

Help and Hypocrisy in Kathryn Stockett's *the Help*

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Abstract

Literature, being a reflector of human experience records the comings and goings of every phase of an era. It floats with number of events in the history, relates day to day events and revisits history for pointing out the reference. It voices out for the voiceless people and raises voices against immorality and brings proper answers for the questions raised in the society. Black literature with many etched events of racism which happens around the world records the sufferings, domination, discrimination which the blacks underwent. Kathryn Stockett is an American novelist. Her novel *The Help* deals with themes of racism, social class and humanity. This article focuses on the theme of philanthropy as projected the author Kathryn Stockett and how the blacks become subservient whites. White community shows up their fame with hypocrite nature which leads them towards ruination. Hence the present study aims at bringing out true nature of whites and the sufferings of blacks under the control of whites.

Key Words: Class, Hypocrite, Justice, Suffering, Society

Kathryn Stockett is an American novelist. She is known for her debut novel *the Help* which is about an African American maid. The novel *the Help* by Kathryn Stockett was published in the year 2009 which is the sensational bestseller. It depicts all about how the characters suffer due racial discrimination. Help normally defined as a source of resource for those who are in need. Here in this novel the author justifies the title by addressing black maid as in dire need of help. The black maids rendered the need of white people but in return the white judges them differently. These maids sacrificed their own life for white by spending hectic of hours to do white's household work to grow the children of white. Their feelings were shattered with harsh words though they were perfect in their given works. They obeyed their masters and did

everything for them. The white never considered that the black maids were the people who promote the civil rights of white community.

The character in the novel *Aibileen* does cooking, cleaning, takes care of whites' children though she does multi-tasking work the wage which is given to her seems always less. The black people who are known as *The help* shower true love to the children of Whites and they thought them the manners more than the whites because the whites consider their babies as a pestering figure of their life it shows that in order to make the society believe and to show up. Taking care of white babies, that's what I do, along with all the cooking and the cleaning. I have raised seventeen kids in my lifetime. I know how to get them babies to sleep, stop crying, and go in the toilet bowl before they mamas even get out of bed in the morning. (Stockett 1)

The black did not have any privileged work as whites do because they were oppressed by everyone. Moreover, they send their children to do household works of whites because their family might have four to six siblings and they will be imposed more taxes and they will face another horror of discrimination with their husbands who will be superior to run their family. So the black community suffers, fears for different issues which have been created by the wishes of white community.

Even the children of black people were taught from their childhood how they should behave in the house of whites once they go for work. They were pushed to work under them because to feed their family. "Sit down on your behind, Minny, because I'm about to tell you the rules for working in a White lady's house" (Stockett 38). The character Minny's mother listed out the rules to follow.

"Rule Number One for working for a white lady, Minny: it is nobody's business. You keep your nose out of your White Lady's problems, you don't go crying to her with yours—you can't pay the light bill? Your feet are too sore? Remember one thing: white people are not your friends. They don't want to hear about it. And when Miss White Lady catches her man with the lady next door, you keep out of it, you hear me?... (Stockett 38-39)

The black was dumped with lots of rules and they were also instructed to follow it, one among the rules is the help were advised not to use whites' bathroom though it's a case of

emergency for them, because its white mentality that if the help use their bathroom the whites would get diseases. Though if they use their bathroom the help will be sent out of the work and they will suffer in order of searching an another job. They run their life with intolerance of acceptance in order to feed their family and to pay all their bills without any delay. And also the help was suspected for any evil practice of the society by the white's though no one voices out for them. So they accept the suspicion and moved on with heartbreaks because the cause of voicing out can even lead to death.

But on the other side the white people disguise themselves as a soul of purity among the society and do all evil practice in order to dominate the colour people. Especially in this novel, the character Hilly Holbrook always sees the help in a suspicious notion. Miss Hilly believes that the bathroom bill and Jim Crow segregation laws actually helps the help. But the laws incorporated in "Compilation of Jim Crow Laws of the South" is indigestible. The rules were

No person shall require any white female to nurse in wards or rooms in which negro men are placed.

It shall be unlawful for a white person to marry anyone except a white person. Any marriage in violation of this section shall be void.

...Books shall not be interchangeable between the white and coloured schools, but shall continue to be used by the race first using them.(Stockett173)

Hilly also triggers her friends to build separate bathroom for black and added that says they would get diseases if the black uses their bathroom. "A bill that requires every white home to have a separate bathroom for the colored help"(Stockett 9).It did not sound good because of the words of Hilly their friends would accept the plan of Hilly and they started to built new bathroom for black which makes the help feel sober for the state of believe they hold and accepts the reality and moves on it with hope of change. Even the bathroom which for them reflects their life of gloominess. "I put her diaper back on and we go out to the garage. Rain make it smell a little swampy. Even with the light on it's dark, and they ain't no fancy wall paper like inside the house. Fact, they really ain't no proper walls at all, just plyboard hammered together. I wonder if she gone be scared" (Stockett93).

Miss Hilly in order to make the society believe that she helps the African and she also raises funds for needy of children in Africa but this act of Hilly is a false generosity that is she does that in order raise her status of class as charitable woman. Hilly didn't think that it would lead black for the expectation from other help but on the other side the black people being domestic workers helps the white employers. If Miss Hilly truly cares about them she might can provide enough wages for the blacks who works in her kitchen to serve her. But Hilly do not care about it and she doesn't voice out for the social injustice rather she joins with injustice.

Skeeter, is one of the loveable character works as an editor in a journal in the novel. She loves her black maid Constantine who grew up from her childhood. She might felt the presence of pure love from Constantine, she gets worthy advices from her. She loves being with her she enjoys her childhood days by sharing matters with her. She spends a happy childhood because of her. But one day when she returns from her higher studies she didn't find Constantine in her house and she never get an answer for her question. But the help of Constantine would remain as constant love because she carves Skeeter as a good soul with esteem character.

As it is said all know, Evil of any person will destroy themselves with their own behavior. But the soul of good practice would always get the shower of blessing one way or the other. The character Skeeter being a white woman voices out for the black people. She always respects the black people in fact she refreshes the thought of Aibileen by asking "Do you ever wish you could... *change* things?" (Stockett11), which makes Aibileen to think deep but by thinking about the circumstances, she cannot do nothing for the happening of injustice. Rather she can only pray for the good deeds for them and their white owners.

The character Skeeter stands as a helping figure of the novel. This character highlights the theme of help. Skeeter has been a soul of purity, she risks her own life and creates a platform for the black to shatter out their heart feelings when they face during their work. She has been a figure of humanity in the novel by helping the black maids being a white woman. She has been also neglected by her own friends because of her helping tendency and for voicing out for black maids. She never considers it and proceeds with the collection of stories of maids which records the pages of the help novel which has been planned to publish anonymously though the letter of words illustrates truth about white and experience of black. Even though the black suffer out of

domination in their working place they too carved the incidents of merry they underwent in their work place. The collection of stories records both pessimistic and optimistic view of the black. And in the end of the novel she raises the dignity of black maids and she also adds credits to her career.

To sum up the help or the black maids who works for the need of white uplifts the community of white. On the other side the paper focuses on the theme of help with the character Skeeter , which one does to others matter a lot though it's small or huge. Because it might can change once entire life at that time. In order of being a good soul one can carve good vibe around us. But being hypocrisy will always lead to the path of misery because in reality everyone one is like the character of Hilly Holbrook they do anything for getting fame of the society till now it continues among the society.

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