
Ethical Concepts Applied on “The Grapes of Wrath”, a Novel by John Steinbeck

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Abstract

The paper highlighted the analyzing of the novel (The Grapes of Wrath) by John Steinbeck and criticizing the socio-economic , morals as well as the concepts in the novel .To achieve the objectives of the paper , the study adopted the descriptive analytic approach .The focus had been on The Ethical View of Literature Criticism and the novel itself . It included four dimensions: The first dimension -Framework of The Study and Introduction . The second dimension - The Ethical View of Literature Criticism. The third dimension - The Ethical Concepts of The Grapes of Wrath . The fourth dimension - Analyzed and discussed the concept of the title “The Grapes of Wrath” , as well as conclusion , findings and recommendations .

Keywords: ethical concepts, The Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck

1-1- Introduction :

Language arts educators enter their classroom with a strong desire for their students to discover the significance of literature. The students’ response to literature relies heavily upon what teachers require them to read. Typically teachers feel obligated to uphold reading traditions of the past; therefore, they concentrate their curriculum around the “classics.”

Classic literature is important to high school literature; there is a reason why certain works are canonical and students can benefit from experiencing this literature in terms of ethical and social elements teaches as well as morals from **“The Grapes of Wrath” by John Steinbeck** .

1-2- Problem Statement:

Despite the positive response young adult literature has on students, it has failed to gain widespread acceptance in the high school curriculum. Proponents of young adult literature must fight against attacks in its quality and confront constant fears that the “classics” will be neglected if young adult literature is taught. However, with careful consideration and proper planning, young adult literature can be an effective educational tool in the high school curriculum. At the same time classic literature, despite opinions that it does not connect to adolescents, has much to offer high school students and should not be completely ignored in the secondary classroom.

Rather than allowing one type of literature to dominate the curriculum, students would benefit more if young adult literature and traditional works were equally valued and included in the language arts classroom .

1-3-Significant of paper:

This study would allow language arts teachers to integrate young adult literature with classics in secondary schools , by teaching from thematic units and even pairing related works from each genre.

1-4- The Objectives:

The study aimed to achieve the following goals: - To identify how literature improves ,human and social development across educators in educational settings .

- Strengthening the institutions or organizations morale, by providing the professional development based on ethical and social spirit stemmed for teaching literature.

- Improving students outcomes through reading literary texts .

-Improving the overall quality of students experiences in educational settings through acquiring skills and abilities of knowledge .

1-5-The hypothesis:

- Beginning to examine the social and emotional well-being of educators, including their stress and depression, as important to the quality of the care and education they provide and as targets of professional development efforts .
- Examining changes in educator practices or students outcomes in light of differing intervention approaches through literature curriculum .
- Effectiveness of various approaches to improve students outcomes in reading literary texts and social behavior.

1-6- Methodology: The study is descriptive and correlation rather than involving rigorously executed experimental studies. When evaluations have been carried out, the focus is much more on curricula and their implementation .

1-7- Data Collection :

Secondary References and Books :“The Grapes of Wrath” by John Steinbeck .

- **Primary Data :**
- **Case study applied on criticism of the Novel “The Grapes of Wrath” by John Steinbeck .**

1-8- Limitation of The Research: Time Dimension: 2019 - 2020

2-1- Differences between Ethics and Morals from Cultural Perspectives: The difference between ethics and morals can seem somewhat arbitrary to many, but there is a basic, albeit subtle, difference. **Morals define** personal character, while ethics stress a **social system** in which those morals are applied. In other words, ethics point to standards or codes of behavior expected by the group to which the individual belongs. This could be national ethics, social ethics, company ethics, professional ethics, or even family ethics. So while a person’s moral code is usually unchanging, the ethics he or she practices can be other-dependent.

2-2- Ethical View of literature Criticism:

Although much has been written to show that literature can influence the moral character, the consensus seems to be that novels which are hard to read are good for you, and those which are not are bad. If that is the case, rather than a mere prejudice on the writers' parts, then the view that literature is morally valuable is paradoxical. What is the point of something being useful for moral education if it is only accessible to a minority of adult readers? If novels are to form a part of moral education, then they had better be accessible to most readers at an age where their characters are not yet fully formed. The claim made by Martha Nussbaum and Wayne Booth, amongst others, that good literature can be morally valuable. Also the claim that crime novels constitute a very good example of how novels can be morally valuable .

Aristotelian standpoint: the appropriate way of learning to be good is habituation through action. In order to become virtuous, one has to act repeatedly as a virtuous person would, until one has learned to find such actions pleasurable in themselves. Specifically, thinking is not to habituate: what non-virtuous people lack is proper emotional involvement. Instead of shame, they feel fear of punishment, and the only pleasure they associate with acting virtuously is the relief from such fear.¹

Reading the novel teaches what it is to feel such an emotion in such circumstances, and indeed that such an emotion may be felt in those circumstances, that it is appropriate to feel it. This is valuable because the teenagers who mock and refuse to befriend those classmates who are less confident, or maybe less expensively dressed than themselves often do not realize that it is possible to feel ashamed of this behavior.

It is important to remember that novel reading is not put forward by Nussbaum as a replacement for acting virtuously , but merely as an aid to the process of habituation .

3-1- Steinbeck Legacy and *The Grapes of Wrath* : John Ernst Steinbeck was born in Salinas, a small town near Monterey, California, on 27 February 1902. Both his parents were fairly well-educated and they were fairly well-off. Steinbeck was raised on religious principles. As a young boy, he would occasionally make some

extra money by working on farms, and it has been suggested that is where he got his love for the land.¹ He attended the University of Stanford for about five years, occasionally taking classes that interested him. He tried a bit of maritime biology, theology and law, but the academic world could never really hold his attention long. His time at the University, from which he left without a degree, confirmed rather than weakened his sense of solidarity with working men and women .

Steinbeck and his wife were often on the brink of poverty. He wrote *The Grapes of Wrath* at an incredible speed in the summer of 1938. When it was done, his wife made up the title, and the book was published in 1939.

The book was made into a film in 1940 (directed by John Ford and starring Henry Fonda as Tom Joad, it is still considered a cinema classic), and in that same year, Steinbeck received the Pulitzer Prize for the novel. *The Grapes of Wrath* was also the major reason for the Nobel Prize committee to award him that prize for his life’s work in 1962. He went on to write, among other things, *The Sea of Cortez*, *Travels with Charley* and the widely acclaimed *East of Eden*. He died in New York on 20 December 1968.

The most important elements that all of Steinbeck’s major novels have in common are the setting, namely California, and the fact that the characters are underdogs: poor working class or worse off – homeless, unemployed. His life clearly shows his love both for the place and the people. Yet, other than often assumed from *The Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck was not a communist (or even a socialist) . A love for the poor and oppressed need not, of course, have anything to do with socialism: it is also, for instance, a very Christian thing. Steinbeck was raised to be religious and received a Christian service at his funeral, although he was not a great fan of religious institutions or doctrine: “Socialism is just another form of religion . When he received the Nobel Prize in 1962, in particular for (as the committee put it) “his realistic as well as imaginative writings, distinguished by a sympathetic humour and a keen social perception”,¹ this is what he said in his acceptance speech: “Literature is as old as speech. It grew out of human need for it and it has not changed except to become more needed. I hold that a writer who does not passionately believe in

the perfectibility of man has no dedication nor any membership in literature’ .

He remained devoted to the idea of the wholeness of feminine values within society and within the home. Femininity is, after all, a part of what makes us human.

3-2- Steinbeck’s Critical Reception:

Steinbeck writes from his own voice and tells his own personal story. His voice is very articulator, as he often uses large sections of energy-charged text to explain . The importance of a long book , some critics argue that Steinbeck’s work is often “defaced by excessive melodramatics” and sentimentalism , to justify the extensive length of his new novel, he predicts its future reception. *Time Magazine’s* eventual review describes the novel as “a huge grab bag,” his work obviously conveys a huge sense of adoration towards biblical literature. He writes the novel “so that a man can take from [it] as much as he can bring to it” He uses virtue ethics to investigate human nature, and more specifically, man’s struggle between good and evil. He explains in his own defense that, because literature is the expression of a collective human experience, “a writer would either be blind or dishonest not to include [emotions] in his portrayal of that experience” (268). Steinbeck indeed reinvents and carries his tempestuous prose into *East of Eden* as he paints a portrait of the human condition .

Steinbeck’s literary power lies in the humanity of his characters and the compassion with which he describes and treats them . His attitude toward his Indian characters and their struggles is literary, not sociological” , he draws the “shadow of the Indian” from the perspective of a Salinas Valley frontiersman. Here, the Indian also serves as a comparative tool for his biblical allusion. The hero can be narrow-minded and petty, or show greatness with small gestures, such as the waitress in the Route 66 cafeteria in *The Grapes of Wrath* who, though she nags about the stream of dispossessed migrants, gives them a major discount on candy for the children. Even the ‘bad guys’ in the story, the banks with their tractors and the landowners and authorities in California, who spread all those deceitful flyers, are not truly evil to the core: from “Joe Davis’s boy” in chapter 5, who only works the tractor to feed his family to the small militias in Californian

towns who fear all the “goddamn Okies”,¹ most of them are mainly concerned with self-preservation. Though maybe not very nice, it is very understandable.

Farmers who would rather destroy their crops than give it to the starving Okies may be doing a great wrong, but they themselves believe that if they give the food away, the prices will drop even further and so destroy what little livelihood they have left. Connie, Rose of Sharon’s husband, does not run away because he is evil, but because he is weak.

In the end, the human being is portrayed as a valuable creature . All people, as parts of one big whole – one large soul, you might say – have an obligation to help each other. **The Grapes of Wrath** does not incite violence of any kind, it is a warning. **The style** : pertains to parole , it is a distinctive style , the use of (and) at the beginning of the sentence refers to the Bible , especially [the novel owes much to the Bible] , the narrator uses standard American spelling and the use of dialect in direct speech . There are tow major challenges [the names and the dialect] .

3-3- Dialectology : The use of dialect could thus indicate a certain ‘backwardness’ that the good people of Oklahoma would naturally object to. However, the dialects in *The Grapes of Wrath* serve a very serious (and very realistic) purpose in that they form an important part of the Okies’ identity and social background . The characters themselves remark in passing on the fact that their language is part of their identity when they note that other migrants have slightly different ways of speaking .

A literary text is made up of more than information: language with a background, connotations, references to other literature, personal believes and the rest of the world, to the history of mankind in general and the author in particular.

3-4-Literary :

At first sight, *The Grapes of Wrath* looks like a very simple story – the plot can be summarised as follows: economic disasters in Oklahoma drive the Joad family to California, where everything turns out to be worse than the situation they left behind. From the point of view of a complaint about social conditions, it might not have to get

any more complicated than that, but as a mature novel (this is, according to the title of Levant's essay in *The Novels of John Steinbeck*, this is Steinbeck's "fully matured art") it, of course, is The simplicity of the plot runs through a number of sketches, in themselves apparently just as simple, of various situations, some to do with the Joads and some not (the intercalary chapters) which together give an extensive, more complex view of different aspects of time, place and *condition humanity* . Steinbeck has chosen a remarkable structure for his story. Chapters that contain the personal story of the main characters are alternated with chapters that tell the larger, more abstract story of the social background of the Joads' experiences. This structure is strongly reminiscent of the Bible, which also makes the occasional 'trip' into further clarification:

Steinbeck's convincing finishing touch is that, at the end, Tom Joad aspires to Casy's role. In this shift, Steinbeck manipulates allegory, he does not submit to its rigid quality, for Tom is not like Casy. Tom is far more violent, more capable of anger; having been shown the way, however, he may be more successful as a practical missionary than Casy. One might say that if Casy is to be identified with Christ, the almost human god, Tom is to be identified with Saint Paul, the realistic, tough organizer. Tom is "converted" and assumes Casy's role is deeply realized and rich with significance, not simply because it is a technical necessity, but because it is a confirmation of Casy's reality as a man and a teacher. California and the Promised Land, Noah and Moses, the flooding river and the Great Flood, the dead baby in the basket and Moses again. The very title of the book itself is a reference to the Bible. The plot and characters may seem simple, but there is much more to them. The heroes of *The Grapes of Wrath* are not larger than life, they are ordinary people, trying to do the right thing and trying to believe in themselves. The Biblical echoes refer to human limitations, but they also serve as a testament to human greatness and compassion for the human condition as it is. The story is about continuing on no matter what – an attempt, ultimately a heroic one after all, to make the world a better place. Whether this is a typically American thing to do or not, Carpenter summarises this as follows:

For the first time in history, *The Grapes of Wrath* brings together and makes real three great skeins of American thought. It

begins with the transcendental oversoul, Emerson’s faith in the common man, and his Protestant self-reliance. To this it joins Whitman’s religion of the love of all men and his mass democracy. And it combines these mystical and poetic ideas with the realistic philosophy of pragmatism and its emphasis on effective action. From this it develops a new kind of Christianity – not otherworldly and passive, but earthly and active.¹

4- Analysis and Discussion :

4-1-The Concept of The Grapes of Wrath : “The Grapes of Wrath” uses a variety of interesting techniques to share its message and create emotion within the story. The main storyline is continually interspersed with short sketches and narratives, or explanatory discussions that show what conditions of the era were like and what people were doing. Some of these interludes are used to create a general mood or to foreshadow events later in the story. One example of such a narrative sketch can be noted in chapter three, which is almost entirely devoted to the story of a land turtle crossing the highway. The turtle struggles up the embankments and barely avoids death when a truck hits its and sends it flying off the highway. Still alive, though, it struggles on. In the next chapter, Tom Joad sees the same turtle and picks it up, hoping to take it home to his little brother as a pet. When he meets Jim Casy and the two start talking, the turtle almost escapes several times, but Tom catches it each time. When Tom reaches his family’s home, though, and finds it abandoned he gives up and, in a gesture of despair, lets the turtle go. For a final trial for the poor turtle, it is attacked by one the abandoned cats.

Like the persistent turtle, the Joad family will not give up. In addition, neither the story of the turtle, nor the story of the Joad family may end happily, but both the turtle and the Joad family will survive despite attacks and difficulties. Another interesting technique that Steinbeck uses in “The Grapes of Wrath” is best seen in chapter seven, which depicts a used car salesman selling his old jalopies to the desperate migrants. In doing this he intersperses short, descriptive phrases without predicates into an ongoing monologue which is the car dealers private thoughts. The short, meaningful phrases that Steinbeck uses capture the urgency of the car dealer to sell his broken

down jalopies and the migrants to buy a car that will take them to California. For example Stein quickly introduces the used car lot with only a few short sentences .

4-2- Types of Wraths in The Novel :

In John Steinbeck’s epic, *The Grapes of Wrath*, the Joad family is the example of the working class family during the 1930s. The novel depicts the Joad family as they are struggling to move from an infertile farm in Oklahoma to the gold coast of California. They are driven off of their farm by not only the “dust-bowl”, but because they can’t pay the mortgage to the banks, despite their hard work.

Work is a very important theme in the book. Steinbeck is describing a family whose livelihood comes from working on the land. This has two meanings :

- **The first** describes their jobs as farmers who are literally working on the land to make it produce crops.
- **The second** meaning however is much deeper; it describes the actual process that farmers such as the Joads go through on the farm.

They “work” the land by cultivating it and treating the soil the right way. They put their own blood, sweat, and tears into the land. In return the land sprouts crops, which they would then sell for money.

4-3- The Struggle:

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck is a novel depicting the struggle and distraught brought towards migrant workers during the Great Depression. *The Grapes of Wrath* follows one Oklahoma family, the Joads, as their journey down Route 66 towards the earthly paradise of California. While on route to California, the Joads interact with fellow besieged families, non-hospitable farmers, and common struggles due to the Depression. Steinbeck uses these events to show strong brotherhood through biblical allusion, character development, and inter chapters .

4-4- Stereotyping:

Brought on by the existence of a class system, has many positive effects in John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*. This class system, made up of migrants and affluent people, is present due to the fact

that many of the affluent people stereotype the migrants as poor, uneducated, and easily agitated human beings. Thus, this sets a boundary between the educated individuals and migrants. At first, most migrants ignore the effects stereotyping has on them. But towards the end of their journeys to California, the migrants' rage that had been gradually building up inside lets out and the migrants take action. The effects are more positive as the migrants strive for an education, receive sympathy, and calmly deal with conflicts.

4-5- Reference to the Israelites:

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck, shows a whole family and their struggles. The grapes of Wrath is modeled after a **biblical reference** to the Israelites, god's chosen people. They also left their land, Egypt, and wandered into the desert for many years, searching in vain for a promised land, the land of milk and honey. A lot like the Israelites, many farmers in the middle of the country began migrating to California. The Joads I believe had no choice but to leave the dust bowl to find work. They also had to cross the desert and lost the life of their dog , Grandpa and Grandma. During the depression the Joads' farm was foreclosed. They and all around them were driven from their land. The depression caused all to be extremely poor. If this hadn't been the case the migrants would have all made it to the west coast a lot easier. The country set itself up during the depression in a way that caused only a vicious circle. The country was in a rut and held itself there. Steinbeck was trying to capture an average depression swept family.

4-6- Uncontrollable Poverty:

Throughout history, less fortunate people have been set apart or shunned from the general public. In the Grapes of Wrath, by John Steinbeck, this statement holds true. Throughout the whole book, all of the less fortunate people are treated like they aren't even human. This is not much different than how our society is now. When Steinbeck writes about an unadorned field he is able to give it the brilliance that it deserves. Instead of just a few acres of dirt, Steinbeck makes the reader aware of the heart and soul of the field.

4-7- Powerful Issues :

In *The Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck illustrates such powerful images using his own values. When the Joad family starts deciding to move to California for a better life, the story begins. Tom comes home from prison and the family is reunited. The hopes of all are refreshed and the move seems to be a good idea. And here we have one of Steinbeck's greatest value, the family or the group, and the ties that lie within it. This value is seen through many different examples in this novel. The first and the main example of the family value would most obviously be seen through the Joad family. Even though each person has his or her own separate and unique personalities, as a family they act as though they are one person. It makes important decisions as a group; such as moving to California. Then moving as a group; taking everyone at all costs. It reacts to major events the same. As a group, the Joad family makes the long journey across the country.

4-8- The Grapes Of Wrath – Illusion: "He held the apple box against his chest. And then he leaned over and set the box in the stream and steadied it with his hand. He said fiercely, "Go down an' tell 'em. Go down in the street an' rot an' tell 'em that way....Maybe they'll know then." He guided the box gently out into the current and let it go" (493)."I figured, 'maybe it's all men an' all women we love; maybe that's the Holy Spirit- the human spirit-the whole shebang. Maybe all men got one big soul everybody's a part of.' Now I sat there thinking' it, an' all of a sudden .I knew it. I knew it so deep down that it was true, and I still know it..." (25)."If you could separate causes from results, if you could know that Paine, Marx, Jefferson, Lenin, were results, not causes, you might survive" (166).Uncle John's motivated action alludes to the tale of the baby Moses. To save her baby from slavery, Moses' mother sets the infant adrift in a basket. Similarly, Uncle John feels he is 'freeing' the baby from the migrants' miserable condition. Jim Casy, an ex-preacher, constantly shares his thoughts and philosophies about life. Throughout the novel, he indirectly alludes to Jesus Christ. Casy believes that men are holy, and later he, just like Jesus is killed . In the novel , a fictitious migrant family, the Joads, travel west in search of a new life away from the tragedies of the Dust Bowl in Oklahoma. Along the way,

Steinbeck adds a variety of minor characters with whom the Joads interact.

4-9- Naturalism in The Grapes of Wrath:

The Grapes of Wrath, the Joad family and the changing world in which they live is portrayed from a naturalistic point of view. Steinbeck characterizes the Joads and their fellow migrants as simple, instinct-bound creatures who are on an endless search for paradise (Owens 129). The migrants and the powers which force them to make their journey—nature and society—are frequently represented by animals. The Joads, when they initially leave home, are a group of simplistic, animal-like people who barely understand or even realize their plight, but as the story progresses, they begin to grow and adapt to their new circumstances. They evolve from a small, insignificant group of creatures with no societal consciousness into a single member of a much larger family—society . Steinbeck strongly portrays the Joads and other displaced “Okies” as being animalistic. They often talk about their predicament in simplistic terms that suggest that they are initially not conscious of the circumstances that force them to leave Oklahoma. Mulley Graves, for instance, tells Tom Joad and Jim Casy that the rest of the Joads, whose house has been destroyed by a tractor, are “piled in John’s house like gophers in a winter burrow. John Steinbeck passionately describes a time of unfair poverty, unity, and the human spirit growth in the classic novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*. The novel tells of real, diverse characters that experience growth through turmoil and hardship. Jim Casy, a personal favorite character, is an ex-preacher that meets with a former worshiper, Tom Joad. Casy continues a relationship with Tom and the rest of the Joads as they embark on a journey to California with the hopes of prosperity.

4-10- Economic Depression:

The Great Depression took a toll on the people, unlike any other era in history that spread poverty and hunger throughout the people living in a particular period of time. Steinbeck wrote a realistic novel that mimics life and offers social comments, on real life in Midwest America in the 1930s. But it also offers a powerful social note, directly in the intercalary chapters and indirectly in the places and people it

portrays. Typical of very many, the Joads are driven off the land by far away banks and set out on a journey to California to find a better life. However, the journey breaks up the family, their dreams are not realized and their fortunes disappear. What promised to be the land of milk and honey turns to sour grapes. In the same way, the hopes and dreams of a generation turned to wrath. Steinbeck did see this mess come together, and the public did put it to the side.

4-11- Prejudices :

Prejudice is a strong word. It is the kind of word that leaves a bitter taste in the mouth. One of Steinbeck's themes in the novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, is the prejudice against the migrant workers by the financially established Californians. Steinbeck provides four clear examples of prejudice; the man whose children died of starvation, the fishing story, the California police officer and the history of the Californians. On the way to California, the Joad's encountered other people that had already been to California and were now returning. One of these encounters, with the ragged man with the sunburned face, is described on page 242. The ragged man had children that died because wages were too low and work was too scarce to afford food for his children and wife. His story was one of pain and despair and was evidence of the cruel and inhumane treatment which resulted from the California farmers prejudice towards the migrant workers. Later, the Joads stop by a river where Tom and his Father find a spot to go swimming. Two men, a man and his son, who asked if they might also join them in swimming, promptly join them. The men start talking and it turns out that the other two men have just come from California.

4-12- Cause and Effect in *The Grapes of Wrath*:

I have been debating the value of classics with some other teachers. It's been an interesting dialogue. Some of my associates express a vague notion that a classic is something lofty; that they must be all things to all children and that somehow touching them will elevate us to literary Nirvana. However, I maintain that blindly accepting the 'classics' and continuing to teach them without asking why or without understanding where they fit in with other things that we much teach is one of the problems in our educational society.

Some say: Let’s teach them something because it’s going to be on a test. Let’s expose them to books A, B and C because we’ve been told those books are valuable and they have been held valuable by the power structure. I say let’s look at literature differently.

4 -13- Causes and Effects Phenomena's:

Homelessness is a condition of detachment from society characterized by the absence or attenuation of the affiliative bonds that link settled persons to a network of interconnected social structures.

Homelessness takes many forms, depending on the type of detachment involved and the local circumstances. Homeless families and homeless men appear, so far as can be determined, in all large-scale societies. Homeless women and children are relatively rare. Their appearance denotes wide spread disorder and instability, such as follow famines and civil wars .

4-14- Conclusion: The study investigated John Steinbeck's novel 'The Grapes of Wrath' tells the specific story of the Joad family in order to illustrate the hardship and oppression suffered by migrant laborers during the Great Depression in 1939.

It is an explicitly political tract that champions collectivist action by the lower classes over expressions of individualist self-interest and chastises corporate and banking elites for shortsighted policies meant to maximize profit even while forcing farmers into destitution and even starvation. The novel begins with the description of the conditions in Dust Bowl Oklahoma that ruined the crops and instigated massive foreclosures on farmland. No specific characters emerge initially, a technique that Steinbeck will return to several times in the book, juxtaposing descriptions of events in a larger social context with those more specific to the Joad family. Historians have noted that works of literature often adopt the mood of the times in which they were written. It is thus not surprising that *The Grapes of Wrath*, written by John Steinbeck in the desperate nadir of the Great Depression, appears to be a novel of righteous anger and ably communicates the gloomy depths of human sorrow.

A sense of hopelessness sets in almost immediately. There seems to be no solution for the farmers, who are resigned to their fate

and find themselves baffled at what they may have to face. The main point their survival is collective and intergenerational .

The study stemmed Steinbeck that, common people not just politically, with the theme.

4-15- Findings :

Certainly we can take lessons from *The Grapes of Wrath* just as we can take lessons from almost all literature. They may not be the lessons specifically intended by the author, but that is also part of the beauty of reading it: we take away from it what we feel is important as individuals.

From my perspective, one of the lessons of this novel is that in today's world, even with this stubborn recession, we don't know how good we have it.

The Great Depression redefined poverty. Americans actually starved to death. Today's situation is difficult, to be sure, but it is still nowhere near the level of misery and dislocation as the setting and time period of Steinbeck's tale. I would also take the lessons of compassion - that of giving to your fellow man when they are in need, even if you have little to give. There are numerous examples in the book of this taking place.

As a third lesson, I think the novel highlighted how poorly we treat our fellow Americans at times, discriminating against the poor, but also against people from certain regions, from the South, or in this case, against the "Okies" like the Joad family and their rude welcome into California. However, one of the key lessons that this book teaches us is that there is a profound link between man and land. We are shown the turmoil and disaster that occurs when the Joad family are uprooted from their land - their home - and are left without land and are forced to migrate in search of work.

4-16- Recommendations:

We recommend that Steinbeck is obviously harshly critical of the market forces in play that have brought this about, and argues, as in his other works, that having land gives us security, identity and self-esteem as follows:

- It seems to me one of the lessons of this novel is the ability to give even when you have virtually nothing.

-This book teaches us is that there is a profound link between man and land. - Steinbeck created a drama that is intensely human yet majestic in its scale and moral vision, elemental yet plainspoken, tragic but ultimately stirring in its insistence on human dignity.

-Teachers in teaching literature they must extract lessons and idles(of dignity – belongingness struggle for honest life – virtue – ethics - moralities) to be cultivated for coming generations.

-The inter-chapters serve a number of purposes: stylistic variety, pace changers, historical overview, repositories of Steinbeck's social and political ideas that should be put in best regard.

-The saving power of family and fellowship and the dignity of wrath honor.

-The multiplying effects of selfishness and altruism .

-Faith and guilt .

-Powerlessness , persistence and resistance .

-Family , friendship and community .

The title also refers to Revelation:

"And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God - Comment on references to grapes- as representing both wants and plenty of worthies.

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