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## Application of Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytical theory in Eudora Welty's Selected Short Stories

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Eudora Welty was an American short story writer and novelist who wrote about the American south. Born in April 13, 1909, Jackson, Mississippi. Eudora developed the reading habit from her mother Mary Chestina Welty. Her mother believed that "Any room in our house, at any time in the day, was there to read in or to be read to". Welty studied at the Mississippi state college for woman, while she got transferred to the University of Wisconsin. In 1933, she began to work as a publicity agent in works progress administration. There she collected stories, conducted interviews and took photographs of daily life in Mississippi. In 1936 she published "The Death of a Travelling Sales Man." in literary magazine manuscript. She has become a popular after her first publication of collection of short stories. 'A curtain of green'. 'She is a recipient of many prestigious awards including Pulitzer Prize for her novel the 'Optimistic Daughter'. Eudora Welty was also a good photographer. She got inspired by her father. Her photographs formed the basis of her several stories. The collection of her photographs were published 'in one time, one place' [1971] and 'photographs' [1989].

Eudora Welty a prolific southern writer used many themes throughout her literary works. She discussed about racism, responsibility, myths, initiations, isolation and depression. She is known for her optimistic and pessimistic themes. However her short stories can be approached from multiperspective. This paper focuses on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of depression in Eudora Welty's selected short stories. Descriptions of mourning and melancholia and how it is being applied to the protagonist characters in Eudora Welty's selected short stories are discussed.

Two stories taken from Eudora Welty's short stories are *A piece of paper* and *Cyltie*. In a piece of paper Ruby Fisher is coming to home from a storm and dries up herself. She is alone at home, completely isolated. Her only happiness is reading newspaper. She reads the news, 'Mrs Ruby Fisher will be shot in the leg by her husband'. Suffering with depression she is unable to understand the coincidence in names and gets frustrated. Her first reaction was fear and anger. When her husband came back home she points out the news. Clyde read out and said it's a lie. Finally when her husband clarifies her misunderstandings she understands her fault, blushes and becomes double happy.

*Cyltie* another story of a depressed protagonist. It is a story about a old maid Cyltie, who suffers with mental illness. Cyltie's character is set in a rural town of Farr Gin. She lives with her arrogant elder sister Octavia, younger brother Gerald and their old sick father. Cyltie has a unique habit of observing faces. Her behaviour and her speech at times clearly show her sufferings of depression. At last when she sees her own face in the water she commits suicide.

Depression is a mood disorder which prevents the individual from leading a normal life. According to Sigmund Freud loss leads to depression. Freud's "mourning and melancholia" theory is taken and applied in Eudora Welty's selected short stories *A piece of paper* and *Clytie*.

In 1917 Freud published his landmark paper "Trauer und Melancholie" (Mourning and Melancholia) which was discussed by him in 1914 and written in 1915. In "mourning and melancholia" Freud contrasted the normal expression of grief related to mourning, with the abnormal mechanisms involved in melancholia. Sigmund Freud proceeds to the relationships between mourning and melancholia. The central 'common cause' of both of this painful mind state, he argued, pertains to loss. Mourning and melancholia are symptomatically similar to the principal distinctive feature of melancholia of self-reproach, while in mourning the fall in self esteem is absent. Mourning is not associated with pathological issues because it is a normal reaction to events and generally overcome with the time. Relatively in Eudora Welty's short story *A piece of paper* the protagonist Ruby fisher lost herself from the outside world due to isolation causing to depression. Being a housewife she stays at home without outside world relation. Her only entertainment is reading the newspaper. When she spreads the newspaper glancing it, suddenly 'an expression of utter timidity came over her flat blue eyes and her soft mouth. Then a look of fright on her face, she started about what eye in the world did she feel looking in on her?' (p.17). the little item said; "Mrs Ruby Fisher had the misfortune to shot in the leg by her husband this week" (p.17) 'That's me' she said softly, with deference, and very formally. Then with anger she screamed out and ran here and there around the room. Because of Depression she can't even understand the coincidence of names. Ruby fisher mixes fantasy with reality due to depression but she has the conscious within her. As Freud stated in 'mourning' the depressed person have an intense pain about the lost person or object ,but never have self-reproach and turns to normal life similarly Ruby fisher lost herself from depression and stays with self esteem and turns back to her normal life.

Ruby fisher understands her fault and she is out of depression and turns normally, when her husband Clyde said "well 'I'd just like to see the place I shot you!". The moment Ruby drew herself in, still holding the empty plate, faced him straightened and hard , they looked at each other. That moment she was filled with helplessness. When her husband points out, it is a Tennessee paper, "It was ruby fisher" cried ruby. "my name is ruby fisher!" she declared passionately to clyde. It was another ruby fisher in 'Tennessee' cried her husband. Though she suffered with depression she have the conscious about herself and her surroundings so she understands her misunderstanding. Considering Sigmund Freud in "mourning and melancholia", the work of mourning requires libido which is formerly attached to the loved object, gradually withdrawn, this process needs a considerable amount of time and cathartic energy because the lost object is still present in his own mind. This process is completed when the ego becomes free and uninhabited again and can be transferred to another love objects. In *A piece of a paper* Ruby fisher doesn't have transformation but she realise her mistake and frees herself from depression.

As discussed before Sigmund Freud lays out that mourning and melancholia are two different responses to loss. Though both the states suffer with intense pain, but in 'mourning', the pathological issues are absent whereas 'melancholia' confronts the pathological issues. Distinguishing mental features of melancholia as a profoundly painful dejection, abrogation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-reviling, and culminates in delusional expectation of punishment.(Sigmund freud,s 'collected papers') connecting this melancholia we find Eudora Welty's short story *Clytie*. In this story Clytie suffers with depression along with self-reproach. Clytie is a eccentric character who comes from pressure and hardships of a dysfunctional home. She has a unique habit of observing human faces. Sometimes even her own family members while conversing with her younger brother Gerald , "Clytie saw his fine, thin, almost black lips spreads in a crooked line." How can a man live in the house with woman? How can he? (p.107)

As Freud argues, in melancholia there is no apparent 'object loss' to the person. Even when a depressed identifies the loss he or she can't identify the actual loss which is so disturbing and bothering. Similarly in

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Cyltie she doesn't know what actually troubles her. Her behaviour apparently shows us that is in a depressed state. Although Cyltie is a normal woman like, when she takes care of her sick father, cooks for her family etc. Her behaviour suddenly changes abnormally. For instance when a neighbour old woman shows her a new rosebush she had planted, all in bloom, Cyltie said 'it's nice' but within an hour, she came running out of her house screaming, "my sister Octavia says you take that rose bush up ! and move it away from our fence! If you don't I'll kill you! You take it away."( p.106).

Cyltie hardly speaks to others when she is normal, suddenly she will shout at a little boy when he plays with her sister Octavia's cat. And she would run to the vegetable patch and begin to curse. When alone in the vegetable garden she cursed everyone. This incidence clearly shows Cyltie is pathologically affected. All upon the worst, depression made her to end her life in a pathetic way. As we know she has a unique behaviour of observing faces. When she sees the reflection of her own face in the water she drawn herself into it. Importantly though she observes faces she is unable to love them including her ownself. Freud declares in melancholia the depressed person has inability to love others, develops hatred feelings and other strong effects can lead to suicide

Despite their similarities, as Freud states there are fundamental differences 'mourning is recognized as a normal process without pathology issues. In 'melancholia', we can find abnormal pathology and sometimes lead to suicidal tendency This morning and melancholia process neatly applied to Eudora Welty's two short stories, *A piece of paper and Cyltie*. In *A piece of paper* it ends up with the understanding of the protagonist Ruby fisher, who misunderstand and worried due to her depression .when she gets a clear picture of her misunderstandings she freed herself from the depression and turns happy. As referred in mourning the person suffers to; depression due to the loss of person or object. Here we see Ruby fisher lost herself in isolation that caused depression. Lost is lost. She experienced a mental illness but never experienced a self-reproach.

In *Clytie* melancholic depression is very apparent. She experiences mental illness as well as self-reproach. Cyltie is obedient to her sister sometimes she gets violent and shout at others and curse them. This article thoroughly discusses the application of Sigmund Freud's mourning and melancholia in Eudora Welty's two short stories.

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