

CAUTION: CHANGE AHEAD!

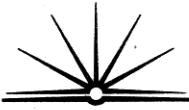
Why, society people

How people react to change in their everyday lives.

Reporter Jane Doe talks to psychologist, Trish Burns on the effects of change and change itself.

Jane will never forget the day she hid in the garage. "The garage was all dirty and full of cobwebs, but I knew if I got out, ~~my~~ I would be forced to go to school". Jane's desire to avoid school was one she believed stemmed from a [#] ⁴ fear of making new friends. "We'd just moved to a new neighborhood and I was reluctant to try new things. The prospect of going to a new school with a sea of strange faces was just daunting".

Why is the process of change so daunting to individuals? The question may be answered when one reflects on ~~the~~ Owen Flarwood's poem, "In the Park". According to ^{leading} psychologist Trish Burns, the woman in the park experiences a 'crisis of realization of her situation and her self. "In the Park is ~~is~~ a poem where



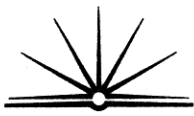
time, personal experience and circumstance have
to imposed change". The catalyst of change she
argues is the 'chance meeting' with "Someone she
loved once" where the woman 'suddenly'
realizes her predicament, "She sits in the park.
Her clothes are out of date". The Burns believes
these negative connotation and imagery of the
opening sentences establish the woman's lack
of expectations ~~and~~ in the "stark depiction of
a joyless ~~exist~~ existence". The monosyllabic
~~tone~~ and flashes of the ~~tone~~ highlights this.
This is then contrasted with the short-lived
vitality of the chance meeting. ~~The~~ ~~but~~ "It's
the inclusion of mere fragments ~~however~~ ~~what~~
of the conversation which however highlight
the personal awkwardness of the situation, ~~at~~
"How nice", "Time holds great surprises".
Burns ~~at~~ ~~is~~ argues the impact on the woman
is made apparent when she ~~she~~ assumes the
man's "unquestionable" thoughts, "But for the
grace of God". This is an evaluation and



condemning conclusion the woman has on her situation. It is one Burns adds that is reiterated by the final sentence, "They have eaten me alive". Burns believes "La Pucelle" is a classic example of how individuals perceive change, "The woman sees only the negative consequences and it's an insight into how she feels as a result". →

Burns argues the external factor of pain has enabled the woman to look at the effect and then make an evaluation.

Harwood's poem, "~~La Pucelle~~ "The Glass Jar" is considered another example, where external factors may impose change. The boy in the poem is ~~exp~~ examined before, during and after the process of change. Written in a narrative style, Burns believes the use of religious terminology, "sun's disciples", "monstrance", "bless" highlight

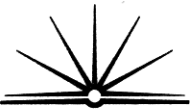


The boy's utmost confidence in his plan to "exorcise monsters" and his anticipated triumph. Furthermore, the religious terminology is indicative of a pilgrimage from darkness to light - a reflection of the inevitable process of maturity. Upon realization of the ~~the~~ loss of light, the sentences become disjointed ~~and~~ with enjambment linking each stanza. This contrasts to the ~~the~~ previously completed sentences and highlights the boy's loss of confidence and hope, "Then hope fell headlong from ^{an} eagle height". The second key experience, Burns explains is the discovery of his parents. The musical imagery here, "Love's proud exultants played from a score no child could read or realize" emphasizes the complexity of the change and the boy's inability to comprehend it. These two experiences, ~~the~~ Burns states, are ones which hold the potential for positive self development. The return of "morning" indicates a path for the boy



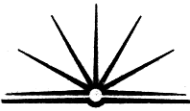
to follow to outgrow his fears. As a "resurrected" son, he can potentially transform the "crisis" of the night into a positive outcome. This is an example of ~~the~~ Burns' beliefs of key factors within our own lives that are ~~indicative~~ conjure to change.

The stimulus material, "Sky High" is a further example of change inflicted as a consequence of time. Hannah Roberts, the composer of the text claims it is a reflection of the process of childhood and feeling "faded and nearly at peak" to "accumulating the life etched lines" of life. Ms Roberts claims, "I wanted to show how ~~the~~ this process operates on an emotional and psychological level as well as ~~the~~ physical". This is primarily achieved through Roberts' personae ~~the~~ ~~no~~ recounts, "Oh, the washing line! - remember first!" Here, the vivid description allows the responder to in fact, ~~it~~ imagine



the scene. This is cleverly aided through the use of present tense, "It's a way of getting the reader to live the experience" (Roberts) ~~and~~, and literary devices such as similes, "straggling sapling around". The juxtaposition of this description with "Today however it is bare" forces the reader to understand the change imposed ^{as a consequence of time} and that allows Roberts to draw a conclusion, "There are too many things trying me to the ground". Burns believes Roberts' work looks essentially at the process of childhood and how this forces the undertaking of more responsibility and thus a development of self. Again another reason why change is often 'daunting'!

The Ray Lawler's play "Summer of the Seventeenth Doll" is Burns' best example of an inability to change. Olive the key character, in her association with dolls and thus childhood, is suggested to have



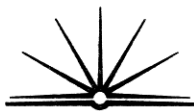
failed to grow up. At the end of the play for example, Olive is accused of failing to "take a grown up look at the layoff". Olive brags that the play fails to heed the warning signs, that "last is just one thing it won't do". The use of pathetic fallacy, "Oley, it looks like rain... "A day like today? You must be mad" emphasises that change is to occur but Olive's blindness towards it. This is reinforced with her declaration, "I'm blind to what I want to be". When Olive is confronted with change, Burns argues she is ultimately unable to accept it, "I want what I had before, give it back to me!". Her rejection of Ross's proposal furthermore illustrates her refusal to accept change and thus the potential for future change. &

[Burns explains that people who often have a good time and expect more to come, like Olive, are the ones most



threatened and thus affected by change. "It's something new and different", ~~Frank Glass~~ Burns claims, "It scares people". Ultimately however Burns believes those who fail to accept change are stunted in self development because they are unable to move on, "To deny change is to stagnate or die". In contrast to Ray Lawler's Play, she ~~to~~ argues, "What's Eating Gilbert Grape" directed by Lasse Hallström has Gilbert accept change and enforce it himself ~~where~~. This is evident when he burns ~~the~~ his house, a symbol of the past at the end of the film. The distancing shot of the house emphasises the fact Gilbert is ready to embark on a new course.

Burns believes change is ultimately a concept individuals struggle with because of its negative and positive implications. Thus the individuals in each of the texts above



struggle with change because it presents to them something unknown, "Fear of the unknown means resistance" ~~stet~~.

Thus, Burns argues change is a process - a journey that is met with resistance initially, but ultimately imposes some form of transformation and ~~to~~ effect. For Jane, the little six year old hiding in her garage, she refused to go to school because she feared rejection and was frightened of the task of ~~me~~ "fitting in". Essentially Burns concludes, "I believe change can have positive implications if you let it. Yes, there is resistance to change but I adhere to the saying of Saul Alinsky, "Change means Movement. Movement means friction. Only in the frictionless vacuum of a nonexistent abstract world can change or movement occur without that adverse friction of ~~the~~ conflict". Burns' departing words? "Go on, live



life, experience change!".

Trish Burns is a leading
psychologist and lecturer at
The University of Sydney.
Her book "~~is for~~ ~~Star~~
"Choosing Change" is currently
available at all leading
retailers.