

A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE ON CAROL SHIELDS'S NOVEL "UNLESS"

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Abstract:

"But I do feel this sense of goodness is part of our human conversation — the biggest part of it". — Carol Shields

Carol Shields's last novel, *Unless* (2002) the best Canadian novel of the first decade of the 20th century. She was a model winner, not only because it is a brilliant novel, but also because it is typically Canadian in combine the English and French languages.

When anybody asked Carol Shields whether she believed God, she replied, "No. Human goodness is the only thing I believe in." Human goodness is challenge in Shield's novel *Unless* by the self-immolation of one woman and the bodily and psychological damage to another who tries to help her. This novel shows Carol Shields most essential light as she has revise the category of Canadian' and female' through which her own uniqueness is constituted. Like most of her novels, *The Handmaid's Tale* is also a canon of feminism. The essential theme of the novel is still the examination of patriarchal structure of male domination and power of the woman's quest for meaningful identity.

Keywords: critical ,prospective, feminism etc

The present novel *Unless* is a stunning story about the survival of the custom of slavery on the power of 'remember' and the collective memories kept alive through verbal tradition. It is also the story of the origin of culture and of people who, living on the boundary of life and death, have manage to create that culture and kept their past alive.

Shields's self-conscious is to the carnival of women's strength, their values, and philosophy of stem from a wish to correct the wrong that have been traditionally level against women. She seeks to rejoice the mythology of women like Reta and Norah merge their dreams into mythology that permit us to recover their went before. Just as a visual space is employed in architecture, so in the present novel 'Unless' Shields tries to create space for her female protagonist, Norah through a require of complicated techniques such as "remember" flashbacks, dramatic voice in narration, stream of consciousness and oral tradition and feminist point of view.

The present novel *Unless* implores the essential change in the masculinity relationships in the society and circuitously designates, "a way out of the gender power-struggle". As such, it serves as a feminist movement in the context of chauvinist in respect of

sexual status, role and nature. It powerfully drives home the message that women are not mere objects of beauty meant for lascivious utilization of man.

In this present paper I focused on the central image of women and the object of woman's daily needs. The idea of in this novel is woman's effort to achieve civilization and a human identity. All characters in the novel be attentive in their respective ego cages and they are involved in power of games. As a result of it none of them are capable of love in the trust sense of the term. The present novel *Unless* is a quest for self identity by Norah, the main character of the novel facing an identity crisis. She confronts with various alternatives. Firstly, Norah has to face and overcome at her work place. In her company 'Seymour Surveys' all responsible and respectable sites are engaged by men and is not obtainable to her. Norah's soon perceives that she is factually and metaphorically fascinated. She comments that her company is covered like an ice-creams and witch with three floors; the upper outside, the inconsequential outside and her section the gooey layer in the central point.

The central character in this novel Norah, the tormented daughter, picks denial via recoil. She was gifted, industrious and receptive and has a boyfriend, a place at university but unaffectionate sisters, two cunning nice and unhappily married parents. This set-up, presented with Shields' typical genuineness as commendably usual, may hit pessimistic or desirous readers as just a bit too goody-goody to be true. The family's un happiness seems to cut them off from recognising the dilemma of the less providential – a fact anxious in the conclusion. Norah believes that the marriage is essential in the life and also that it is maintained by adjustment, but gradually she realizes that only wives have to adjust. In *Unless* Norah struggles with her self-identity and seems behind her mind and begin to 'find' her. As soon she knows that her boy friend Duncan is a ·exploiter and gets insight into the fact of her association with him.

Norah is not an angry with Duncan's behaviour instead she is slightly reassured because she knows her association with him but with Peter she is confused about his personality and his motives. Norah feels that a woman's main smear worth in the marriage depends upon her lovely representation. Norah thinks that Peter has his aptitude to get through her in a cultured way and he has a strong motive to reverse her individuality. He is expecting her understand the roles of a conventional wife and mother. Norah does not want to be trapped in a attractive, unimaginary and artificial life" where her uniqueness and independence are likely to be compacted. Norah realizes that her destiny is to be another bubbles woman after marrying Peter. Her future image is clear to her and she *recognizes* her own self, a tiny two-dimensional small figure in a red dress, posed like a paper woman in a mail order catalogue, turn-off and optimistic flutter in the white unfilled space.

In explore the world of childhood and female friendship, Carol Shields broke new ground. The world of eight to twelve year-old girls had never been examined so methodically and

with such unwavering insight. It intricately examines the relationship between children and women develop with all the distance conflict, sensation and politics that accompany rising up. Girls emergent up are theoretical to recognize with mothers, but also have to work out how to divide. Since there's no clear symbol of disparity obtainable, as with fathers, they have to find one for our self. This procedure is distinguished by love and hate, all diverse up so randomly that it can feel easier to reject uncertainty and plump for ones feeling.

The present novel *Unless* embodies numerous voice arise out of her belong to a diverse biological land and her association with a precise edifying circumstances and because of being a female, these voices are instantaneous and state of each other. The novel is structured like a journey in which through her alliance with numerous masculine and woman connections and friends, Norah sees and evaluate diverse ways of thoughtful conditions and it means to be a woman and this gives the volume of the excellence of the novel of information. The various alternatives before Norah is a systematically dramatize in a sequence of scene, which are well incorporated to compose the major achievement of the novel.

Norah desires to dispose of all home comforts, drop out of college, and ditch boyfriend. She sits pleading on a Toronto sidewalk, and sleeps in her hostel before marriage. She declines to speak her friends at the time of frustration. She wears a cardboard sign around her neck that says "Goodness". Her family, who appointment her with contributions of food and clothing, don't understand where their sweet Norah has gone.

Carol Shields' novels have forever distinguished the heroes and heroines who can communicate grace, love and humour while raising children and coping with all life's ups and downs. Her dream can seem too comfortable, still soppy, her faith in goodness too unrealistic. Her female protagonists never get angry. Secondary characters, loud-mouthed feminist career women, do that. But this time, Shields invents a heroine forced to discard her doubt of feminism and sneak towards it, learning to ask questions about social keeping out and human open-mindedness.

Reta, Norah's mother and the novel's first-person writer has avoided the conflicts that beset many modern women by believing that self-accomplishment means selfishness; neglecting her loved ones. A writer who has forever kept her work on the back-burner, she appears to live out the fairy tale of the good quality wife and mother. Rita Norah's mother didn't give time for herself. Norah doesn't like that type of life. She wants to be independent. So, she has fallen into writing almost by evasion, fitting it in around the housework, producing first translations of other women's memoirs, then entertaining anthology, finally a hilarious novel. Irritating as she is, because she doesn't take her writing seriously, Reta elicits our kindness. We witness her clearly observing how she has accepted male notions of

femaleness; how male writers certainly do not respect female writers such as her. Aided, perhaps, by Norah's sign, she is strained to about turn her notions of good features.

Norah's distress is finally situated in a painful occasion originate at a secure detachment from her family. A suitable conspire device enables her to return home. She always try to keep self identity. She encounters a mother who has never supposed in the out for the count, or in oppression, but who does now know she must listen to herself as well as to her daughter. This is Carol Shields' most attractive novel to blind day.

Most of the novels of Carol shields satisfied with the topic of persecution and endurance, the part of cultural life of Canada and actively connect with effort that are not just national concerns but are also the social, political and traditional issues that will settle on the survival of their country. Norah's suffering is finally located in a distressing event originate at a safe reserve from her family. Not only in Canada, are many countries, women facing problems to their survival in their societies.

The essence of the novel, mediated largely via thoughts and spoken words, rarely takes the form of controlled sentences. Instead the narrative is pepper with theatrical questions, semi-repetitions and half- sentences: it also jumps without warning from present to past and far past, all of which add verisimilitude and liveliness.

Shields's system draws attention to the living properties of language but there also exists an unenthusiastic and freezing aspect of its power, words are the cause of Denver's deafness in order not to hear the answer that she dreads, she closes herself off from all sound.

A superficial review of Carol shields fiction shows that she prefers to depict of women who make clear-cut theatrical choices. She is clearly anxious with the position of power that exerts physical, political, economical and social control over woman to portion her. In her novels she proves that women are better managers than men.

In her novels Carol shield poses all present day feministic solutions and rejects them honestly. Her protagonists learn through their experiences that imitating male attitudes do not lead them towards a complete and distinguished life. They are forced to rethink and re-evaluate their decisions and choices.

Conclusion:

The present novel *Unless* is a work of a writer Norah, who is not only in full command of her substance and a versatile moderator. Carol shields in *Unless* does not adopt a radical posture as a feminist and hold men alone responsible for the overthrow and inferiorization of women. Marriage and motherhood as they exist in a patriarchal society are shown to be delimiting and unequal as far as women are worried. Women like Norah, allowing them to be occupied

and browbeaten ate equally accountable for perpetuate gender related inequity. Carol Shields is a triumphant in portraying Norah's character as a humble passive and unremarkable woman to a strong distinctive and lively feminist.

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