

DEONTOLOGICAL ETHICS OF DESMOND DOSS IN BOOTON HERNDON'S REDEMPTION AT HACKSAW RIDGE

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Abstract: Redemption at Hacksaw Ridge was written by Booton Herndon. The book, which is based on the true story of American Army medic Desmond Doss during World War II, emphasizes Doss' strong moral principles, which prevented him from carrying a weapon or taking part in acts of violence. This study intends to examine the deontological ethics embodied by Doss in the book, emphasizing his moral commitments, ethically grounded decision-making, and the consequences of his actions during the conflict. Sigmund Freud's psychological theory and a qualitative approach are used in the study to pinpoint three important subtopics in Doss's character: morality, duty, and human rights. The results highlight Doss's steadfast adherence to his moral principles and personal religion despite strong peer pressure. As he carried out his front-line medic duties, he never wavered from his non-violent principles. According to the research, Desmond Doss's story from Redemption at Hacksaw Ridge offers a compelling illustration of upholding moral principles in the face of adversity. It highlights the significance of keeping moral standards in place even in the face of strong opposition, demonstrating that morality and bravery can coexist in the real world.

Keywords: *Deontological, human right, obligation, morality.*

INTRODUCTION

Literary works, broadly speaking, comprise a variety of written works, such as novels, plays, essays, poems, and short stories. These literary works capture the historical, social, and cultural values of a specific society or era in addition to the author's thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Literature plays a significant role in passing down ideas, feelings, and cultural traditions from one generation to the next. Prose, poetry, novels, and drama are a few literary forms that, according to Moge &

Ramadhani (2022), reflect the outside world and fundamentally capture the essence of human existence.

A primary attribute of literature is its imaginative and inventive quality, frequently delving into intricate subjects and conveying human feelings and experiences. A literary work typically seeks to elicit emotions or communicate a particular message to the reader or audience rather than merely imparting facts. Literary pieces can elicit strong emotional and intellectual responses by utilizing devices like metaphors, figurative language, and narrative techniques. Literary works aim to create meaningful connections and profound meaning for their readers in addition to providing information.

One of the literary works is from Booton Herndon, which in his book *Redemption at Hacksaw Ridge*, Booton Herndon relates the real-life tale of a war hero named Desmond Doss who had strong moral beliefs. Doss, an army doctor in the American Army during World War II, gained notoriety for his convictions that forbade him from carrying a weapon or using violence. At Hacksaw Ridge during the Battle of Okinawa, Doss saved about 75 lives by refusing to use weapons. Herndon's artwork captures Doss's bravery, tenacity, and dedication to saving lives without putting others in danger. According to Herndon (2016), the book depicts Doss's struggles and valiant deeds by fusing historical, dramatic, and inspirational elements.

The narrative of Desmond Doss can be connected to deontological ethical theory within the framework of *Redemption at Hacksaw Ridge*. Deontology is an ethical perspective that prioritizes obligation and conformity to recognized moral standards, disregarding results or repercussions, (Alexander & Moore 2016). According to this method, morally correct behavior should be carried out according to the duty principle rather than the desired outcome. Doss's unwavering commitment to his moral principles is demonstrated by the fact that, despite being in a violent war situation, he did not kill.

This study aims to investigate Desmond Doss's application of deontological ethical principles in *Redemption at Hacksaw Ridge*. This study primarily focuses on

Doss's application of moral principles in combat scenarios requiring decision-making and the effects of his actions on those in his immediate vicinity. This research aims to demonstrate that deontological ethics are applicable not only in extreme situations like war but also in everyday life, social interactions, and society at large by examining how the principles of deontological ethics shape Doss' actions, relationships with others, and his ultimate courage.

RESEARCH METHOD

Researchers employed qualitative research methods in this study. The qualitative method focuses on the process and on interactive events, building facts and their meaning from culture. Additionally, in cases in which the researcher is actively engaged (Somantri 2005). In this study, researchers will employ a descriptive qualitative method to address issues and carry out additional analysis. employing techniques for data collection, search, and analysis in a descriptive qualitative manner.

Data Collection

To support this study, the researcher used techniques to obtain data from library research projects. This is because the library provides most of the data. To fully understand the storyline, the author has to do these steps:

1. The writer must read the novel multiple times as the first step in this data collection technique.
2. The researcher reads the book and then annotates the sections that deal with the discussion point—that is, the novel's application of deontological ethics.
3. For additional support, the author also collected some additional information regarding the topic's discussion from a variety of e-books, research journals, and research papers.

Data Sources

The information utilized to address the research question is referred to as data. According to Runtu (2022) Griffith distinguishes between two categories of evidence that are pertinent to literary analysis: primary sources, which are the literary works themselves, and secondary sources, which are viewpoints and information unrelated to the original work. *Redemption at Hacksaw Ridge*, a book written by Booton Herndon that chronicles the life of Desmond Doss a man who lived by strong moral principles is the main source for this study. As a medic in World War II, Doss abstained from carrying a weapon in favor of tending to the injuries of both the enemy and his injured teammates. He stuck to his moral principles in spite of the difficulties. Extra information was gathered from publications on the internet, books, and journals.

Data Analysis

In order to fully understand *Redemption at Hacksaw Ridge*'s plot, characters, and difficulties faced by the protagonist, the author first reads the book several times while making notes on key passages and pertinent information from reviews and other sources. After emphasizing significant events through character development, the author uses Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory which splits the human psyche into the id, ego, and superego to address the goals of the study. The author synthesizes the data and analysis using an intrinsic approach that is exclusively focused on the novel in order to reach thorough conclusions that are grounded in the psychoanalytic framework.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study focuses on Desmond Doss's deontological ethics in the book *Redemption at Hacksaw Ridge*, which is based on a real-life World War II incident. It examines Doss's choices, which went against the law and had far-reaching effects. Doss's actions, in spite of being bullied and refusing to carry or use weapons in

combat, emphasize the value of unity in the face of divergent viewpoints. His decisions demonstrate the need for us to defend humanity by acting morally and with good intentions. Doss serves as a reminder of the importance of understanding one another, the freedom to express one's thoughts, and the duty to coexist in harmony with moral principles in society.

These results are a compilation of student test scores, ranging from pretest results prior to treatment to posttest results following application of the Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) method. According to this data, using the LRD method with narrative texts has improved students' reading comprehension abilities. The pre- and post-tests each had twenty multiple-choice items, according to the researcher. A baseline was set by the pre-test, and the LRD method was used to conduct the post-test. Scores have improved, indicating the efficacy of the LRD method. As you can see from the table below, the intervention significantly improved the students' reading comprehension skills.

Human Rights

According to Freud, Id has the trait of constantly seeking out instant gratification of his desires without taking reality or consequences into consideration. As it is mentioned that the characters have rights in relation to her needs, he believes that it is his right to do something, which drives his needs. No one should violate the moral rights that are inalienable to every individual. This is an unalienable, universal right. Kant highlighted the value of treating people with dignity and refraining from using them as a tool to further personal agendas (Kant 1785).

Everyone has the freedom to think, act, and draw conclusions for themselves and for other people in life and in a nation. Gender equality is a concept that was developed in Indonesia in relation to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That proclamation stated that every human being is equal and free at birth. The declaration is cited in relation to the equal rights for men and women (Ibrahim et al., 2021). This

demonstrates that everyone has the freedom and right to live their life according to the laws that apply to them.

The ability to make decisions empowers people or organizations to select courses of action in accordance with their goals and preferences. Desmond was a young Adventist who reserved his love for his future bride and had never pursued a romantic relationship. When he was 22, he went on Dorothy Schutte's first date. He had a job in a shipyard and was comfortable with his used car before he enlisted in the army. Freud's theory of the "id" postulates that human behavior is motivated by fundamental needs. Desmond's behavior demonstrates this, striking a balance between his religious convictions and the primal instincts that govern survival and human decision-making.

Desmond Doss's to live takes over in a wartime scenario, rendering him incapable of controlling his behavior. When Desmond Doss heard his friend tell him to take it easy on the task, he lost all control over his wrath.

"Take it easy".

"How can you take it easy up here?"

(Page 108)

Even though he was a devout man, Desmond complained about being unsatisfied several times during his first combat experience at Hacksaw Cliff. Desmond Doss started to question his actions in this scenario, feeling as though he had regretted reporting for duty.

" why am I doing this?"

"I not Hungry"

(Page 108)

Doss argues that he has the right to defend his own choices, even if they don't agree with other people or seem unreasonable. Despite their differences, he shows the significance and impact of his distinct personal decisions. For example, when he

was younger and saw someone in need of a donation, Desmon gave blood without hesitation.

"It was Desmond's blood, and his only, which matched that of the ill woman. He was only a skinny boy in his early teens, but the patient's condition was critical, and he offered his blood without hesitation. After giving it, he got off the table on which he had been lying and had to grab a hatrack to keep from falling to the floor"

(page 27)

Desmond Doss attempts to clarify in this quotation that he is not a conscientious objector someone who abstains from all military service by saying that he is not against war. Rather, he would have rather been referred to as a "cooperator" who served his country in a different capacity. He declares his intention to enlist in the military but adamantly declines to kill due to his moral convictions.

"I'm not a conscientious objector," he said. "I'm willing to serve. What I am is a noncombatant."

(Page 28)

As a Seventh-day Adventist, Saturday is observed as a Sabbath day, and Doss upholds this belief. He frequently requested permission to worship on that day, which occasionally led to conflict with his coworkers and superiors. Under military pressure, Doss fought for his freedom to practice his faith. He continued to adhere to the tenets of his faith, which included abstaining from the use of weapons and keeping Sabbath services open, in spite of numerous obstacles and discrimination. In the end, Doss's beliefs were respected by the military, even though there was initial resistance. He was given permission to serve as a medic without a weapon and to observe Shabbat worship.

"I believe that God will work out a way for me to go to church". Private Doss told the chaplain."

(Page 90)

Doss requested permission to pray before they entered combat, and their superiors granted his request before they ascended the cliff.

"This is going to be a dangerous mission, Doss," Gornto told him. "You don't have to go." "I feel I should, lieutenant," Desmond said. "I may be needed. But, lieutenant, I'd like to ask a favor before we go."

Desmond Doss's senior officers even suggested that he resign and go home, but he refused because he had the right to participate in training to go to war, and in this particular incident, he refused to use the weapon that his trainer had given him. The incidents that occurred to Desmond Doss during boarding training until the day of the battle demonstrated that the character was attacked and bullied by dishonest colleagues. This demonstrates the character's freedom to uphold his morals and convictions.

Obligation

Desmond Doss's id guides his ego, which enables him to make decisions that are consistent with his moral principles and his desire to fulfill his religious obligation to abstain from killing. Deontological ethics emphasizes duties grounded in unwavering moral principles and evaluates deeds according to their compliance to norms rather than their effects. According to Freud, the ego helps people navigate reality by striking a balance between moral obligations and self-interest. Behavior that is motivated by a sense of duty or by personal interests is influenced by both ego and obligations.

Even though his coworkers were constantly taunting him with derogatory remarks and vulgar yells from the barracks, it is evident that Desmond Doss was performing his religious duties. Despite this, he continued to pray.

"Hey, look at the preacher!" Somebody shouted above the racket. "He's prayin!"

(Chapter 20)

Since he was a young child, Desmond Doss has had a strong sense of responsibility. In the eighth grade, Doss was unable to finish his education and had to assist his father in his job to support the family. And after he learned Mrs. Ketterman's philosophy, his sense of responsibility was ingrained in him.

"If a job is worth doing,, it's worth doing right" She tell him.

(Chapter 29)

Doss rushed to fulfill his duty as a medical soldier who cared for his comrades on the battlefield when his colleague fainted, his body swaying and his pulse barely throbbing from training. At that moment, Doss assumed responsibility for his comrades as a medical soldier.

" Can you doing anything for this?" He asked.

" I'll sure try" Desmond said.

(Chapter 41)

Despite working, Doss fulfilled his responsibilities, which included not working on the Sabbath and telling his boss the truth about not finishing his work because it was getting close to the Sabbath. He didn't even show up on Saturday to pick up his pay and finish the work that day. Additionally, during their meal together, Desmond shared that he is an obedient person who tithes and doesn't smoke.

"that's all right Tom," the boss said . "Finish it up Monday. Your money will be ready when you finish."

" God took care of things in His own way , and it all worked out just right."

" You sent ten percent of your paycheck to your Church. You wouldn't smoke a cigarette or take a drink if your life depended on it. You won't even eat a pork chop!"

(Chapter 43/44)

Page 45 describes how Desmond Doss and Dorothy performed their own worship or service in the cow pasture after he and Dorothy's superiors denied them permission to attend church on the Sabbath.

"if you give me the slightest provocation, Doss," the major said. "I'll have you court-martialed."

(Chapter 45)

It is evident that Lieutenant Gornto, Desmond's superior, assigned him the task of assisting them in creating a symbolic rope that would allow them to reach the top of the cliff.

"You were pretty good with knots back in mountain training," Gornto recalled.

"How about helping us secure these nets to the top of the cliff?"

"Yes sir," Desmond said

(Chapter 99)

"Sir, I believe that prayer is the biggest lifesaver there is. I believe every man should have a word of prayer before he put his food on the road ladder to go up that cliff."

(Chapter 99)

During the battle, Desmond ran into the cave to get to his injured comrades and helped his colleagues who had been hit by Japanese grenades. He also asked his fellow soldiers to shield him from Japanese fire.

"Don't stop now! Desmond shouted back to his men. "Keep 'em coming!"

"Cover me!" Desmond shouted to a pair of infantry men inching their way forward behind him.

(Chapter 103)

One of the medical officer's colleagues advised him not to give it too much thought when the officer was told to report back to work, but that's when Desmond became enraged and argued with his colleague about not undervaluing their responsibilities as medical officers.

"Take it easy."

"How can you take it easy up here?" Desmond said to him

"How can you take it easy up here?" Desmond demanded. He was actually angry. "You go back to battalion aid station, and you tell them that I said you are in no fit condition to be up here. If the doctor wants to see me about it, I'll come back and talk to him. But don't you come back up here. You understand?"

Morality

Moral behavior is obligated to all people equally and universally. According to Freud, the superego stands in for the conscience and helps people discriminate between good and wrong. Morality and the superego both assist individuals in acting morally and in accordance with their conscience.

When Desmond was threatened with termination for failing to adhere to training at the seventh heart, he stood up for his moral convictions.

"You say my work is satisfactory," he said, "so the only grounds you have for my discharge is my keeping the Sabbath. I'd be a very poor Christian to accept a discharge implying that I was mentally off purely because of my religion.

(Chapter 49)

On the seventh day, Desmond persuaded his commander to forego training as a means of defending his moral convictions.

"Desmond paused for breath. "Sir," he said softly, "please believe me. I know that if I keep God's commandments, He will give me wisdom and understanding equal to those who receive training on His holy day."

(Chapter 49)

Desmond's friends and commander wagered that within 30 days, the commander would force Desmond to carry or hold a weapon, but Desmond stuck to his moral conviction of abstaining from weaponry.

"You know I don't approve of gambling, sergeant," Desmond said. "I don't want either one of you to lose. But I'm not going to carry a gun."

(Chapter 50)

Desmond was met with hostility and intimidation when he joined Lieutenant Walter G. Cosner's team, but he persisted in his moral conviction to abstain from carrying a weapon.

"The lieutenant was out to make him either take the weapon or be court-martialed"

"I'm sorry, sir," Doss said, "but according to my religious convictions, I cannot bear arms."

(Chapter 51)

When his colleague asked Desmond to pray for him, he declined because Doss was not a priest; however, his colleague still asked for Desmond's prayers because his colleague was already a priest and the priest's solution was to drink. Desmond was observed praying for one of his colleagues in the barracks who frequently bullied him. That's why he asked Doss to pray for him, and even though Doss frequently mistreated him, Doss still followed through on his actions because of his morals.

"Why come to me? I'm no chaplain."

"I will," the medic promised, "but you've got to pray for yourself." "I dunno how. But when I get back to the States I'm gonna start going to church." Desmond reached out and clutched his arm. "You can't wait that long!"

"We don't have that kind of insurance. You've got to begin now."

"There are lots of men with religion here. Listen. The Lord can help you to live for what you know to be right. He will help you just as He has been helping me. You've got to make up your mind to prepare to meet your Maker in case your time should come."

"It's always rough," Desmond answered. "But with God's help we'll do all right."

(Chapter 99)

Desmond was sensitive to his colleague's feelings when he saw him beginning to lose hope on the battlefield in front of them, but he nevertheless encouraged his colleague who was beginning to lose hope.

He used to be one of his coworkers who tormented him in the barracks. Desmond's confidence in himself did not waver.

"I can't go any longer. My luck's run out. You can say I'm sick. You got to send me back."

But Doss couldn't approve "There's nothing the matter with you," he said. "stop talking like that. Pull yourself together and you'll be alright."

(Chapter 107)

CONCLUSION

"Redemption at Hacksaw Ridge" is a novel that chronicles the life of Desmond Doss, a medic in the United States Army who fought without using a weapon during World War II, emphasizing deontological ethics. Doss shows how moral choices can make a big difference even in times of war with his unwavering adherence to his moral convictions, especially when it comes to his refusal to carry a weapon because of his Adventist faith. Doss carried out his responsibilities while standing by his convictions in spite of criticism from his superiors and peers. Because he saved lives without taking any, his story encourages us to consider our own moral principles and demonstrates that goodness can exist without resorting to violence.

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