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“Sticks” Essay Topic Proposal

The story “Sticks” was a very meaningful and symbolic story. “Sticks” is a story full of love yet so depressing at the same time. The story shows how death can impact one’s self, and the way they interact with the environment, including other people. The father would decorate a pole in his yard and his children couldn’t understand it. The father would be very rigid and stern with his children, however so loving and caring for the pole. Imagine being the neighbor to this pole and seeing a man decorating a pole in his yard. In my essay I will evaluate the father through many perspectives.

Throughout society, we have seen how masculinity has been pushed on men so much. Throughout a societal view, men are pushed to be dominant, and insensitive. Men who show emotion are considered to be weak. In “Sticks” the father would be very rigid with his children, but so very gentle with the pole. The pole was a reflection of him and the complexity of his life.

In terms of a literary perspective, the father is very creative and meaningful. The pole he decorated has so much imagery within it. An example would be the cross. In Christianity, the cross represents the death of Christ, and the redemption of man. How ironic is it that the father dies, with the last message of the pole being that his children forgive him? The pole is also descriptive of his the different components of his life. From a societal view, it’s just a pole. From a literary view, the pole is a work of art.

In conclusion, with “Sticks” being such a short story is was very powerful, and meaningful. In the end the father dies and the children throw away the pole. From the children’s perspective, is the father forever dead to them? As a kid, how would you feel if your father showed more affection to a nonliving object more than his own flesh and blood?