

Tribhuvan University

Critique of Normalcy in Indra Sinha's *Animal's People*

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**Letter of Recommendation**

Mr. Parbin Jnawali has completed his thesis entitled "Critique of Normalcy in Indra Sinha's *Animal's People*" under my supervision. He carried out his research from 2069/12/01 B.S. to 2071/12/15 B.S. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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**Approval Letter**

This thesis entitled "Critique of Normalcy in Indra Sinha's *Animal's People*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Mr. Parbin Jnawali has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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## **Abstract**

This research taking the insight from disability studies, examines how Indra Sinha's *Animal's People* subverts the idea of normalcy and disability. This research analyses why Sinha gives a normal human attributes to the disabled narrator in the novel. Endowing the protagonist, Animal, with normal human characteristics, sexual, economic and social agency and making him as competent as normal human being *Animal's People* subverts the traditional concept of disability and normalcy.

Disability is rather a social construction. Negation of disabled social participation and stereotypical representation of disability marginalizes the disabled. However, social acceptance of disabled as the normal human being and positive representation of them helps to erase the fallacy of disability.

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## **I. *Animal's People* as Critique of Normalcy**

This thesis examines how Indra Sinha's *Animal's People* questions the 'normal' people's assumption of disabled. 'Normal' people assume the disabled to be 'other'. They believe that disability is a personal problem. Disabled people are supposed to be dull, childlike, dependent, ignorant and passive. However, *Animal's People* contradicts the 'normal's' assumptions through disabled narrator, who explores the similarities between disabled and so called normal people. In addition to that, providing social participation to the disabled, it counters the stereotypical images of disabled and devises new method of representing the disabled.

Disability is a social construction. The social attitude plays vital role in defining the course of disability. The social attitude influences the disabled's participation in society and thereby the gradual effacement of the stereotypical images of disabled. Social acceptance has positive impact on disabled lives whereas social rejection relegates them to margin. *Animal's People* documenting two lives of Animal that of social rejection and of social acceptance familiarizes the misconception about disability. As disabled are similar human being social attitude influences their identity. Social recognition as similar human being has positive impact on their lives.

*Animal's People* is a story of a disabled person's social experience. The disabled narrator, named Animal, narrates his social experience. Animal has bitter experiences before his meeting with local leader Zafar. People abuse and laugh at him due to his twisted back. They treat him like an animal. He is orphan and peerless. As people ridicule him he has no social involvement. His social participation is limited to begging and his social activity is stretched to scavenging.

However his daily activities change after meeting with local leader Zafar. Unlike other villagers Zafar treats him as human being. The job of informant not only

increases his social involvement but also his other capabilities comes to fore. Animal desires to marry Nisha. And he makes good relationship with American doctor and helps her to integrate in society so that his yearning to walk gets fulfilled. He cares for old crazy nun as mother. Animal shows the maturity stopping the furious crowd to burn down the factory. Besides, he shows the capacity to learn and human compassion.

Animal's story provides an opportunity to observe significance of social attitudes in disabled lives. Negative attitude makes disabled living experience worst. They not only make disabled vulnerable to social injustice but also their sense of self suffers negatively. However positive attitude helps disabled to integrate in society. Moreover, Animal's story weakens the stereotypical images of disabled and makes a point that is 'normal' and disabled are similar human being. His story counters the misconceptions about disability.

Since its publication *Animal's People* has received numerous reviews. Some are concerned with writing technique of the novel and some are with the subject matter of the novel. Reading the technical aspect of the novel a critic writes:

Sinha's novel struggles against readerly co-optation even as paradoxically perhaps, its protagonist desperately seeks to make room for presumably foreign ideal readers. It is with an eye toward this tension between resistance and accommodation that *Animal's People* might be read as a sustained attempt to articulate the limitation of laughter in postcolonial context and in so doing, to suggest new models for intercultural reading. (Snell 45)

*Animal's People* making troubled relationship with reader makes reader aware that reading practices should observe the power relationship as these power

relationships shape the meanings and understanding of the text. Animal presenting itself as an abject creates horror in the reader and with bawdy language creates laughter only to show the corporate injustice and governmental negligence and uneven power that shapes the lives of the Khaufpurian. Similarly another critic is also attentive towards this problematic relationship between text and reader. However, the critic purposes different interpretation of this troubled relationship between text and reader and writes:

The text refuses to establish a relationship between a subaltern narrator and a comparatively socioeconomically privileged reader that would enable the reader to engage in literary humanitarianism. It reminds the reader that “the people of the Apokalis” (366). The poor people the reader does not usually see who are impacted by politically situated, corporate violence will not fade into oblivion beneath the chemical vapour from which they emerged in this narrative. (Rickel 102)

Rickel argues that text refusing to establish the relation between reader and narrator objects certain way of reading the book. Literary humanitarianistic act of reading depoliticize the suffering of “the people of Apokalis” (366). The acts of reading do not bring any changes in the lives of the people but the legal action against culprit brings changes in the life of the Khaufpurian. The literary humanitarian assumption of suffering as trauma and reader and narrator’s relationship as testifier and witness to trauma relives the suffering is questioned here. The political aspect of suffering can not be reduced to literary humanitarianism because of its depoliticizing nature. Suffering of the people will not evaporate easily by the acts of reading as we can not negate existence of power dynamics that eludes the quest of justice.

Another critic in tune with Snell and Rickel observes the technical aspect of the novel. “Animal’s People adamantly refuse to neutralize pain and suffering, but rather uses it to spark a fiery confrontation with corporate and racial inequality” (Bezan 101). *Animal’s People* is a text that is engaged in political activities. It refuses to neutralize the pain but uses it as weapon to fight against the inequality. It does not neutralize pain and suffering but through pain and suffering demonstrates the economic inequality. The economic inequality is an attribute of neoliberal order. Reading *Animal’s People* from the Marxist perspective another critic writes:

His novel gives focus to three of the defining characteristics of the contemporary neoliberal order: first, the widening chasm- within and between nations- that separates the mega- rich from destitute; second, the attendant burden of unsustainable ecological degradation that impacts the health and livelihood of the poor most directly; third, the Way, under cover of a free market of free market ideology, powerful transnational corporations exploit the lopsided universe of deregulation. (Nixon 445)

Neoliberalism exploits the people by creating gap between human beings. Due to neoliberal ideology richer are getting richer and poorer are getting poorer and this is not limited only on national level but also to the international level. Similarly neoliberal ideology empower to International Corporation to exploit the weak nation using the cover of free market. The desire of making profit and exploitation hampers the poor with environmental degradation where poor are obliged to live due to inability of mobilization. But another critic goes against the claims of Nixon claiming that this novel parodies the reality. For him,

*Animal's People* is not realist, but rather it mocks the claims of the authenticity and realism by offering a picaresque parody of these claims. It constantly plays with the reality of the environment and its sociocultural entanglements, and it repeatedly emphasizes the readerly share in constructing realism at the cost of unheard voices of the poor and of animality in general. (Baratosch 17)

Baratosch questions the claims of realism. The novel regularly invites reader to create own version of the realism, showing different version of reality. *Animal's People* parodies the claims of realism. Protagonist of the novel tells his own version of reality.

Despite the wide range of analyses, none of the critic, however, is aware of Animal's physical deformity and social response to it. His twisted body and people's response to it shapes his attitude towards self and the world. Animal's story throws the light on disabled people's struggle in society to live as human being. In addition to that this story demonstrates that disabled people are as capable as normal are if they are provided with equal opportunity.

In order to analyze this argument, arguments from disability studies seem relevant. Disabilities studies provide the explanation to Animal's struggle to live as human being. It gives insight to his continuous struggle with the self and social mistreatment due to his twisted body. Sinha's focus on Animal's sexuality and his fading anger to the world and people is better understood with disability approach. In addition to that, disability studies help to understand Sinha's distinct method of representation.

Disability is social construction, social attitudes influences the disabled access to social activities. People perceive disabled negatively. They consider disability "as a

form of pollution, evidence of sin. Disable people have been considered divine punishment or, alternatively, the result of witches spells” (Hubbard 188). Social attitude can impact disability in both way positively or negatively. Social acceptance positively influences disabled lives whereas social rejection makes disabled social experience worst. Social rejection of disabled in long run produces a sort of stigmatization.

Social position of people having stigma is very low. Social treatment of person having stigma is fatalistic. People do not view disabled person as human being and are insensitive to them. They justify their worst treatment with difference in appearance. Goffman claims, stigmatization erases the human identity of disabled. He writes,

Person with stigma is not quite human, on this assumption we exercise varieties of discrimination, through which...reduce his life chances. We construct stigma theory, an ideology to explain his inferiority and account for danger he represents, sometimes rationalizing an animosity based on other differences, such as those of social class. We use specific term crippled, bastard, and moron in our daily discourses. (Goffman 205)

The human status of stigmatized person is compromised. He is discounted as human and subjected to discrimination. People perceive stigmatized person as a threat to society and morally legitimize the discrimination. As an outcast in social arena person with stigma is inferior and people derogate such person. Moreover to prove the inferiority of the stigmatized person people produce various theories.

People create the stereotypical images of stigmatize person as dependent, monster, dull, burden, sinner ignoring the other positive aspect. “Stigma as a form of

negative stereotyping has a way of neutralizing positive qualities and undermining the identity of stigmatize individual” (Coleman 222). People’s negligence to positive qualities and negation of stigmatized person’s identity renders stigmatize person to emblem of negativity. They are simply “non- existence or dead” (226). They become invisible in society.

Body is the center of disability discourse. It not only related to disabled concept of the self but also to the definition of disability. “... disability is ... seen as bodily inadequacy” (Thomson 282). The idea of bodily insufficiency generates negativity towards the body in question. People perceive such bodies as flaw or lack and sometimes illness. The idea of defective body creates fears among people. And such body is restricted from society. They are institutionalized and left on the shoulder of medical profession. Society has refused to have responsibility.

Further, body matters to disabled person too. It is intricately related to disabled self. Disabled perception towards their body influences their self. If they think their body as attractive it helps to have positive self. However disabled person internalize the social aversion towards the body. As social being they can not remain outside the social influence and internalize the social aversion to own body.

Disability is defined against the norm. Thus the concept of norm can throw light upon the devaluation of disabled body. Norm is defined as ideal and “average ... becomes ... ideal” (12). And average has suddenly possessed with greatness. “an individual who epitomized... all the qualities of the average man, would represent at once all the greatness, beauty and goodness of that being” (Davis 12). All the positivity is associated with average. People below the average and above the average are considered as deviation. And all the negativity is attributed to such deviated body.

Such bodies are thought as defective body. Disabled body do not conform the average and is considered negatively.

However the idea of norm fluctuates. There is no uniformity in idea as it differ accordance to time and place. The idea of norm is constantly changing. Any idea or thing once considered norm changes over time. Once burning of married women alive with corpse of her husband is considered normal. But now this is barbaric act. No sane community does such practice. “The grotesque permeated culture and signified common humanity, whereas the disabled body, a later concept, was formulated as by definition excluded from culture, society and norm” (Davis 11). Changes in the meaning of grotesque over period of time indicate the nature of norm. Once having top of the hierarchy, the concept grotesque relegates into lower status. Further, even if it is assumed that time and place which changes meaning of norm, stop at a point, the meaning of norm differ. At present norm is understood as average. And it is difficult to define average. Average is a concept of almost not fixed idea. Thus idea of norm is indefinable. David Pfeiffer defines norm in similar manner. For him,

...what is the normal way to cover a mile ...? Some people would walk. Some people would ride a bicycle or a bus or in a taxi or their own car. Others would use a skate board or in line roller blades. Some people use wheelchairs. There is, I argue, no normal way to travel a mile. (qtd. in Kaplan 355)

Norm is indefinable. Nothing can be considered as normal. It depends upon the definer. Every individual defines norm differently. Norm does not denote anything. Then the disability is also indefinable. Anyone can be disabled. For person using wheelchair all other person can be disabled as other can not use wheelchair as smoothly as the person using wheelchair can do. Disability is thus social construction

that focuses on the idea of average. Person not conforming to the average is discriminated in society. The discourse of norm is produced and reproduced negatively stereotyping disabled person. It is effectively done by institutionalizing the notions and stereotypes of disability through literature.

As people have very little or no knowledge about disabled person they are stereotyped. “The attitude that disabled people are frightening or inhuman results from lack of meaningful interaction with disabled people” (Saxton 108). The negativity towards the people with disability is prevalent in society due to disabled absence in society. As disabled people are absent in society people do not have first hand experience with disabled. People then move to other indirect sources and literature is the one that provides the information. Nonetheless literature filled with biased normative discourse imparts the biased knowledge.

Literature is proliferation of so called normal people’s ideology. Their ideology is guided with negativity towards disabled. ‘Normal’ people can not tolerate the disabled people. This intolerance is manifested in their aversion towards disability. In fictional world too, normal makes disability invisible. They either accept by normalizing them or by denying the voices to disabled character. Normal can not accept disabled as they are. In cultural production disabled people’s identity is negotiated. They are presented symbolically, their outward appearance as symbol of their inner character. When a character has squint eye his perspective is also skewed. So Davis argues that so called normal people determines the fate of disabled. He says,

Hippolyte’s disability is in fact ability, one which he relies on, and from which he gets extra horsepower, as it were. But although Hippolyte is more than capable, the operation must be performed to bring him back to the human and away from the equine, which the first

syllable of his first name suggests. To have disability is to be an animal. To be part of other. (Davis 20)

Disabled people are victim of autocracy of normal. Normal does not want the existence of other who is different from their expectation. Normal do not bother certain thinking of normal be beneficial for other or not. Sigmund Freud idea of literature as manifestation of unconscious desire of the writer gives wider understanding of the disable's representation in literature. Normal's intolerance of disability is so that normal without considering the benefit of disable tries to bring them into the position suitable for human. In cultural production disable are devisible either through normalization or through denying voices. Disable character is rarely centrally represented because it is "unusual for a main character to be person with disabilities (Davis 21). Normal people has opinion that disable character is not suitable in the leading role rather he is suitable for marginal role.

Moreover the normal's assumption of disability as 'other' has created the various problems in the lives of disable. Limiting disability to functional aspect, normal has created discourses aiming at making disability invisible. Normal's assumption of disability is faulty as it is bias towards the disable people. From the wrong position normal has approached the disable person. Though they are different from normal on the regard of appearance and capabilities, they are not different and threat to normal but they are human being like normal whose human qualities are invisible under the normal's reproachful attitude.

This research is divided into three parts as introduction, textual analysis and conclusion. Introduction reviews the literature related to *Animal's People* and provides the point of departure along with the basic insight to disability. Second chapter is textual analysis of the novel. It is roughly divided into three parts. Firstly it

deals how negative social attitude erases the real identity of disabled and its impacts on the self. Second part deals with how social acceptance enhances the real identity of disabled. Disabled need opportunity and they can show that they are equal as 'normal' are. Third part is related to literary representation of disabled. How Sinha's representation of disabled challenges the traditional method of representation and as a whole creates space for disabled. The third chapter is conclusion. It concludes the findings of the research.

## II. The Reality and Misconceptions of Disability

This research examines how Indra Sinha's *Animal's People* critiques the traditional notion of normalcy and disability. By demonstrating disability as social pathology and demonstrating 'normal' and disabled similar human being traditional notions of disability and normalcy is questioned here. By devising new method of representation it questions the ideology of normalcy that is induced with negativity towards the disabled.

*Animal's People* is Animal's meditation on his lived experiences. He thinks whether his life is good or bad and tells all about himself. He desperately wants to shake off the animal status that comes with his name though he embraces the name Animal defensively. Living with old nun engrossed in apocalyptic visions, Animal actively participates in social activities. Besides he has sexual desires and he openly admits that. People make fun of his sexuality. Further they mistreat him as his body is twisted. However his anger towards the world fades away as people accept him as human being. Social acceptance has positive impact on his attitude towards world and the self.

Social attitude defines the course of disability. And social attitude towards disabled is negative. People perceive disabled as lesser form of life and treat accordingly. The social perception as lesser form erases the disabled real identity. "Deaf are always rewritten as lacking, soulless or primitive," (Nelson and Bernes 69) disabled are always perceived negatively. "An inability to speak went in hand in hand with [...] stupidity" (Edwards 35). People's response to deaf people is evident how social perception erases the real identity of disabled. People relate the ability to speak to ability to reason. And thus disabled or deaf people are identified according to the assumption of so called 'normal' people. Disabled people's real identity is shadowed

under presumed identity. As a social being disabled cannot escape from the social influence. Domination of assumed identity makes the enhancement of real identity harder.

Animal, the presumed identity is dominant over human, the real identity. People perceive him as an animal. Name, the identity marker is replaced here. His twisted body resembles the animal body and people call him Animal. Moreover, the name Animal implies that the subject is not human. He narrates, “I had a human name” (123). Now the human name is erased and replaced with Animal. Though he knows he has “human name”, marker of his human status, he is unable to remember the name. Animal says “I used to be human once I have been told” (1). This suggests that the identity of human is gone and heresy points to the dominance of the presumed identity.

Animal publically accepts his human status which is irritating for some people to them he replies to them saying “I’m Animal why? By my choice or because others named me and treated me like one” (209). Animal’s reply illustrates that Animal has not taken the name as his choice but it is the social choice. Social ill treatment has compelled him to erase the real identity and embrace the given identity. Here the social identity is dominant over real identity. To live in society disabled have to surrender to assumed identity. They can no longer protest in public so Animal publically accepts the assumed identity.

People form ideas through appearances and naturalize the disabled body Farouq idea on the subject too demonstrates that. He says “...If a man is lame he is langada. If he’s cross-eyed he’s look –London –talk –Tokyo. These are just fucking words, call him Raju or Razaq, doesn’t change what he is” (87). These words demonstrate the people’s insensitivity towards disabled and people’s priority to

appearance. On the basis of appearance people name disabled and treat according to them. People think that the real name is insignificant. Further, social adherence to perfect body is so deep rooted that Animal prefers physical perfection. So Animal narrates, “if I agree to be human being, I’ll also have to agree that I’m wrong shaped and abnormal” (208). Only to have a sense of perfectionism Animal accepts the lower status. Erasure of identity goes beyond the naming process to denial of agency. Disabled people are denied agencies like sexual, social, economic that ‘normal’ is entitled.

Disabled people are denied sexual agency. Sexuality is taboo for many disabled people. They are deprived of any information on sexuality. They are thought to be either asexual or hypersexual. They are perceived in extreme though they are ‘normal’ sexual being. Hypersexualization and desexualization of disabled is fatalistic in relational to disabled identity. Sexual identity is too defines who they are. significant in disabled life. It is closely linked with self. “Sexuality is ... acceptance of one’s body and self-more generally” (Wilkerson 34). Sexuality means lot of things besides physical intimacy. Besides sexual capability it is sexual feelings or desires, intimacy and physical attractiveness. When disabled feel themselves physically attractive their sense of self positively changes.

Animal’s sexuality is laughing matter for people. Children tease his sexuality. As a child animal is habitual to comments like “hey Animal how do you do it” (16), “hey four legs you and your girlfriend Jara glued like this” (16). Owing to twisted body Animal’s sexuality is ridiculed. His resemblance to animal has been a source for people’s fun. Negation of his sexuality continues well till he is adolescent. People make fun of his sexuality. Animal narrates another incident where his sexual identity is ridiculed. “Farouq says look who’s got his hopes up. Just his hopes ? Ask some

other way. So then they all are laughing at me” (67), Animal narrates. In people’s eye Animal is not a candidate. People refuse to see him as candidate because of his deformed body. Social negativity to his sexuality has damaging effect on the self. He is unable to accept his self. He relates his body as obstruction to have physical contact.

Constant devaluation of Animal’s sexuality owing to his body his sexual confidence has decreased. He views himself unattractive. He is inferior to himself. He says “... if only I could stand up straight, it might be different matter...” (47). He further narrates “... everyone else would one day get married but no girl would never look at me” (47). His confidence of attracting women is lost though he is positive to some part of his body. Moreover, his confidence is so low that he cannot believe anyone could love him with their perceived imperfection. The presumed identity of asexual being compels him to lose his confidence. It only strengthens the stereotypical images of disabled as nervous only because of domination of presumed identity. The prospect of not attracting girl due to twisted body becomes so deep rooted that he wants to operate his body at any cost. He even goes to the extent to betray own people not disclosing the truth about Elli, though he does not betray them. When a girl, Anjali, discloses her desire to be with him he links it to teasing. Besides desexualization, Hypersexualization too erases the real identity of disabled.

Disabled sexuality is often exaggerated. “People with disabilities have also been regarded as hypersexual and as predators of (non disabled) children” (Wilkinsin 43). They are seen as lusty. People instantly assume disabled to be extremely sexual. Viewing disabled lustful creature negatively affects the disabled sexual identity. Hypersexualize image of disabled leads to erases the real identity of disabled.

So called normal people seems uncomfortable with Animal's sexuality. Animal's sexuality is lust for them. "Animal's lust initially drives the plot" (Missan). People confuse lust and sex. Further Animal's behaviors are irritating for them. Animal's speech is nasty as he "spouts profanity" (Missan). Missan seems uncomfortable with Animal's demonstration of sexual desire and his language. She seems unaware of the environment of Animal's upbringing. Animal joins Zafar's group to be near with Nisha. He admits that he has "feelings for Nisha" (39). The desire to be near with Nisha can not be interpreted as lust. He loves Nisha because she is the person who treated him as normal human being more. He says, "from the first she took me exactly as I was. When she called me *Janvar*, Animal, it was name nothing more. She never seemed to notice that I was crippled, nor pretend I wasn't. She was the only person who treated me as completely normal" (22). Friendly behaviors from Nisha attract him towards her. This is the human nature to feel positively about a person who cares for them. Further, Animal's definition of love clarifies the reality.

Animal distinguishes between love and sex. Sex and love are not similar for him. He narrates, "Love is different and more difficult. It has nothing to do with sex." (47) In his opinion love and sex are two distinct things and sex has no relation in love. Animal further defines love as matter of happiness in small habit or things of beloved. Animal's notion of love is enough to understand what initiates the plot. Animal's lust as Missan has argued, does not initiate the plot.

Certainly sex is one motive behind his desire for operation but primarily he wants it be accepted as human and to stop the abuses. Further animal's living environment throws lights on Animal's sexuality. In his early days, he is subjected to sexual harassment. People often talked about it and he is spectator to animals and

human's coupling. In addition to that biologically he wants to have sexual relationship and psychologically curious about it. Further, repressed things sound louder. And Animal's case is not different. To assert his sexual identity he unhesitatingly speaks about his sexual desires. He is not afraid to express his desires as expression of sexual desire is not a crime. However people are uncomfortable with Animal's sexuality as Animal talks about sexual desire openly.

Moreover, social "hammer blows that beat his humanity out of him" (219) and he has developed the mentality of tit for tat. He says, "When people know you fight back people leave you alone" (17). Animal is experienced with bitterness so he is rude to the people who tease him. People's treatment to him and Missan attitude points to the social refusal to consider him as human being.

Moreover Animal is struggling with presumed identity. Publically he accepts his presumed identity. He seems to love that identity but in reality he wants to enhance the real identity. He says "my name is Animal" (23). And due to social mistreatment he feels like animal. He says "not just what I look like but what I feel" (87). Animal not only physically but psychologically succumbs to presumed identity. However, animal tries to break away from the presumed identity. When dominant identity is dominant disabled people are subjected to discrimination. Disabled people are abused in society as people assume them to be lesser form of life. Moreover, disabled people face various problems in their life because of social attitude. Social bias makes disabled vulnerable to abuse. "Abuse is serious threat to many people with disabilities". As people do not consider disabled as human being disabled people experience the abuse in every sphere of lives. Abuse denotes "behavior that takes away someone's dignity and self worth" (Reid 1, 3). Disabled people life is "every day ordeal" (Murphy 152) for them. Disabled people fair badly in the area of physical

or psychological abuse. As disabled are rendered voiceless they are subjected to abuse. They are prone to psychological and physical abuse.

Animal has experienced physical and psychological abuse. He is sexually harassed and physically bruised. Animal narrates how Farouq used to tease him. He says to Animal “you never fucked” (223). Whenever they meet Farouq brings up the subject. He even takes Animal to brothel. He is determined to pay for Animal. He says “come on, I’ll pay for you” (234) and the reason behind the payment is the idea of fun. Farouq answers to Animal saying “fun of it” (234). His action is abusive as it questions the Animal’s sexual identity. Animal’s sexual activity is funny for Farouq. Animal narrates another incident of people making fun of his sexuality. He also narrates “...he said it was part of my education. What he’d show me I’d never forget” pointing to Farouq. To this Farouq replies “Fool can’t take a joke” (92)? Educating disabled about sexuality is good thing but in the name of teaching people sexually abuse. Disabled sexual desires are ridiculed. It has become matter of fun to ‘normal’ people. Disabled people’s dignity and respect is compromised.

Apart from psychological abuse disabled has been subjected to physical abuse. As disabled are isolated from society and having no one to stand on their behalf disabled are vulnerable to physical abuse. People do not consider disabled people’s feelings. Animal narrates “Farouq nags with foot” (68). He is so much abused that he do not expect advice or mild warnings but the worst. Further Animal expects kicks from other as he is kicked without any reason in his life. When he does mistake he expects the worst. Other way around is surprise for him. He says “Instead of shouting, catching my ear or landing a kick to the arse” (173). These examples show the extent disabled people suffer. Disabled people in every corner of lives experience physical and psychological abuse.

Animal's status is that of animal. He is compared with dog and other four footed animal. He is not human but "fourlegs" (16) to people. People view his deformity rather his humanness. He is a laughing stock for them. And his feelings are of no significance for other. He is just an animal for people. Thus his body is a place of human discrimination. His appearance matters as he walks on hand, he is merely animal for people.

His body is a place to satisfy people's anger. People kick him whenever they like. Animal narrating a police inspector's treatment says, "Fatula has hated me for years, he'd lay into me whenever he saw me on the street didn't even have to be doing anything" (121). There is no obvious reason for kicking Animal. Disabled are undesirable in social arena and Animal's experience points towards this undesirability. Without doing any thing wrong Animal is subjected to beating. In addition to that he narrates another similar incident. He says, "next thing he'd thudded a foot on my back side [...] give me my two rupees, says I'm alive landing another heavy kick" (110). Here the brutality is unmatched for the money. Beating brutally just for two rupees begs for question. And the brutality points towards the undesirability of disfigured body. People do not want to see Animal.

Moreover, Animal's experiences of harsh treatment from people points out the social attitude towards the disabled. Disabled people's self-respect or dignity is lost not because they have deformed body but because society is intolerant to such bodies. Such bodies are undesirable in social arena. People try to avoid such body. And Animal experiences the undesirability. He says "most people who talked to me just told me to fuck off" (19). People avoid such person as if they are monster or contagious disease. Disabled experience isolation in society as they are constantly

abused. Due to negative social attitude isolation becomes the destiny of disabled person.

Social unacceptability results into isolation of disabled people. The aversion and abuse makes disabled unwilling to have socialization. Disabled and non-disabled social interaction is too problematic as both parties do not know how to approach the other. Disabled and non-disabled try to avoid the social interaction. Society regards disability as the fault of the subject. People refuse to accept disabled as friend. In this regard disabled experience tells how they are ignored. "People whom I know did not look my way. And person with whom I had nodding acquaintance did not nod. They, too, busily looking of to another direction" (Murphy 134). The experience of Murphy is exclusive for the understanding of the disabled isolated existence. People tend to neglect the disabled. Either people's negligence or ridicule isolates disabled in society. The social undesirability has isolated the Animal not because he is antisocial.

Animal is social being. His social nature comes to fore with his social involvement. After social inclusion Animal shares good relationship with people. People often share their problems, secretes and happiness with him. He is a good listener and has good sense of humor. He has helped to Elli to integrate in society and visits people and listens to them. Though he hates human he begins to maintain cordial relationship with them.

Animal says "I started to run away as teasing has begun" (19) and he further says "Jara is my friend" (19). These two references illustrate the disabled's situation in society. Loneliness is their destiny. Animal has a friend Jara. A human being having friendship with a dog instead of human speaks volume of disabled isolation. Moreover, social tendency of making fun of people's impairment complicates

disabled participation in social activities. To participate in social activities disabled have to stand up against ridiculing behaviors.

Further Animal lives away from society in rejected company premises which is dangerous to living due to poisonous gas. But Animal has no friend except Jara. Jara is a name of a dog. A human being having no human friends in society and obliged to have an animal as a friend is social injustice. Animal does not remember the name of his friend with whom he played with and got a name Animal.

Moreover, Animal needs company who do not bully him. So he says “Anjali will come to live with me” (366). Animal considers to buy back Anjali because she loves him and wants to be with him. The idea of living with Anjali suggests that Animal is in need of company. He could fulfill his sexual desires in brothel but he cannot share his sorrow and happiness with them. Moreover Anjali is a sex worker and Animal’s desire to be with her cannot be interpreted as lust. Anjali is another person besides Nisha who treat him as human. Social isolation, abuse and denial of sexual agency make disabled living difficult. The dual identity negatively impacts the disabled self. They always try to avoid the present self the presumed identity.

Animal’s effort to break away from presumed identity is seen in his action. Animal has private desire to have straight body. Animal has kept his desire to be ‘human’ secret. He says “never did I mention my yearning to walk upright” (23). Animal though desires for straight body he has not said it to anybody. When he goes to hospital for mental problem he asks the doctor about the possibility of having operation of his body. Moreover his human qualities enhance his real identity.

Animal is not supernatural creature or real animal as his name suggests but human. He has human emotions like anger, jealousy happiness and jealousy. He is jealous of Zafar as he is in love with Nisha. When courts summons company to

appear to court assuming a victory he feels joy. In another instances he says poetic justice to the incident where American lawyer are killed with the same poison as the Khaufpurian. He feels so much sadness that he neither speaks in his mother tongue nor translate into English or his mother tongue.

Animal's Perception of own body is negative. He dislikes his own body. He feels 'raw disgust' "(1) when he views his body in mirror or sometimes his own shadow irritates him. His own body evokes hatred. He has no self respect. He has compromised his human status. He introduces himself as Animal. He seems to be containing with his lower status in society. He says "what I feel" (87). He feels that he has animalistic character. Mistreatment from society has influenced his perception towards his body. He has difficulty in accepting his own self. He narrates, "to be trapped in animal's body is hell..." (216). He is extremely negative about his body.

Animal is unable to accept his present self as human. He either goes to distant past or future for the acceptance of human status. His perception of human is influenced by normative discourse. In his eye to be human is to be able to walk on two legs or having straight body. So that he relates his human status with the ability to walk in two legs. He dehumanizes himself. He compromises his human status. His name, Animal is evident how he feels towards his body. He feels 'raw disgust' (2) when he views his body in mirror or sometimes his own shadow. He is unable to accept his present self as human. He either goes to distant past or future for the acceptance of human status. He narrates "I used to be human once" (1). He relates his human status to childhood when he is able to walk on two legs. Straight body is all he wants. He records the possibility of becoming human as "If I'm cured" (207). Though he is human his human status is conditional as he is unable to accept his

present self. Due to social stigma to disability disabled people have problematic relation with self.

Stigmatized person is perceived as inferior so that they can not accept their present self. They desire 'normal' body as "For stigmatize people idea of normality exaggerate importance and supreme goal" (Coleman 226). So disabled people focuses on resembling like 'normal'. They can go any extent and in the process "Tortured learning may be associated" (Goffman 208). Torturing the self in order to get accepted demands notice that how desperately stigmatize person try to avoid the stigma and other discrimination.

Animal is not exceptional. Social attitude influence his ideas about his body. He sees his twisted back as lack and therefore wants to correct it. "...an operation to make me stand straight and walk on two legs" (57) is Animal's way of correcting his lack or twisted back. He uses his language as defense mechanism and as a poor and orphan the development of other vocational skills seems impossible. So that operation of his body seems last option available to him to writ off the stigma.

Moreover, Animal's relation with Elli, a doctor, is shaped with his desire to have an operation. He is very much conscious of his language and behavior with Elli. He does not want to upset Elli giving reason to good relationship with Elli he says "I'll never criticize in case she gets angry and stop my treatment" (167). When Elli is upset Animal is very much concerned and take responsibility to cheer her up. He says "I must repair Elli's mood" (186). Animal does not want to upset Elli. He is desperate to transform his twisted body, twisted self. He even goes to the extent of deceiving the whole village, though he does not. He quickly corrects himself saying if you think me selfish Living with stigma is painful. Disabled self is shaped through social response to their body. Besides body sexuality also influences the disabled self.

Sexuality brings positive feelings about body. As sexuality is related to attractiveness disabled people perceive their body positively. They do not assume themselves as ugly. It brings the positive fillings to the body. However, disabled are denied sexual agency so they struggle with present self. Animal wants to change his present status so that he too can attract a girl. He is depressed at the prospect of not getting married due to his twisted body.

Animal is social being. His sociable nature comes to fore with his social activities. Though animal hates the human world he begins to have cordial relationship with people. People often share their problems and happiness with him. He is a good listener and adviser too. Animal relationship with Aliya, Nisha Elli Zafar and other member of the society proves that he is a social being. His isolation is the result of social aversion as he has good relationship with the other member of the society who accepts him as social being.

Moreover Animal's People redefine the meaning of disability. Disability is not individual pathology but social one. Generally disability is understood as restriction on activity. And such restriction arises due to society. Deformity does not necessarily restrict the person's functional capacity. Social perception is the real cause behind the functional restriction.

Animal is able to function as normal human being. His physical activity is not restricted due to his twisted body rather he has adapted to walk on hands. He even can climb to a tree. His deformity has not significantly obstructed his daily activities. He can gather information and roam in the city. He can cook. But being 'normal' Elli is unable to fulfill her job. Elli has come to the city so as to help the poison victim. But society obstructs her. Though people are in dire need of clinic they refuse to go to the Elli's clinic. Even if it is free people do not go there. People perceive her as an

agent of the company and people do not visit her. Being 'normal' and capable Elli is restricted. Disability is thus social matter more than body. Thus the social attitudes plays vital role for the realization of disabled real identity providing access to disabled in social participation.

Disabled body plays paramount importance to disabled identity. Disabled self is influenced with their perception of own body. However disabled perception is guided with social perception. Self originates from social experience and disabled perception of the self evolves as a result of their communication with other people. "... Social barriers are the root of the oppression faced by person with disabilities, then the source of positive transformation and empowerment also lies in society" (Addlakha and Nagase 195). Society plays vital role in determining the course of disability. Disability is social problem and Social attitude plays defining role in disability discourse. Social acceptance of disabled has positive impacts on disabled lives.

Animal anger to the world fades away as people accept him as human. People show concern for him. Zafar and Farouq suspecting Animal of burning down the factory come to rescue him. Farouq says "Animal, there's another thing you must not mention. Police are asking how the fire in the factory started. Don't ever say you were there" (362). Zafar too argues in similar line of Farouq. He says "we don't think anything... you lost it, it wasn't you, that's that" (362). People are protecting him. And they are advising him what to do and what not to do. They are concerned with Animal's safety. People's acceptance of Animal as human being has positive impact on his self. When Zafar says, "you are a human being. A full and true human being" (364). To that Animal replies "why are you saying this" (364)? Animal reply illustrates the softness in his stance. Earlier Animal aggressively refused to be

associated with human and used to identify himself as an animal. But in this instance Animal shows different behavior. His rage against own body is gone largely due to changes in social behaviors.

To bring positive changes in disabled's life social recognition of disabled as equal and similar human being is necessary. In addition to that, people need to understand that every human being is temporarily able. "if the able bodied saw the disabled as potentially themselves or as their future selves, they would be more inclined to feel that society should be organized to provide the resources that would make disabled people fully integrated" (Wendell 266). 'Normal' people perception of disability needs to be change. Only then the disabled integration in society and erasure of presumed identity is possible.

Social recognition of equal or similar human being changes the nature of disability. This is largely because negative social attitudes exclude persons with disabilities from an equal share in their entitlements as citizens. Such attitudes also curtail the opportunities of people with disabilities from social contact and close personal relationships with others. For the social inclusion of disabled people reconstruction of negative stereotypical image is necessary. Reconstruction of negative stereotypical image is possible with social acceptance. Social acceptance of disabled helps to destroy the illusion about disability. The social participation opens up the reality of disabled identity.

Animal's participation on social activity is possible only because of social recognition as human being. Before his social recognition, Animal has no existence in social activities. He has no responsibility to anyone or anything. Though whole city is struggling for justice Animal is not interested in it. Animal's indifference to social activity is due to lack of trust. To this Animal says "No one ever has trusted me with

anything before” (25). Zafar accepts him as human being. He says, “you are especially abled... entitled human dignity” (23). Zafar’s acceptance of Animal as human lands him into the role of informant. Animal collects information and does other errands. *Animal’s people* steps forward to dissolve the binary of us versus other in regard of disability. It demands recognition of disabled in society demonstrating the similarities between disabled and non-disabled.

Disabled people share commonality with ‘normal’ people. Disabled people’s dreams or desires are similar to non-disabled person. Disabled adolescent’s dreams and non-disabled adolescent are alike. “Like most adolescent ... teenagers with disabilities have hopes and desires for marriage, children and satisfying adult sex lives.” (Murphy and Young 641) Disabled people desire for happiness and have dreams of family. The impaired body does not alter the dreams and desires of the people.

Animal’s all the struggle, selfishness and hatred toward human is for human love and acceptance. He again and again complains of not having a girl for marriage. Moreover, Animal life is epitome of loneliness. He has no friends and family to share the moments of life. He lives with nun who is engrossed with apocalyptic vision. Marriage thus makes sure that he has company. He wants to marry Nisha because she is the person who is worried about his well being and understands him.

Further, he needs company and happiness in life. A woman and few children is all he wants but Animal is not only person to have such dream. Nisha also wants happy married life and children out of this poisonous city. She says “I’d like to have kids but I told Zafar I don’t want our children growing up here” (196). Nisha too dreams of having kid and happiness. She wants to go away from the place so that she could provide the happy life for her children. Her desire to have children also points

to having good sexual life. Nisha and Animal both of them dream to have happy family life.

Animal's thinking is similar with that of the other young people. Disabled desires are similar to non disabled but "society seems unable to grapple with the idea of disabled people having the same emotional needs and desires as the rest of the population" (Robillard and Fichten 198). The social perception of disabled as different has resulted into denial of similarities between disabled and non disabled. Thus, disabled exhibition of similar desire is ridiculed. However disabled people's needs and desires are similar to that of non disabled.

When an American doctor arrives in city they perceive her body in similar way. Farouq says "oye baba I will surely die for that crake" (67). He sensualizes female body. Though Animal does not say anything loudly inside his mind he too sensualizes the doctor. He says "I was thinking in same line" (67). Animal's acceptance of having similar thinking illustrates the similarities between disabled and non disabled person. Further disabled and non disabled person shares similar experience in life.

Disabled and non-disabled both are afraid of death. How disgusting life may be they want to stretch it a little further. "Never I've been so scared of death" (205) Animal says when *Muharm* comes nearer. He has bet with Farouq to walk on burning coal. Further, his desire for living is extreme at the moment of his desire of death. Animal is sad due to the death of Aliya, Zafar who are near to his heart. At the same time Nisha rejects his marriage proposal and desperate Animal decides to die engulfing thirteen *golis of datura*. But he runs away for life when a factory gas touches his body. He says, "I'm running... just to clutch one more hour" (340). Animal wants to stretch his wretched life according to his living experiences. But

animal is not only the one who runs away for life. All the Khaufpuri runs away for life. Their lives are similar to that of Animal. Life is painful for them too. They are suffering from various illnesses. Their lives is surrounded with poison. It is everywhere in land, in water, in air. Every house hold has at least one person directly suffered from the poison. Government is not providing any relief and government hospital is of no use. Their life is worse off. Yet they want to live.

Disability is basically human condition. Every human have to pass from the stage of limited functionality and dependency. Human life is that of interdependency. 'Normal' people ignore the fact that "disability is universal experience of humanity" (Tom Shakespeare 203). If people understood it the problem of disability disappears. People refuse the fact that one day they can be disabled. Such perception attracts them to unreal world of bodily perfection and discriminate the disabled. "All of us experience illness: most of us grow old and will face increasing losses of physical and mental power. "Ability" then is both relative and temporary" (Berger 571). Physical ability and 'ideal body' is temporary. Every human being passes through the condition of helplessness. Disability is basic of life. *Animal's People* justifies the claims.

*Animal's People* shows disability as a human condition. In the novel almost all the character are passing through disability. Moreover, in novel disability is acquired later. Disabled character in the novel has 'healthy' or 'normal' life but later they become disabled. The central character of the novel used to be walking on two legs. Singer Somraj known as voice of Khaufpur for his beautiful voice is unable to sing. If dysfunctionality is disability than people who are able to walk on two legs are unable to work properly. American doctor Elli is unable to treat people, Nisha is unable to partake in strike, and Zafar is unable to maintain his hope or courage for which he has

known. These examples show that disability is human condition. Everyone is temporarily able.

Disabled reality is far from social presumption. People assumption is flawed as stands upon the fear or sin psychology. People perceive disabled to be asexual. Disabled sexuality is taboo subject. Disabled lack the sexual feelings or desire in non disabled eye. Disabled possess sexual feelings and sexual desire. However Sinha has provided sexual feelings and capabilities to his character. And has makes point that “sexuality as an aspect of life to which everyone should be entitled” (Wilkerson 43).

Animal is sexually capable being. He has sexual desires and feelings. He openly expresses his desires. He says, “I want it day and night” (45). Animal has no hesitation to express it. He talks how his sexual organ is oppressing him. He says “why do I allow myself to be dominated by the things between my legs? Is it my master?... will it kill me if I tell it no”(245) ? Only to encounter the sexual harassment or sexual teasing Animal has not accepted that he wants sex. He is capable to have sex but his twisted body has made difficulty for the approach. He wants physical contact. Animal’s sexuality is louder only to be heard as sexual being, it is normal regarding his age and environment.

Disabled sexuality is shocking for the ‘normal’ people. They refuse to believe in disabled sexuality because disabled people are immature. Sex demands maturity but disabled are perpetual child. Maturity and responsibility are attached to non-disabled person. Disabled are perceived as static. “Disability becomes an idea that precludes the possibility of human development” (Kliewer et al.175). Disabled are eternal children. Moreover, people projects “infantilizing qualities onto disability” (Berger 570). Viewing in this way robs the disabled identity as mature person. Disabled are responsible member of society. To write off the disabled maturity is seer

negligence and oppression to disabled person. Disabled person can grow to maturity if opportunity is provided.

Animal grabs the opportunity to demonstrate his maturity. Animal is responsible member of the society. Animal is always concerned with social welfare. He does his responsibility quite sincerely. While collecting data he befriends with Elli. Sometime Animal “ear ogles” (105) to collect the information and sometime repeatedly tries to pronounce the American city. He says “ Ghostville? Ghostivelle pencilmania” (96) . Animal say so that he’ll not forget the real name. Animal’s major work is to spy Elli. When Elli complains about the people’s disbelief in her he smartly brings the subject of her meetings with minister. At the moment of revelation of Elli’s truth Animal is confused. He instantly does not disclose the truth. He wants to tell it to Zafar.

Moreover Animal’s maturity comes to evident at the most trubalant situation. When people have heard the Zafar’s death they are at wits end. They started to burn down the company he stops them. He says “friends, do not burn anything here it will be that night all over again” (311). No one is concerned with the safety of the city. Despite Zafar’s repeated effort to warn people about the danger of burning down the factory premises people are not aware of it. They all are swayed by anger however Animal keeps calm. He saves the city from the danger. At this moment Animal stands by himself up to the level of Zafar.

Further he wants to cancel the tomorrow because at the moment everyone is happy. Though selfish, he is matured person. He takes society first and does accordingly. Though his personal interests clashes with the public interest, he is a responsible member. He has told the truth. Moreover only that clash of personal interest does not make him irresponsible. He assumes his responsibility fully. When

he has assigned to carry cash to a moneylender Animal shows the maturity. Animal demands the receipt from money lender. He says to money lender “give me the receipt for the money” (90). He says he asked repeatedly fearing if he does not get it, this guy could deny he ever received the cash. He knows the importance of the receipt in the future. These examples illustrate that disabled are mature person.

However, non- disabled assume them to be superior and disabled to be inferior. Disabled in non- disabled eyes are incompetent. They cannot learn and understand anything. They are dull. Disabled are “... redefined from competent to wholly incompetent” (Kliewer185). Disabled’s competence is disregarded in society. People believe that disabled cannot learn because they lack the functional brain. Disabled people possess the brain of child and they are wild. Literate competency demands discipline which disabled is believed to lack.

Animal counters all these notions. Animal shows the capacity to learn. He is literally competent. He can “read and write Hindi” (35). Moreover, he learns foreign language. He can communicate in English and French. He speaks French with Ma and sometimes to hide his inner feelings. He finds English easier to learn. Animal’s ability to read, write and communicate in various languages proves the traditional concept of literate incompetency is just a fantasy of non – disabled.

Further, though disabled people show the sign of literate capability, people refuse to believe that disabled posses an active mind. According to ‘normal’ people disabled mind is dead or they only can copy what ‘normal’ think or does. Disabled are perceived as imitator. Disabled are “intellectually enfossilized” (Kliewer et al.168). Disabled people are thus reduced to unintelligent or fool people who are only able to mimic. Nonetheless, *Animal’s People* counters such redundant notions.

Animal is aware of cultural, historical and daily aspect of the Khaufpurian lives. He is critical of the claims of religion. He says, “if religious were true, there wouldn’t be so many of them, there would be just one for everyone” (208). Animal is concerned with the ultimate goal of the religion. All religion is concerned with happiness of the people then why there is multiple religion and the claims of superiority Animal contemplates.

Further, Animal is aware of the past of the Muharram. He says fire is the part of Murrām [...] because it’s the heat of the desert where the prophet’s grandson, Hazrat Imam Hussien was martyred” (205). He knows the culture of walking on the fire. Besides, he knows about Goddess kali and her appearance. He says “I see mother Kali ... her skin blacks as roasted corpse. She’s got massive fangs and a red tongue hanging to her waist and a belt of chopped- off heads” (32). He is aware of the religion. He is keen to language that society adopts. He knows how language evolves over period of time. He says “...someone says something unbelievable like Chunaram is serving free kebabs, others will pipe, ‘oh sure, the kampani’s come to court” (34). People are referencing company to say something impossible.

Besides this he is conscious about the people’s perception of things. It is evident when he advises Elli while visiting the people of Khaufpur. He tells, “Forget your doctress’s bag, forget you know Hindi, people will be shy to speak if they know you can understand. Make out you’re some dumb fucking journalis” (177). Animal is aware of the people’s reaction. So he advises Elli what to do and what not to make sure that she gets the information she needs. Further he shows the common sense as an evident of his maturity. He says “I might have joke of it ...the fact that he was Nisha’s dad, plus I had my lunch everyday in his kitchen were good reason to be civil” (49). Animal knows how to behave with people who are good to him. Being

childlike and lacking the literate competent disabled people always in need of care. They are dependent to normal person to live in a world and fulfill their necessities.

The discourse of dependency of disabled is fallacious. People's reasoning is false as it centers away from the disabled opinion. People think that disabled need care for daily activities so they are dependent. But the idea of independence is related to choices. "Independence is the ability to make one's own decisions and "call one's one shots" how and where to live" (Dalal 87). Independence is related to choice of disabled leading of life. Disabled people may need other people's help for daily activities and sometimes to control own body. But they can decide the living condition. Moreover, human life is characterized with interdependence. As a child all people need other's help for each and every action.

Animal is master of his choice. This novel is dependent on Animal's choice. A journalist has come to write story about Khaufpur and has decided to write the Animal's experience. However he has flown back to America without story as Animal refused to share his story. As Animal decides to share his experience his story has come as this book. He "did not want to talk about it" (3). So the tape that journalist has provided to record his story has stopped to work. As Animal decides not to talk the tape has damaged. He says "rain got the tape" (3). Though Chunaram has lured Animal with "free kebabs ... as long as it lasts" (7). Animal has refused to tell his story.

Animal decides to share his story to end his dilemma. Earlier he has nothing to do so he has decided not to tell the story. Animal has decided to tell the story not because people are pressuring him or luring him to tell the story but he has "choice to make" (11). In this instance Animal is free to decide what to do or what not, no one can control his decision. Moreover, Zafar too acknowledges his independent agency.

Animal says “I do as I please” (174). This implies Animal is free agent, no one can dictate or force him to do anything. Animal’s wishes determine his action. He has wished to spy on Zafar and Nisha and has spied on them. He has chosen to live in company premises and determined not to show Nisha though she has desired to know. However he has shown it to the Elli. He is lord of his decision. Further he decides what type of clothes to wear or not. When Nisha has told to buy new cloth he denies. Though it seems trivial it is significant in deconstructing stereotypical images of disabled. Moreover Zafar also argues in same line as Animal, saying “you are free to make your own decisions” (194). Zafar’s dialogue illustrates that disabled people are independent. Their decisions no one can interfere. Like other ‘normal’ people, disabled person need help. Only to interpret disabled need of help as dependence is prejudice against them.

In addition, this novel questions the traditional concept of disability as social burden. Traditionally disability is thought to be social burden. “People with disabilities may be seen as burden or passive” (Reid 3). People perceive disabled to be dependent economic burden. People ignore the disabled’s capabilities. Disabled people are not always burden to society. It is true that they need a little more attention and a little more resources. Little more resources and care does not imply that disabled are burden to society. Animal even demonstrates how he is not burden to the society.

Animal is no burden to society. He is economically productive person. He earns “four hundred rupees a month ...for his work’ (28). He has been receiving money for his work. Society needs to acknowledge that every human have different skills and talents. Such skills are needed to be explored and Zafar does exactly the same. He thought about various works that is suitable for Animal. It ranges from

carrying cash to various scams like bloodstain and spilled *channa*. Finally Animal is assigned to work as informant. He have to keep his “eyes and ears open and report to Zafar if anything unusual was going on in the *bastis*” (27). Moreover, Animal shows the capability to care an old nun, Ma Franci. She is old and speaks French only. Animal maintains cordial relationship with her and very much concerned about the old nun. Animal cares about her choices, safety, and health. Animal’s example of caring old nun besides his job of informant illustrates disabled capabilities should be explored and provide job accordingly. They will not be burden to any one. Animal learns French language in order to communicate with her. She has lost all her knowledge of other language other than her mother tongue French. Not only would that without Animal’s help it is impossible to say what happened to her. She is 70 years old and always speaks of ‘apokalis’ lives with Animal.

In addition to that Sinha has questioned the literary representation of disabled. As disabled people lack the role in society people do not have enough knowledge about disability so people turns to literature to get information about disability. Moreover, literature is reflection of people’s ideology and is able to impart knowledge about disability critiquing of literary representation is important. And Sinha provides the anti traditional representation of disability.

*Animal’s People* questions the traditional way of literary representation of disabled. Traditionally disabled characters are used to enhance the concept of the norm. Disabled character generally brought back to the norm of the society. Disabled character’s ability or their will has no role in any decision made on their behalf. Through disabled character discourse of norm is maintained.

Body has the focal point of the normative discourse. Deviation from socially accepted body is supposed to be animal’s body. Normative discourse focuses on the

ideal body. Disabled body has to go through changes so as to pass as 'normal' body. It does not consider the ability of the subject. The subject of the question irrespective of any benefit has to go through corrective process so as to assimilate in society.

*Animal's People* however, steps aside from the tradition.

Animal is accepted as normal human being in society though he is bullied. People do not pressure him to operate his body. Operation to make straight body is Animal's idea. Sinha has not any provision to operate him. Doctor in government hospital does not see any possibility of getting desired effect. Elli is unable to operate her clinic. Nonetheless when there is chance Animal weighs it down with his freedom. He thinks with an operation he may be back into the normal world but "how far will that get... in the *gullis* of Khaufpur" (366) is the question. Animal decision of accepting his impairment breaks the traditional way of representation the disability.

Further, disabled characters are negatively portrayed in literature. They are villains or bad guys. "Physical handicaps are made the emblems of evil" ( Longmore 133). Physical deformity has been equated to deformity of the character. The disabled characters are mean, callous and heartless. They are criminals. They always seek revenge. They are serial killer or psychopants. The idea of representing disabled as mean character is people's aversion to disabled. However, disabled characters are not evil.

Animal certainly has flaws in his character but he is not an evil person. Animal has "sordid secretes" (66) and he has been jealous to Zafar. Animal speaks roughly and has no respect for the people. His rough attitude and behaviors towards the people is the replica of people's treatment to him. He wants to change the incident in his favor but he is not harming anyone. Evil results into destruction of other. Social treatment to him is quite inhuman. He describes himself at heartless man. He says,

“The hammer - blows that beat his humanity out of him” (219). In that instance his anger towards world can be justified. To say Animal is evil just because he is angry to the world and neglect his other human qualities is bias. Though Animal has flaws in character he is a good person.

Animal is concerned with the welfare of the society. Animal says “please do not burn anything here or it will be that night again” (274). Further Animal helps to Elli to assimilate in society. Animal cares for other people. He is not a bad character. He is pure in soul. Animal seems filthy or nasty but in reality he is a good person. A person is evil when he thinks and does to harm other. In case of Animal this is not applicable. Animal poisoning to Zafar is just to weaken his sexual urges an attempt to stop the physical intimacy between Nisha and Zafar. Nonetheless Animal decreases the dose citing the harm on the Zafar. His jealousy is no way can be read as his evil thinking.

Further this novel gives the leadership role to the disabled. They are often depicted as supportive character. “If disability appears in novel, it is rarely centrally represented. It is unusual to for a main character to be a person with disabilities, though minor character can be deformed (Davis 21). Disabled are suited for minor role. As disabled are ‘other’, major role is far from them. Moreover, disabled character does not have any contribution in novel. They are represented as fool and sometimes for comic relief. Either their presence or absence has no significance in novel.

Sinha has made a disabled his hero. The story of Animal’s People revolves around Animal. His actions determine the course of novel. The novel is Animal’s meditation on his lived experience. To get out from the dilemma of having operation or not he narrates the story. He plays multiple roles in novel. He is a good friend,

good son to old nun and spy to the villagers. Animal says “various version of Khaufpurian struggle are told and for the sake of truth I’m telling the story...I’ve choice to make” (10, 11). So this is Animal’s story. According to Animal, there are lots of stories about the Khaufpur and its continuous struggle to get justice rather it is related to Animal’s compulsion to make choice. Animal has not only got central role in novel but also positive role that enhances the disabled positive identity.

Poverty, helplessness, homelessness have been the trademark of disabled’s representation in literature. Disabled are depicted “in ways that they arouse pity.” (Davis 21) Disabled are pathetic and tragic figure in the novel. Disabled are needy people who cannot exist independently. “In media disabled people are portrayed as sick, suffering, looking for help and having special needs” (Krahe and Altwasser 60). Disability is portrayed as tragedy. Disabled people are dependent and without normal people’s sympathy they cannot exist in the world. To have impairment is to be in receptive role, suffering, poor and helpless.

Animal is poor and homeless but he is not miserable and helpless. Unlike other people he is unable to walk on two legs. However, his inability to walk on two has not interfered with his daily activities and his ability to move around. He can move anywhere and even climb on trees. He is able to earn enough for him. Moreover he is better off than other people in society. Many people have chronic illness and physical pain.

He narrates the story of Somraj who is famous in Khaufpur for his voice. He pointing to the Somraj’s singing notes says “sa re ga kha si kha si” (155). Somraj has lost his voice and his life is so miserable he makes joke of himself. his notes includes *kha si kha si* which are not real note but indication of Somraj’s misery. Whenever he tries to sing cough stops him. Whenever he tries to sing he has problem with lung.

Animal's twisted body is not tragic for him but social attitude has created problem for him. Sinha has countered traditional notions that disability is tragedy.

*Animal's People* shows strong contempt to pity. In novel Animal's portrayal is such that no one takes pity on him. To avoid pity "Animal transforms himself from exotic object" (Snell 7). The exoticism invites stares and stares results into pity in relation to disability. So that Animal creates a distance with reader. Despite his disability, he does not perceive himself as victim. He says "I'm not *bhonsdi-ka* victim" (27). People gaze to him and his surrounding irritate him. He is baffled by the gaze of the foreigner which is pitying or sympathetic. Further, Animal's self-composed song speaks volumes about his attitude towards pity. In his song he writes, "If you dare to pity me I will shit on your shoe and piss in your tea" (210). Animal hates to be pitied. If anyone tries to pity him the result will be disgusting. Animal's character is such that no one pities him. He is rude, shameless.

Traditionally disabled characters are portrayed as one dimensional. "Disabled characters are not allowed to fully round character. They are over simplified ( Harnett 21 )". Disabled character do not changes over time and they are predictable in action and thought as they are one dimensional. Disabled character's lived experiences are not important and to show disabled are dependent and they are passive they are presented as such. Disabled character do not possess any complexity.

However, Animal is a complex character. His character changes over the period of time. He turns to socially active person from a beggar boy. He is no longer a beggar boy disturbing the customers and scavenging the farbage but an active member of the society who with Zafar do well for the society. Irresponsible Animal transform himself into responsible member of society. He takes the responsibility of old nun who speaks only French and engrossed in apocalyptic vision. He is

concerned with social welfare. Moreover, Animal is not guided by simple desire of sex but with the desire of acceptance and companionship. His character changes as he grows to maturity. As he gets social responsibility, he transforms from one stage to another one. He is a complex and round character. Animal is multidimensional and has two faces one is public and another is private. His actions are also unpredictable from the start. Readers need to go through the whole book in order to understand him.

*Animal's People* locates disability in social attitude and denaturalizes the misconceptions about disability. It focuses on disabled social experience. It familiarizes disabled capabilities. Familiarizing disabled capabilities *Animal's People* questions the traditional concept of disability. Disabled are as capable as normal are but they need social recognition as similar human being. Moreover, Sinha has questioned the traditional way of literary representation of disabled. As people form concept through literary representation and negative representation strengthens the stereotypical images of disabled and they lack the social role. So positive representation is positive step to reconstruct the discourse of disability.

### III. Disability as Social Construction in *Animal's People*

Indra Sinha's *Animal's People* questions the traditional concept of disability which is an attitudinal problem more than bodily 'defect'. The social perception of disabled as "other" makes disabled vulnerable to abuse and other discrimination. It erases the real identity of disabled. Besides it damages the disabled sense of self. Disabled perceive themselves through others eye and devalue their body, shoving themselves to the negative consequences. *Animal's People* best illustrates the consequences resulting from the social abuse.

*Animal's People* demonstrates that society is responsible for disabled identity. Society can positively influence the disabled accepting disabled as human being. Social acceptance helps to counter the negative stereotypical images of disabled. *Animal's People* giving social, sexual, literate, economic agency to Animal questions the so called normal's projection of disabled as savage, incompetent asexual, tragic and burdensome.

In addition to that, *Animal's People* shows disability as human variation. All human being are dissimilar in one way or another. Disability is human variation and disabled deserve equal respect and dignity. The novel demonstrates that disabled are as capable as 'normal' are when society acknowledges disabled as equal and assigns responsibility to them.

Moreover, *Animal's People* challenges the traditional method of representing of disabled character as central character. It humanizes disabled character and familiarizes the disabled reality. Traditional method of representation is redundant. It is guided with stereotypical images of disabled. But Sinha goes against the tradition and demonstrates disabled as similar human being as so called normal human being.

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