

Title: *Anger is a Gift*

Author: Mark Oshiro

Perspectives Category: Different Abilities

Reviewer Name and Grade: Yaseen V., Grade 10

Date Reviewed: 7/25/21

1. What is the main plot of this book?

The main plot of this book follows Moss Jeffries, a student at West Oakland High. Moss suffers from panic attacks and experiences ridicule from his peers and the community after his father was brutally and wrongfully executed by an Oakland police officer. Readers get to see how Moss navigates life without a parent and the media's abusive stories against his family.

2. Which character did you most identify with and why?

While I was reading this book, I thought that Moss Jeffries was someone I related to because it is very common for people to feel "stuck" in their highschool and hometown. While I do not experience the things he goes through, I can understand how hard it must be to cope with the loss of a parent whilst battling the media and suffering with his own mental health.

3. What do you believe is the main message of this book?

I believe the main message of this book is to not allow painful and tragic losses in life to constantly keep you depressed. Instead, you should use these experiences to grow as a person and lift yourself back up.

4. Do you think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story, or did it come across as too "preachy"?

I think the author did a great job at displaying the grief and frustration Moss feels throughout the book, both at himself and at the community around him. I believe the author conveyed the main message of this book effectively and integrated it seamlessly into the story without it being "preachy".

5. If two or more perspectives on an important topic were explored/presented in this book, which one did you agree with and why?

In this novel, two perspectives were shown regarding Moss' father. One perspective was that of the community where Moss' father is painted in a bad light. The other perspective is that of Moss, who loses his father in a devastating way that shows the criminalization of marginalized groups. I agree with Moss' point of view because of how realistic the storyline is and how so much of the topics explored in the book are seen in real time today.

6. In what ways (if any) were your beliefs about a topic changed or reaffirmed through reading this book?

While reading this book, my beliefs on social justice and how marginalized groups are often targeted by law enforcement due to racism and bigotry was reaffirmed.

7. What perspective, if any, do you think was missing from this book?

One perspective that I wish the author would have explored was the perspective of Moss' father and what he dealt with in his life leading up to his last moments. I think this perspective would be valuable and would display immense amounts of emotion.

8. Did this book encourage you to pursue any topics further through more reading, research, action, etc., and if so, how?

Yes, this book encouraged me to pursue topics of emotions and the psychology of the human mind when it endures an extremely sad or tragic event. This book also prompted me to do more research on marginalized groups and how they are targeted for criminalization.

9. What type of reader (based on age, interests, perspectives, etc.) would you suggest this book to?

I would suggest this book to readers who want to read about grief and struggle. I think these topics are important to explore because they teach you about the human experience and how people deal with various obstacles in their lives. I found it very interesting to read about Moss' feelings and how he felt "stuck" in his highschool.

10. What other book(s) have you read that you think would make a good addition to this category of the Perspectives Bibliography, and why?

One other book I would recommend is The Insiders because the brilliant novel is written by the same author of this book. This novel follows Héctor Muñoz, a boy who shares similar feelings of not belonging to his community. This book ultimately tells the story about finding home and falling in love amidst dangers, and is another great read by Oshiro.

Reviewer Name and Grade: Tatjana T., 11th grade

Date Reviewed: April 10, 2023

1. The main plot of "Anger is a Gift" by Mark Oshiro follows Moss Jefferies, a high school student who grapples with anxiety and trauma after witnessing his father's murder by the police. The book explores Moss's journey to find his voice, navigate activism, and fight against systemic injustice in his community.

2. I most identify with Moss because, like him, I have experienced anxiety and trauma, and have struggled with finding my voice and standing up against injustice. Moss's internal struggles, his determination to make a difference, and his passion for activism resonated with my own experiences and beliefs.

3. The main message of this book is about the power of protest, resistance, and standing up against injustice. It highlights the importance of using one's voice to challenge oppressive

systems and fight for equality and social justice. It also addresses themes of trauma, mental health, and the complexities of navigating activism as a young person.

4. I believe that the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story without coming off as preachy. The author portrays Moss's journey in a realistic and nuanced manner, showcasing his internal struggles, growth, and activism in a way that feels authentic and relatable.

5. In "Anger is a Gift," multiple perspectives on the topic of activism and protest are explored. I agree with Moss's perspective, as he advocates for peaceful protest, grassroots organizing, and standing up against systemic oppression in a non-violent and strategic manner. It aligns with my own beliefs about the power of peaceful activism and grassroots movements for social change.

6. Reading this book reaffirmed my beliefs about the importance of using one's voice and standing up against injustice, even in the face of challenges and adversity. It also shed light on the complexities of navigating activism as a young person, and the importance of self-care and mental health in the pursuit of social justice.

7. While the book provides diverse perspectives on activism, it could benefit from including more intersectional perspectives and experiences, such as those of individuals from marginalized communities who face multiple forms of oppression.

8. Yes, this book encouraged me to pursue further reading, research, and action on topics related to activism, protest, social justice, and mental health. It inspired me to engage in conversations, educate myself, and take action in my own community to challenge oppressive systems and promote equality and social justice.

9. I would suggest this book to readers who are interested in contemporary young adult fiction, stories about activism, social justice, and mental health, particularly from a diverse and intersectional perspective. It may resonate with readers who are passionate about social justice, activism, and making a difference in their communities.

10. Another book that would make a good addition to this category of perspectives biography is "Long Way Down" by Jason Reynolds. This novel is written in verse and follows the story of Will, a Black teenager seeking revenge for his brother's murder. As he descends in an elevator with a gun in his waistband, he encounters ghosts from his past who challenge his beliefs and force him to confront the cycle of violence. It addresses issues of gun violence, trauma, and the impact of systemic injustice.