

# The rocking horse winner essay sample

[Life](#), [Love](#)



The Allusion of Love World War I revolutionized the way that Americans view life and death, after Europe was bombarded visits from the Grim Reaper. After the war ended in 1918, America entered a period of live now, worry later, referred to as the roaring twenties. The 1920's inspired many great writers from Fitzgerald's Gatsby to Milne's Pooh, writers in the 1920's wrote with themes centralizing around money, love, and the problems that follow in a fairy tale way. One man stands out from the rest with a great work titled The Rocking Horse Winner, in which D. H Lawrence depicts a scene of twisted virtues and painstaking love. " The final stories of D. H., written in the middle and late 1920's represent a period of formal experimentation in which he moved away from traditional narrative realism and the setting of rural England to the realm of mythical supernatural fairy story"(Baker 1) " A restless pilgrim he had uncanny perceptions into the depths of physical things and an uncompromising honesty in his new of human beings and the world"(Lawrence 2576). In the short story, a boy named Paul has a warped perception of love resulting from his mothers materialistic and money obsessed lifestyle.

His mother denies him the love he needs to be strong because she knows that she cannot provide for her children properly based on the family income. D. H. Lawrence uses great symbolism criticizing those who equate love with money and luck with happiness to show that confusion among love, luck, and greed becomes the ultimatum of personal responsibility. Success was acquired through material items in the eyes of Paul's mother Hester and so she continued to spend all of the families' money in spite of the fact that they were quiet poor. Hester had felt society had placed implications upon

her to continue living large and so she hid all her imperfections amongst her material possessions. In his dysfunctional household “ Paul learns from his mother to associate love with money representing the desperate search for values in a cash culture” (Piedmont 1). “ Knowing this, Paul rides hard for the vision of the winning horse, not for himself, but for his mother and her materialistic love.

” To ease his mothers plight, Paul rides this rocking horse to were there is luck which means predicting the winner of the horse races”(Gillett 1). He would do this by rocking on his toy horse as if he was in the actual race, and as a result he would obtain the knowledge of the future accurately predict the winning horse in the race. Starting out with just five shillings Paul’s money grew exponentially. When he has reached 10, 000 pounds, he decided to give his mother 1, 000 pounds a year for five years. No matter how much money his mother had acquired she was never satisfied but Paul felt the need to make his mother happy hoping in return he would be shown love. Paul was “ Absorbed, taking no heed of other people, he went about with a sort of stealth, seeking inwardly luck” (Lawrence 1205). Greatly mistaken he had only come to learn that his mother had become a lot greedier. In the process of collecting the money he decided to keep it a secret by hiring a lawyer to handle the money. One day Paul saw the envelope from the lawyer and asked his mother if she had received anything good in the mail. She said “ Quite moderately nice” (Lawrence 168) in a bitter voice.

This exemplifies her need for more never being grateful for what she was given. After conversing with his mother, Paul had come to the conclusion that with a great enough sum of money, his mother might finally stop worrying about more money. “ His mother represented the futility of the new consumer culture, where luck and lucre meant the same thing” ( Piedmont 1). Her definition of luck was anything that brought about money. Greed was also a main theme in the 1920s and is predominating throughout the story.” Although they lived in style they felt always an anxiety in the house. There was never enough money”(p. 159) . The bills in the house would still go unpaid due to Hester’s fruitless spending. Not only was Paul’s mother obsessed with money but Uncle Oscar was as well putting a bet on the winning horse even though he understands that his nephew is in terrible condition. The only thing present on his uncles mind was to possess more money and he did not think twice about the conditions of his nephew days away from passing.

At the point where Paul is lifelessly laying there Oscar says ““My God, Hester, you’re eighty-odd thousand to the good, and a poor devil of a son to the bad” (Lawrence 1215). Oscar no longer compares Paul as a child but instead as an object of money. Oscar’s mind is so greatly distorted that he can not tell the difference between what is good and evil. Paul’s family was so greatly absorbed in their external appearance that they would rather fix their home and barely have any money than then live in a normal house. “ There was always a grinding sense of shortage of money, though the style was always kept up” (Lawrence 1203). Paul’s parents created an illusion of being the perfect parents and created the illusion that they had provided

everything for their dear son but instead had put material items before the love of their child. As a result Paul's understanding of life had become completely altered because his immediate family was too blinded by greed. Paul's mindset is greatly changed by the whispers brought about by the house when it cries " There must be more money! Now, more than ever!"( Lawrence 299).

Throughout the novel D. H Lawrence incorporates symbolism as a representation that love and happiness can be destroyed by greed. Paul's mother represents both self centeredness and greed because her main goal in life is to acquire more money. Hester values wealth more than love and it is evident through her inability to find an emotional attachment to her own children but she really couldn't find love for anyone. It is evident " She had bonny children, yet she felt they had been thrust upon her, and she could not love them" (Lawrence 225). She even leaves them hungry spending her money on herself instead showing how cold hearted she truly was. " Only she herself knew that at the centre of her heart was a hard little place that could not feel love, no, not for anybody" (Lawrence 790). Money was the only object she could truly embrace leaving no love for her children nor her husband even though she appeared to be the ideal mother filled with compassion for her children but it was merely an illusion.

In the end her need for more money results in the death of her son but she never shows her feelings for him allowing him to pass without ever telling her son she had loved him. With this Paul lays there dying never to have fulfilled his mothers expectations in earning her love feeling neglected.

Another symbol would be the rocking horse that Paul rides in order to predict the winning horse of the race. It symbolizes death because in the end his health is greatly affected all in the journey to obtain love. The house is the last symbol in the story that represents the constant need for more money. It is the mothers need for more money that leads to the house. The whispering is symbolic of the family's financial problems. Paul's mother's unlimited desires and expectations for life are responsible for the repeated refrain which even the house begins to chant: " There must be more money! There must be more money!" This voice is pervasive and ever-present, and preyed on Paul's mind. It motors him to do something to solve the problem.