

The french lieutenant's woman essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The post-modern ideals held by the protagonists Charles and Sarah in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, are displayed in Chapter 22 of the novel. The author, John Fowles develops unconventional characters in their context of the Victorian era. The author seemingly asserts his opinion on Charles' actions objectively but a deeper plunge into the chapter highlights views held by the author that are contrary to his existentialist argument presented later in the novel with the eventual three endings. Overall, Fowles ends up intruding on the text in order to advocate a post-modern theme, showing unreliable narration.

Post-modernism is the main direction of the text and is amplified especially in this chapter. Fowles repeats the phrase "free-will" several times throughout a page in the chapter. He notes in one instance that Charles uses his "free will" as his walking stick even. Fowles already stated in a previous chapter that he would not like to control his characters.

He does break this proclamation though by shaping the reader's mind on certain characters. He makes it clear through a dry tone for example, that Charles' perception of Sarah is wrong and even more so, representative of the Victorian era. He asserts that Charles "stands for his age" in dimly perceiving Sarah's passion and failing to see her imagination. He explains that "these two qualities were banned by [his] epoch" so that is most probably why Charles cannot see them. Perhaps this is a positive from a feminist perspective as it shows Fowles stream of consciousness in a modern context.

His tone here is discontent with Sarah's epoch's attitude towards women. This again links with the unconventional attitude of Fowles' characters as we know that Charles is intrigued by this woman; intrigued by qualities which would otherwise be considered taboo in her context. The novel's intended context is around the same time that arguments on existentialism were put forward. These entail that [...] Existentialism is shown from Charles, particularly, as practically bides time and really only tries to keep himself from getting bored until he received his uncle's title. That naivety was indirectly dwelled on in the chapter.

When he received the telegram from his uncle that inquired for them to meet for "most important reasons", "he kissed the envelope" that the message came in. He thought that the message entailed that his inheritance was close, when in fact he does not receive it in the end.