

# Robert frost and modernism research paper examples

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



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The modern world is dominated by technological influences that have seen a change in the lifestyle and behavior of man. A comparison is always made on how the day-to-day life of man is being influenced by the technological developments. This has different impacts on people depending on how they handle the changes. Observing the behavior displayed by man, one can only be amazed at the power of how technology has turned man from being a naturally social creature to a machine like individual. Robert frost is one of the modern poets who has observed the changing trend in man even with the changes happening around. He has distinguished himself and displayed his thoughts through poetry. In this paper, we shall be looking at his poems and how modernism has been displayed. We shall give special attention to three poems namely; The Death of the Hired Man, Home Burial and The Road not Taken.

Some of the critical issues addressed in these poems are the changing political scenario and the tactics used by politicians for their own benefit.

There is also the issue of isolation, which has been brought up by the antisocial nature of human being. Robert frost has also looked at the

prevailing competition and the need for a man to be creative in order to survive. It seems as if everything that needed to be explored has been explored. Science has made everything almost possible and making man feels self-sufficient. As long as the necessary equipments and materials surround one, they may not need to travel far and physically interact with people. This has led to a breed of human beings who are lonely yet they cannot confess that they are lonely. It almost feels like having a close association with other humans is a waste of time, which can be used for other constructive things.

### **The Death of the Hired Man**

The poem, the death of a hired man touches more on the family values and the dwindling nature of relationships. Modernism is displayed in this scenario where by people are finding more solace outside their family circles which is contrary to ancient times. Gone are the days when a family member mattered much and nothing whatsoever could weaken the bond. We encounter a man by the name of Silas who has had issues with his wealthy brother. It becomes too complicated that the brother bothers less about the health situation of his brother. On the other hand, Silas works for Mary and Warren who technically becomes his best friends and a family to him. Even though Silas' brother has the ability to take care of his brother because of his vast wealth, he seems so much preoccupied with his success that he does not bother (Eric 132).

Silas is a diligent employee who feels indebted to his masters. Despite his ailing situation, he does not force himself with his brother and rather chooses

to be with people that love and care for him. On the other hand, Mary and Warren are held in between accommodating Silas and trying to reconcile him with his brother. They feel that because of the bond they share, they may not be of great help and assistance to Silas. It is at this juncture that Warren realizes the great responsibility he has towards Silas and the need to reconsider reconciling with him. However, it is too late for him, as Silas dies a cold death besides the stove.

In this modern world, people will care less about relationships until when they lose the person they should have cared for. This comes with a lot of regret and a wish to rewind the situation. Technology has made people to be too busy acquiring wealth that they may not care about the people that provided them great support. An example is especially between children and their parents. They tend to forget the sacrifices they make for their upbringing, most of the children will grow up to be successful and committed. Some may choose even to travel and live abroad and yet not give any form of support to their parents (Tuten & Zubizarreta 69). They look at them as stubborn old people who do not understand the generational gap between them. However, once their parents have died, they reflect with regret why they did not give them the attention they so needed. They try to cover up this by giving them an expensive send off which ultimately does not take away the guilt.

Modernism has however not taken a toll on all people as revealed by the reaction of Mary and Warren. They are human enough not just to throw Silas out considering his health condition. They accept and appreciate the great support he has shown them and hence trying all they can in their power to

assist him. Prevailing situations and circumstances have made people take up the responsibility to love and care even for those they do not know. Life has a way of taking us to relate with strangers simply because we have no otherwise. It happens that a person is alienated from their close family members and hence being forced to be nice to total strangers for the purpose of mutual benefit (Eric 69). Such interactions have also made many people to be more inclined to their friends more than they are to their relatives.

## **Home Burial**

Home burial is a poem that highlights strained relationships due to miscommunication. It is a story of a husband and wife who have just lost a child. They have different ways of reacting to the loss, which ultimately divides them. Modernism has been displayed in this poem by the different roles that are played by men and women. Traditionally, a woman was considered the submissive one who was obliged to respect and live by the decisions of the man even when they feel it is not right. They had the responsibility of persevering and taking in what their men did without complaining or being rigid. In this poem however, we see a freedom of expression on the woman who is yet to come to terms with the death of his child. She tries to express her grief to her husband who fails to understand as he treats it casually. This ultimately annoys his wife who decides to walk away.

Communication is vital in any form of relationship. When two individuals fail to understand each other, it becomes quite difficult to relate. It is

traditionally expected that the woman play the yielding role by understanding her man even when things does not make sense. This is because it was believed that the man had the final say in the family and that his decisions were the best. The woman was also expected to suppress his hurt and pain towards his man as she lives with the conditions. It appears as if the man and the woman are living I totally different worlds especially after the loss of the child. They must have been enjoying a good relationship which has been strained by the challenge of a dead child.

It has become common for families and friends to be separated by issues which could be solved and handled by them. What separate families in these modern times are misunderstandings that are caused by the day-to-day challenges of life. The fact that the man fails to decode the message of the wife and vice versa makes it difficult for them to relate. Going through such a season when each of the parties feel the need to be understood is critical in building their relationship. It however happens that they fail to understand each other where one party decides to walk out on the other. Most of such situations like the death of a loved one may be beyond their control yet they lack the avenue to solve their issues (Fitzsimmons 33).

There are those vulnerable moments when the parties concerned should understand each other. The poem also displays the gender differences that make a man and a woman react differently to a situation. The woman in the poem wanted the man to empathize with her and simply give her a shoulder to lean and cry own. What the man failed to understand that he did not have to react negatively but simply keep quite and jus be close to the woman. He needed to let her woman grieve for her child and allow tears to flow freely by

not being irritated. On the other hand, the man had accepted the misfortune that had befallen them and was wondering why the woman was bitter about it. His reaction was defensive in a manner that he thought the woman was blaming him for the death of his child. By reacting the way he did, the man was trying to justify the fact that he had nothing to do with the death of the child and that they had to move on with the loss.

The expression displayed in the poem on how a home fell with the death of a child also tells us much about how people in the modern world relate to each other. It is clear that after the burial of the child, the man and the woman were left all alone to deal with the grief. They did not understand that the two needed a lot of help and support to help them go through the rather difficult moment. Realizing the difference ways through which different genders react to grief, some few relatives and friends should have remained behind just to help them through the morning (Hoffman 106). However, these days people have become too busy that the moment they assist in the burial, they walk away and care less about how the bereaved handle the situation. After the death of a loved one, the toughest moment is accepting what has happened and moving on. Grief is the scenario that frost wished to display which has affected most modern relationships.

## **The Road not Taken**

The road not taken is a rather short poem that can be interpreted differently. This highlights the dilemma that is faced by man on a day-to-day basis. Life is full of choices and one is compelled to make what they feel is the best. In most cases, it requires a great deal of courage to make a certain decision

that is not common to everyone. As we make the decisions, we usually encourage ourselves that it may not be the best but hope that one day. Those around us will understand why we had to do so. The poem also displays a battle of conscience where the modern man has so many alternatives. There is the desire and wish to take all the roots yet they do not understand which one will lead to success. After considering the number of people that have taken a particular route, they desired to do it uniquely by choosing a very different route.

Consultation and seeking advice and most probably from the elder ones is something that the modern man shuns away from. Compared to some years back when a man will choose to seek advice before making a vital decision and more especially when they are stuck, this days they choose to follow what they feel (Frost 58). The issue of trust and appreciation of the elderly in our midst is questionable as a person chooses to battle it all alone. It is assumed that a person would rather make their own decisions and face their fate rather than follow another person's advice and not succeed. The poem displays the self-centeredness of man and the selfishness that is displayed in the decisions that they make.

The road not taken is also a reflection of the ever-changing scenarios in the modern world. This is displayed in the behavior and more especially the technological advancements that are being invented each day. The world has become so competitive in terms of opportunities and ideas. This hence requires a person to be more creative to survive. People are inventing unique ways through which to do their things, which will make them stand out and be remembered for what they did. The struggle for survival also



makes people to attempt things that have never been attempted before. It is amazing on how the human mind comes with survival tactics some that may be considered ridiculers (Wilcox & Barron 114). What matters is how a person survives rather than how the society will look at it. It is a matter of personal satisfaction, which is contrary to what the society considers right. Apart from the theme of modernity that has been displayed in Robert Frost's poems, there is also the aspect of style, which also represents the unique way in which poet has been displayed. When addressing issues of critical nature, it is necessary for a poet to use style that will keep the audience yearning for more. As the world changes, it is inevitable for poets to use the traditional way of presenting their literature. Poetry is more than just the use of symbols, idioms and rhyme scheme. Style such as suspense and the need to allow the audience to participate in the interpretation of a poem is vital in making it more appealing and acceptable. Despite the fact that Frost is an ancient poet writer, there is a distinction on how he presented his recent poem from what he did years back. This is simply done to accommodate the changes that come and the need to appeal to the readers.

We realize that the issues that faced generations behind us are different from what is facing the current generations. It may hence not make sense if a poet sticks to addressing issues the traditional way when the audience has changed considerably. Frost has also been careful to bridge the gap between the old and current generation by using ancient scenarios to display current developments. For instance, in the road not taken, we see his setting displaying a traditional scene. The seen of woods and paths may not make sense to the current generation where people easily associate with beaches

and cities (Richardson 123). However, when you keenly study the message, we realize that Frost is making a relationship with the current dilemma that faces man.

The biggest conflict that faces man is balancing between family relationships and the need to make money. Compared to the past years where family relationships were cherished more than careers, things have turned out the other way. The family unit is facing threat as people pursue their careers at the expense of their families. It is rather unfortunate that families never get to have moments when they can have moments where they share.

Television screens and mobile phones have taken center stage in what should have been considered a family moment. Children are restricted from interacting with their friends and hence finding solace in indoor games.

These are some of the scenes that have been addressed by Frost in his poems as he seeks to condemn some of the negative consequences of modernism.

We have to agree that change is inevitable and that we must live with the changes that come with modernism. However, as we learn the bitter lessons of neglecting our relationships at the expense of our busy schedule, we realize that nothing matters more than the people we love. As we get entangled with our busy schedule, at one time or the other we realize that we need people around us. However, unless we take up the challenge of being there for others when they need us, there is no way they will be there for us (Lentricchia 65). The result will hence be a breed of people who are lonely yet cannot openly admit their loneliness.

We have become so much accustomed to virtual relations that when we are

encountered with real issues, we may not be able to solve them. One thing that we tend to forget is the fact that all technological advancements were invented by man. They therefore have shortcomings that will need to be corrected by another person with a different weakness. We may hence pretend to believe that technology gives us perfect solution failing to realize that it was invented by imperfect persons. The moment we learn to link up technology with the developments of man, the sooner we realize that it is necessary to have physical people around us. This does not however imply that we do away with technology as this is impossible, however worshipping the same work of man at the expense of those dear to us is dangerous is only likely to turn us into zombies rather than human beings.

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