

# Tess of the d'urbervilles



Discussion Director - Tess of the D'Urbervilles 1. One of the biggest issues in this novel is whether Tess is victimized, whether she is responsible for her fate, or whether she is partially victimized and partially responsible for her fate. What do you think? Throughout the entire novel, Tess has been victimized by others and by pure accident. Starting from the very beginning when her father found out about their link to the D'Urbervilles, every misfortune she experienced was initiated by external forces.

Her own mistakes are minimal and forgivable until the end of the novel. Some of the readers of the literacy circle argued that Tess is responsible for her fate in the end because of her decision to kill Alec. I believe that she had been far too pressured and in the end she exploded and did something out of desperation. If she hadn't been victimized for so long before her death, she definitely would not have committed such a crime. 2. Are there times when Tess does have a choice and her decisions and actions are the result of her character?

Yes, Tess does make her own decisions throughout the novel. For example, when she decides to tell Angel about her past, this is a decision based on her character. Although one can't say she is to blame for his reaction, nor can anyone criticize her for her honesty, it was this decision that got her abandoned by her husband. She makes many decisions where she ends up getting in a worse situation, however up until the end, all her intentions are good natured. 3. The best tragedy-highest tragedy in short-is that of the WORTHY encompassed by the INEVITABLE. The tragedies of immoral and worthless people are not of the best" Do you agree with Hardy? Do you believe that the novel is a tragedy? Yes I agree with Hardy. It is more tragic

to read about a good person who experiences terrible events and catastrophes rather than bad people. It is tragic because one would not expect terrible things to happen to good people, the common idea being that positive actions get positive rewards.

The idea of tragedy being inevitable scares readers in believing that human beings are hopeless in the hands of fate. This idea of tragedy that Hardy describes is illustrated in the novel. Tess is exactly what he says a good tragedy is about, a good person that succumbs to the inevitable. 4. How does Alec show himself to be a better, more considerate, less purely villainous person than we might have believed him to be earlier? Are his actions toward Tess ever motivated by love? Alec returns in the plot as a convert. He went from being a rapist to being a priest.

He shows himself to be better by wooing Tess with the promise of comfort and love. He compares himself to Angel and tells her that Angel will never come back. He tells her the truth about his last name and provides her with honesty. I don't believe his actions toward Tess are motivated by love. Someone in love would not have tempted her so devilishly with money and shelter; they would provide emotional support above all. If Tess did not feel there was love between them, then most likely he was still his same old scheming self.