

Love versus lust

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Much like food and water, humans crave love as a vital nutrient to survive. When babies are born, they immediately cry out; only calming down when cradled by their mother.

In order to grow up not only happy, but also healthy, children rely on their family to fuel them with love and support. Before adolescence, the love of a family can alone satisfy the human need to be cared about by another person. Once a child becomes of age however, family affection no longer fulfills the craving completely. Humans will then long to love and feel the love of someone who they can share an intimate relationship with; specifically someone outside their family tree. In *100 Years of Solitude* by Garcia Marquez, occurrences of incest plague the Buendia family.

Incest, or sexual relations between members of the same family, corrupts the idea of what true love stands for. Because the Buendia's lineage was built around incestuous relationships, the family became deprived of real love which, in turn, drove them into a deeper state of solitude. During the founding of Macondo, the imaginary town in which the novel is set in, the narrator introduces the first solitary character, Jose Arcadio Buendia.

Destined for marriage to his cousin Ursula Iguaran immediately following his birth, Jose Arcadio Buendia never had an opportunity to choose his own soul mate. The two were joined together till death, not by love, but instead by mutual agreement. Even after ceremoniously celebrating their engagement, Ursula and Jose Arcadio Buendia practiced abstinence for a year due to fear of infant deformities.

“ At night they would wrestle for several hours in an anguished violence that seemed to be a substitute for an act of love...” (Marquez 21). Jose Arcadio Buendia finally gave in to intimacy only after taunting by a bitter opponent wounded his pride. Because he was incapable to ever feel true love due to his pre-determined circumstances, he attempted to subdue his love craving elsewhere. Jose Arcadio Buendia became obsessed with knowledge, to the extent that he would neglect his family to spend more time in his laboratory. “ That was the way he always was, alien to the existence of his sons..., and partly because he was always too absorbed in his fantastic speculations.

” (Marquez 15). His downfall came when he thought he discovered a way to create perpetual motion, which is impossible to do even in the make-believe town. He went so mad with his disillusionment that he lived the rest of his life alone, tied to a tree. In order to compensate for the absent love of a father, Ursula embraced the role of a mother over all the Buendia offspring. She constantly tried to secure social bonds, by accepting the orphan Rebeca into her house as a daughter and by welcoming countless strangers into her home.

Although she played a significant role in holding the family together, human nature proves that the love of a mother alone is not enough to thrive in life. Jose Arcadio and Aureliano, brothers, both make love to Pilar Ternera, an older woman with no other intentions besides sexual relations. This lust, often mistaken for love, still cannot satisfy the desire for real love and so the brothers continue to look elsewhere. Jose Arcadio follows a lust and leaves Macondo while Aureliano finds himself “ in love” with Remedios. “ He wanted to stay beside that lily skin forever, beside those emerald eyes, close to that

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voice that called him ‘sir’ with every question, showing the same respect that she gave her father” (Marquez 64).

Marquez describes Aureliano’s infatuation with Remedios more like a father-daughter relationship rather than love between two equals. Although not related, the idea of incest is still prevalent in their relationship. After Remedios dies, Aureliano does not become as distraught as he had originally expected. Instead, he becomes void of any emotion and feeling. “The death of Remedios had not produced the despair that he had feared.

It was rather, a dull feeling of rage that gradually dissolved in a solitary and passive frustration similar to the one he had felt during the time he was resigned to living without women” (Marquez 94). Although he suffers alone through his indifference to the world, it is clear the craving for love never left. During his travels during war, Aureliano had seventeen sons. Unable to experience true love for any of the women he had sexual relations with; his lonely suffering drove him to attempt suicide. Throughout the novel, Marquez uses his characters as a way to expose the importance of the human need for love. He shows how easily this need can go overlooked, and then shows the consequences from doing so.

Aureliano (II) grew up in a state of solitude from birth. He was born out of wedlock, so in order to hide the shame; Fernanda del Carpio isolated him from the town. After many years, he gradually accumulated himself into society. The effects from growing up alone for many years deprived him of love, and his loneliness drove him to lust over his Aunt, Amaranta Ursula. ” ... Aureliano confided in her about his repressed passion for Amaranta Ursula,

which he had not been able to cure with the substitution but which was twisting him inside all the more as experience broadened the horizons of love” (Marquez 387).

The fear of infant deformities, reiterated over and over again by Ursula, finally came true. The son of Aureliano (II) and Ursula was born with a pig’s tail. This occurrence was the final action before the apocalypse of Macondo. Marquez denied most of his characters true love, but allowed them to full-fill their needs in incestuous relationships. According to the outcome of events in the novel, many of his characters’ personal battles with solitude stemmed from them mistakenly substituting real love for lust.