

# The development of dunstan ramsay in fifth business

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



Experiences refers to the nature of the events someone or something undergoes. Experiences is what is always happening to us and can change someone for better or for worse. Throughout the novel, *Fifth Business* the protagonist, Dunstan Ramsay goes through many experiences that help make him the person he becomes at the end of the story. According to Jungian analyst Anthony Stevens, individuation is the “ process, simple or complex as the case may be, by which every living organism becomes what it was destined to become from the beginning” (Stevens, *Private Myths*, 139). With the concept of individuation Robertson Davies is able to create characters such as Mrs. Ramsay, Diana Marfleet, and Liesl Vitzliputzli to help mold, change, and fortify Dunstan into the person he is at the end of the story. By applying the Jungian theory of individuation and the ideas of character by Perrine, we are able to follow the development of Dunstan as he goes through life.

The first character to have a major influence in Dunstan’s development is his mother-Mrs. Ramsay. His mother is the first maternal influence he has and she helps to mold him into a person who takes control of his life. Even though she seems to love her son, she can be characterized by what Perrine calls indirect characterization; where her personality is revealed through her actions, and dialogue. By using Perrine’s method of indirect characterization, we can see that she is a determined, and strict mother whose feelings towards her son change over time. Through her actions we see that she shifts from a lovely parental role with the arrival of Paul Dempster. With the arrival of Paul we see the focus of her love change and isolation is coupled with the resentment she feels after the snowball incident. This is shown

when Dunstan says, “ I began to believe that I was more responsible for the birth of Paul Dempster than were his parents.... Part of that dreadful fate would undoubtedly be rejection by my mother” (Davies 17). By him saying this we see Mrs. Ramsay’s attention and affection being focused towards Paul instead of her own son. This treatment toward Dunstan contributes to the first phase of individuation-the shadow. Mrs. Ramsay’s treatment is responsible for Dunstan’s inability to connect with women, which is an unconscious aspect of his personality which his conscious ego can not identify in itself.

Diana Marfleet is the first woman Dunstan get into a sexual relationship with, and with her being his first realistic love she ends up playing a very significant role in the development of Dunstan. We first meet Diana when she takes care of Dunstan when he is injured during the war. As the two characters relationship begins to detour from a friendly one into a sexual one, we see how Diana starts a change in Dunstan. She does this by giving him a new name, “ You’ll never get anywhere in the world named Dumbledum Ramsay” (Davies 92). This name change signifies Dunstan’s new view of life and his rebirth. Even though Diana helps him start a new chapter in his life, she can be characterized by what Perrine calls direct characterization, where her personality is revealed by what is said about her by other characters. By using Perrine’s method of direct characterization, we can see that she is a loving, and overbearing person who contributes to Dunstan’s growth. By what is said about her we can see her shift from a lover to a motherly figure in the eyes of Dunstan, “ She was too much of a

mother to me and as I had one mother, and lost her, I was not a hurry to acquire another” (Davies 88). By him saying this we see Diana contributing to the second phase of individuation-the animus. Because of her acting like a mother than the sexual partner that he craves, she becomes responsible for the revealment of the normally dormant animus in Dunstan, which brings him one step closer to self-actualization.

The last character to have a lasting effect on Dunstan’s development is Liesl Vitzliputzli. Liesl is the first person in the novel to actually help Dunstan find his true self, which in turn fortifies him as a person. Even though Liesl seems like an unfriendly and ugly character she can be characterized by what Perrine calls indirect characterization, where her personality can be evident by her actions. By using this method of characterization, we can see that she the only person who cares about Dunstan’s well being. Liesl first appears in part five of the novel when Dunstan travels to Mexico City and ends up following a magic show. As their relationship evolves, we see how Liesl becomes Dunstan’s confidant, which begins with her trying to have sex with him. By her trying to seduce Dunstan, it opens the door for her to give him counsel and to shed light for Dunstan to realize that he never “ leads a full life” and needs to take action. She introduces the concept of fifth business to him, “ Who are you? Where do you fit into poetry and myth? Do you know who I think you are, Ramsay? I think you are Fifth Business” (Davies, 213). This is the last phase of Dunstan’s individuation process-the self. With the light shed over Dunstan by Liesl, he is finally able to fulfill his role in the surrounding people’s lives.

Throughout Robertson Davies Fifth Business, the protagonist Dunstan Ramsay goes through many experiences which help make him the person he is at the end of the novel. By using the jungian concept of individuation Davies is able to create different characters like Mrs. Ramsay, Diana Marfleet, and Liesl Vitzliputzli who end up intentionally or unintentionally molding, changing, and fortifying Dunstan.