

# Critical analysis of a mother in dubliners essay sample

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



There are five different themes highlighted in the story. The first one is Paralysis, which is the central theme for all the stories in “Dubliners”. In this story, paralysis is shown with the story’s main character, Mrs. Kearney, who is constantly relying and depending on her daughter, providing her with a very good education and making her follow a career in music. Paralysis could also be seen with Kathleen Kearney, who was forced by her mother to follow a musical career, and the way some people eventually say that she has no future in music whatsoever. The second theme, marriage, deals with the way it is portrayed in a negative way.

Mrs. Kearney got married “out of spite”, and there isn’t much romance in the relationship between her and her husband, although this doesn’t suggest that she has completely given up her romantic ideas. We also see the portrayal of husbands and wives, or family life in general, in a negative way. The third theme is class distinction. This is to do with how Mrs. Kearney keeps on bragging to her friends that her husband is taking her and her daughter to Skerries and they spend their money on Kathleen’s education and music lessons, to help prepare her for the concerts.

Another aspect that highlights this theme is Ms. Kearney’s use of language, which is that of an upper class, and this shows that she received an education that was as good as her daughter’s. The fourth theme is culture and religion. Certain aspects of culture are highlighted when we are told about the grand concerts, which are part of the Irish revival. Also, we see the way the Irish language is kept alive, like the way Mrs. Kearney and her

friends say good-bye in Irish. As for religion, we find out that Mr. Kearney was very religious and he often went to church by himself.

The final theme is materialism. This is to do with the way Mrs. Kearney is opportunistic, and how she is persistent with her daughter receiving money for all her performances. Joyce uses a satirical writing style in this story. This means that he is “making fun” of the characters indirectly/subtly. For example, the narrator refers to the concerts as “grand”, when in reality they are a failure, and the way Mr. Holohan’s friends call him Happy Holohan. Also, the way he refers to the artists in the concert as “artistes”. Another aspect of Joyce’s style is impressionism.

This is to do with how the narrator just tells us about the story (gives us a feedback) without revealing anything to us. For example, the narrator tells us the story through the way he sees it. He does not state his opinion, but instead he leaves us with what information we received from him to come up with our own conclusions of the characters. Naturalism is another aspect of Joyce’s style. He uses real places and real names in the story to give the reader a sense of place. The language Joyce assigned to the narrator is simple and flamboyant.

For example, “People said she was very clever, a very nice girl and a believer in the language movement” (p. 155). There are two forms of language spoken by the narrator: Speaking about the characters and providing information (Miss Devlin had become Mrs. Kearney out of spite... She was educated in high-class convent... ), and speaking on behalf of the

characters (People said... she was a very nice girl... ). When reading the story, we reach a few conclusions about the characters. Mrs. Kearney is revealed as a snob, conceited woman living in middle-class Dublin, and received a high-class education.

We see that she has a harsh and cold attitude (“ Her ivory manners were admired... She sat among the chilly circle of her accomplishments”). Mr. Kearny is a pious and sober man, he does not have a romantic relationship with his wife (not enough love), but he is always there to help and support his wife. Mr. Fitzpatrick represents the negative side of the male characters. Because of him, the concert ended in failure. In this story, Joyce has highlighted many aspects, ranging from themes to style, and he elaborated on them with detail, which helps the reader understand the way he portrays “ real” life in Dublin.