

An underrated character

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A fictional character I find to be very underrated is Sir Lancelot Dulac from T. H White's, "The Once and Future King." Lancelot is usually remembered in two ways.

He is remembered as The handsome knight who was the friend of the king, or he's was the man who stole his best friend's wife. However, I see his actions much more impactful to the story. The thing that was the most impactful was the romance between Lancelot and Queen Guinevere, King Arthur's wife. Lancelot's affair is so much more than a one time fling, and even though anyone who's ever read the book knows that it's more than a fling, we still treat it as such. Guinevere and Lancelot's love is more dynamic, genuine, and more believable than her and Arthur's marriage from the start. Arthur was an arranged marriage set by Guinevere's father.

The two didn't even know what the other looked like until they met on their wedding day. Now that was a very common thing for royal families in that era to do, however, you can't love someone you have never seen. If you are lucky then you can grow and learn to love the person, however, that is unlikely. The very question of rather Guinevere loved her husband or not is irrelevant to her situation anyways. Women had no power until centuries after the era that this book takes place. If Guinevere didn't love Arthur she couldn't get the marriage annulled or ask for a divorce, the only way she could get out of her marriage to Arthur was if she died, or Arthur divorced her.

We have no evidence that says she did or did not love Arthur, but we have plenty evidence of a dynamic relationship between her and Lancelot. The

first evidence that shows how dynamic the two is was that they did grow to love each other over time. When Lancelot first comes to Camelot from France to be in Arthur's court, he and Arthur are fast friends. Guinevere, however, admits that she detests him, hates him even for being so vain and arrogant. As the story progresses, Guinevere is forced to spend more time with Lancelot and only after they learn more about each other does their love blossom.

Another point that shows how dynamic Guinevere and Lancelot are, is just Lancelot as a person. Guinevere didn't fall for Lancelot because he was more handsome or more powerful than her husband, in fact, Lancelot was the exact opposite in both departments. As I mentioned before Lancelot left his home of France to become a knight in Arthur's court, and it is commonly known that at that time a lowly commoner was not able to become a knight. Knightship was typically only granted to four groups of people; Lords, Noblemen, the sons of Lords or Noblemen, or the king's sons. Knowing what we know about Lancelot, we can infer that he was the son of a Lord.

So that would mean that Lancelot would, in fact, come into a lot of money later in life but at the end of the day, Lancelot is still just a knight and would never come in more or even the same amount of money as Arthur had. The second point is that T. H White described Lancelot as not a very attractive man physically. These two points prove that Guinevere did, in fact, fall in love with the man that Lancelot was, and not because he was handsome or wealthier than her husband. Another thing I noticed is that Lancelot's struggles are even more dynamic than Arthur, our main character and focus of the story. This is not to say that Arthur doesn't struggle as a character at <https://assignbuster.com/an-underrated-character/>

all, but Arthur isn't really faced with any serious challenges mental or physical, until near the end of the book.

Lancelot, on the other hand, struggles emotionally from his entrance into the story right until the very end. When Lancelot first comes to Camelot he is very cocky and with good reason. Lancelot was a living legend in France and was said to be the best fighter there was. However, when he faces Arthur and loses he feels defeated as a man and starts to question where he is even worthy to be Arthur's knight. He struggles again when he discovers his love for Guinevere. Not only does he feel unworthy of Guinevere's attention, but he feels as if he has betrayed a man he had a brotherly love for.

He begins to hate himself because he wishes that he didn't love Guinevere but he couldn't control who he fell in love with no matter how much he tried. Lancelot even struggles when Guinevere admits her love for him. Lancelot becomes conflicted both morally and religiously. He is overjoyed that his love is reciprocated, however, He knows that she is married and the thoughts he has for her are against his Christian faith. He is also conflicted because he knows that Guinevere does not love her husband but that doesn't change that she is married, and to his best friend no less. Arthur has struggled as well, like when his father figure and mentor, Merlyn dies and leaves him to rule Camelot alone, when he is nervous about meeting his, at the time bride-to-be, Guinevere, and once again when his illegitimate son, Mordred comes to Camelot to find him.

The largest problem Arthur faces is the civil war in Camelot, and even then it is caused by Lancelot and Guinevere. Even then he never faces anything

close to what Lancelot struggles with throughout the story. I believe that T. H White possibly made a mistake and made his supporting character more interesting than his actual main character, by giving Lancelot a more dynamic relationship with Guinevere, more personal dilemmas to overcome, and generally, more of a personality in the short time that Lancelot was in the novel, than Arthur ever did throughout the entire novel.