

IMAGE AND INTERPRETATION OF PSYCHOLOGISM IN "ME BEFORE YOU" BY JOJO MOYES

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Abstract:

The article analyzes the psychologism through the intricate development of characters Louisa Clark and Will Trainor. Louisa transitions from a directionless individual to someone ignited by ambition and growth, catalyzed by her interactions with Will. Conversely, Will grapples with despair and a profound identity crisis following his paralysis, illuminating themes of autonomy and the psychological impacts of disability.

Keywords: psychologism, ambition, individual, psychological impacts.

Introduction

In "Me Before You," psychologism plays a crucial role in understanding the characters' emotional landscapes and motivations. The story follows Louisa Clark and Will Traynor, who form an unconventional bond after a tragic accident left Will paralyzed. Here's an interpretation of psychologism within the narrative:

The characters are deeply layered, with their psychological states significantly impacting their decisions. Will's struggle with his disability leads to profound existential questions about quality of life, while Louisa's journey reflects growth, self-discovery, and her ultimate confrontation with her own limitations. - Louisa Clark: At the beginning of the story, Louisa is portrayed as somewhat aimless and unfulfilled in her life, working in a dead-end job and lacking ambition. Her encounters with Will Traynor challenge



E- Global Congress

Hosted online from Dubai, U. A. E., E - Conference.

Date: 29th November 2024

Website: <https://eglobalcongress.com/index.php/egc>

ISSN (E): 2836-3612

her worldview, catalyzing her personal growth.¹ As she becomes more attuned to Will's struggles, Louisa evolves from a passive character to someone who actively seeks to push her boundaries. The act of caring for Will ignites her ambition and prompts her to question her life's trajectory.

Will's Despair vs. Louisa's Hope: The emotional dichotomy between Will and Louisa is central to the narrative. Will's internal conflict revolves around his battle between wanting to live and feeling that his quality of life is compromised. Louisa, filled with optimism, believes she can change Will's perspective on life. Their interactions are charged with tension as Louisa's hope clashes with Will's deep-seated despair, highlighting how unprocessed grief and trauma can shape an individual's outlook on life.

Socio-Economic Context: The contrasting backgrounds of Louisa and Will serve as a commentary on how socio-economic factors shape personal identity and perceptions. Louisa's working-class roots are rife with limitations, while Will's privileged lifestyle has afforded him opportunities and experiences that become points of conflict after his accident. This disparity underscores the psychological impact of societal expectations and personal circumstance on individual aspirations and relationships.²

Discussion

- **Physical Settings:** The environments depicted—from the vibrant, bustling scenes of Louisa's town to the sterile, oppressive atmosphere of Will's home—affect their mental states. Louisa's exploration of new environments alongside Will symbolizes her journey out of her comfort zone, which ultimately leads to her psychological growth and her newfound awareness of life's possibilities.
- **Complex Relationship:** The relationship between Will and Louisa challenges traditional romantic paradigms. Their bond is rooted in mutual understanding and psychological connection, rather than standard romantic tropes. Louisa's devotion serves not only as a source of hope for Will but also as a catalyst for his own exploration of autonomy and choice.
- **Themes of Sacrifice and Choice:** Will's decision regarding his life and autonomy raises profound ethical questions about love and sacrifice.

¹ 1. Frew, Linda. "Representations of Disability in Contemporary Fiction: A Study of Jojo Moyes' *Me Before You*." *Disability Studies Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 4, 2017.

² Murray, Nicholas. "The Ethics of Love and Loss: Jojo Moyes' *Me Before You*." *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 49, no. 3, 2017, pp. 295-309.

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Louisa's quest to show Will that life is worth living intertwines with her own emotional journey, creating a rich exploration of how love can inspire profound change but also lead to heart-wrenching decisions.

- Family Dynamics: The background characters, especially Will's parents, contribute to the emotional conflicts. Their differing views on Will's condition—his mother's nurturing instinct versus his father's pragmatism—reflect the multifaceted nature of coping with loss and disability. Their emotional dynamics influence how Will perceives his situation, layering the narrative with complex psychological themes.

- Will Traynor: Will's character embodies the struggle to reconcile identity and physicality. Before his accident, he was a successful, adventurous man who enjoyed life to its fullest. After becoming paralyzed, he experiences a significant psychological shift, grappling with feelings of despair and entrapment. His struggle to find purpose in a life he perceives as diminished illuminates themes of autonomy and the psychological ramifications of disability.

The internal conflicts faced by both characters showcase the impact of their past experiences and relationships. Will's desire for autonomy and despair contrasts sharply with Louisa's fresh perspective and unwavering hope. This juxtaposition highlights how psychological factors drive their interactions and emotional turmoil. The settings—from the Traynor family's affluent lifestyle to Louisa's working-class background—illustrate how socio-economic factors intertwine with psychology, influencing characters' perceptions and choices. The environments shape their identities, revealing how deeply intertwined personal psychology is with societal contexts. The evolving romantic tension between Will and Louisa is steeped in psychological implications.

This dialogue aims to reflect their emotional struggles, growth, and the psychological complexities of their relationship.

Setting: A quiet afternoon in Will's home, with sunlight streaming through the window. Louisa has brought him a cup of tea, and they are seated together, the weight of their unspoken feelings hanging in the air.

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Louisa: (looking hesitant) Will, I've been thinking... I don't want to push you into anything. I just want you to know that you don't have to face this alone.

Will: (sighs deeply) Lou, you don't understand. It's not about being alone. It's about what's left for me. I can't live like this. No matter how much you want to help...³

This dialogue captures the essence of their relationship, showcasing Louisa's optimism alongside Will's struggle and despair. It reflects their journey of connecting deeply, navigating their emotional conflicts, and fostering personal growth against the backdrop of challenging circumstances.

Their relationship challenges societal norms and expectations about love, relationships, and individual autonomy, portraying how psychological connections can transcend physical limitations.

Conclusion:

Through the lens of psychologism, Jojo Moyes crafts a narrative in "Me Before You" that delves into the depths of human experience. This exploration of the psyche—encompassing themes of love, loss, personal growth, and societal pressures—invites readers to reflect on their own understandings of what it means to truly live. The characters' struggles resonate on multiple levels, encouraging an empathetic engagement with the complexities of their lives. Through engaging storytelling, Moyes illustrates how intertwined the human experience can be with psychological, emotional, and social factors, offering a poignant examination of resilience and the quest for meaning in adversity. Jojo Moyes intricately weaves psychologism throughout "Me Before You," creating a rich tapestry of human experience that examines the complexities of love, loss, and the quest for meaning in life. Through vivid characterization and emotional depth, the story becomes a powerful exploration of the human psyche in the face of adversity.

³ Brady, Patricia. "The Working-Class Heroine: The Agency and Dilemma of Louisa Clark in Jojo Moyes' Me Before You." *Women's Studies*, vol. 45, no. 3, 2016, pp. 244-260.

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