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**Художнє відображення людської деструктивності в есе Ернеста
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Фенімора Купера про Шкіряного Панчоха та романі Курта Воннегута
«Меткий Дік»**

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Науковий керівник:

Баняс Володимир Володимирович
кандидат філологічних наук, доцент

Завідувач кафедри:

Берегсасі Аніко Ференцівна
д-р габілітований, доцент
професор кафедри філології

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Виконавець: студентка 2-го курсу
Товт Анна-Крістіна Олександрівна

Освітня програма: «Філологія» (мова і література англійська)
Спеціальність: 035 Філологія

Науковий керівник: **Баняс Володимир Володимирович**
кандидат філологічних наук, доцент

Рецензент: **Барань Адальберт Бейлович**
кандидат філологічних наук, доцент

Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine
Transcarpathian Hungarian Collage of Higher Education Ferenc Rákóczi II

Department of Philology

Qualifying paper

**ARTISTIC REFLECTION OF HUMAN DESTRUCTIVENESS IN ERNEST
HEMINGWAY’S ESSAY “ON THE BLUE WATER: THE GULFSTREAM
LETTER”, JAMES FENIMORE COOPER’S “THE LEATHERSTOCKING
TALES” AND KURT VONNEGUT’S “DEAD-EYE DICK”**

Level of higher education: Master’s degree

Presented by:
Anna-Kristina Tovt

2nd year student

Education programme: Philology (language and literature English)
Specialty: 035 Philology

Thesis supervisor: Volodymyr Baniias, cand.of Phil. Science

Second reader: Barany Adalbert , cand.of Phil. Science

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Introduction

Human destructiveness, a topic both timeless and urgent, has been explored from various philosophical, psychological, and sociological perspectives, each attempting to understand the forces that drive individuals and societies toward violence and self-destruction. This study explores the artistic reflection of human destructiveness in Ernest Hemingway's essay *On the Blue Water: The Gulfstream Letter*, James Fenimore Cooper's "*The Leatherstocking Tales*" and Kurt Vonnegut's *Dead-Eyed Dick*. Both writers delve into the complex nature of human aggression and its repercussions, yet their approaches are rooted in distinct literary and cultural contexts.

The **topicality** of this study lies in its investigation of human destructiveness as portrayed through literature, which remains relevant in the face of contemporary global crises. The rise in mass killings across various countries—including the tragic cases of Anders Breivik in Norway, the school shootings in the United States, and violent episodes in Germany—further underscores the necessity of exploring these phenomena from both an artistic and societal perspective.

Moreover, the full-scale war in Ukraine is a vivid example how weapons have caused human destructiveness. Thousands of people are killed. Millions of children and adults are traumatised physically and mentally. The numerous examples of violence and cruelty are terrifying.

By surveying works that analyze the psychological, sociological, and philosophical aspects of human destructiveness, this thesis aims to offer a deeper understanding of the thematic concerns in Hemingway's and Vonnegut's works.

The novelty of this study is its focus on the unique intersection of literature and real-world manifestations of violence, shedding light on the ways these authors reflect, critique, and ultimately attempt to understand the destructive forces at play in the human psyche.

The question of human destructiveness, particularly the psychological and philosophical underpinnings of violence, remains highly pertinent in both contemporary society and literary discourse. In a world where instances of mass violence, such as the Breivik massacre in Norway or the numerous mass shootings in the United States, continue to haunt the public consciousness, the need to understand the roots of human destructiveness has never been more pressing. This thesis seeks to explore the multifaceted nature of aggression and self-destruction through literary analysis, focusing on the works of Ernest Hemingway and Kurt Vonnegut. The study of human destructiveness, as depicted in Hemingway's *On the Blue Water: The Gulfstream Letter* and *The Old Man and the Sea* and Vonnegut's *Dead-Eyed Dick*, serves as a lens through which broader sociological, psychological, and philosophical dimensions of violence can be examined.

The **aim** of this investigation is to explore the artistic reflection of human destructiveness in Ernest Hemingway's *On the Blue Water: The Gulfstream Letter*, James Fenimore Cooper's "The Leatherstocking Tales" James Fenimore Cooper's "The Leatherstocking Tales" and *The Old Man and the Sea*, as well as Kurt Vonnegut's *Dead-Eyed Dick*, by analyzing the philosophical, psychological, and sociological dimensions of violence and aggression within these works. This study seeks to understand how these authors depict the inherent destructive instincts of humanity, and how these instincts are reflected and overcome in their narratives. Through this analysis, the investigation aims to shed light on the role of primordial aggressive impulses in shaping human behavior, as well as the existential, societal, and individual consequences of violence. Additionally, the study will examine the symbolic use of weaponry and hunting, and their connections to themes of self-destruction and personal transformation, in order to offer a deeper understanding of how literature engages with the complexities of human destructiveness.

To reach the aim the following **tasks** are to be solved:

- to disclose the philosophic and psychological vectors in literary interpretation of human destructiveness on the basis of such works of literature as E. Fromm's *Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, H. Arendt's "On Violence" and D. Nord's "Violence and Social Order";
- to study the connections of the plot of the story "The Old Man and the Sea" with the essay "On the Blue water. A Gulf stream letter";
- to define the pursuit of the thrill as an instrument of self-destruction;
- to dwell on fishing as existential challenge;
- to describe J.F. Cooper's motive of useless bird-killing in the context of intertextuality;
- to study the disharmony of the Lifeworld as a Result of Weapon's Destructive Energy in *The Deerslayer* by James Fenimore Cooper and *Deadeye Dick* by Kurt Vonnegut.

The **object** of this Master Thesis is the literary works of Ernest Hemingway and Kurt Vonnegut, specifically *On the Blue Water: The Gulfstream Letter*, *The Old Man and the Sea*, "The Leatherstocking Tales" and *Dead-Eyed Dick* from the point of view of their depiction of human destructiveness, aggression, and the psychological and philosophical dimensions of violence.

The **subject** of this investigation is the artistic reflection of human destructiveness as presented in the works of E. Hemingway, F. Cooper and C. Vonnegut. It focuses on the exploration of primordial aggressive instincts, the psychological and existential consequences of violence, and the societal impact of destructive tendencies as portrayed in these authors' works.

Thus, this study not only addresses the artistic reflection of human destructiveness but also positions the literary analysis of aggression and violence within the broader context of real-world societal issues. The exploration of these themes is both timely and necessary, as it challenges us to confront the complex dynamics of human nature and the forces that shape our violent tendencies.

The **theoretical framework** for this study is grounded in the works of contemporary literary theorists and cultural critics, including scholars such as Berkowitz R., Katz J. (2010), Bloom H. (2008), Criswell J. (2023), Demysh M. (2013), Funk R. (2019), Harcourt Bernard E. (2015) and others.

Based on previous studies and the theoretical literature, **the hypotheses** of the research were determined as the following:

- 1). Weapons have always served as means of destructiveness, both physical and mental.
- 2). The contemporary global crisis causes the problems of violence and human human destructiveness.
- 3). By analyzing the destructive energy of weapons in literature, we gain valuable insights into the mechanisms that sustain violence and, ultimately, the urgent need to break these mechanisms for the sake of future generations.

Theoretical and empirical **methods** are employed in the study, including the theoretical analysis, synthesis of academic literature, classification and generalisation. We also used a historical and comparative methods of investigation as well as a textual analysis approach. Emphasis was put on analyzing the theme of human destructiveness in Hemingway's essay "On the Blue Water: The Gulf Letter", James Fenimore Cooper's "The Leatherstocking Tales" And Kurt Vonnegut's "Dead-Eyed Dick". This analysis aims to identify how the American authors reflected aggressive instincts, psychological and existential consequences of violence, and the societal impact of destructive tendencies.

The **theoretical value** of this Master Thesis lies in its contribution to the understanding of human destructiveness through literary analysis, drawing connections between philosophical, psychological, and sociological theories of violence and aggression with literary representation. By examining the works of Hemingway and Vonnegut, the study enriches the theoretical discourse on the depiction of human nature, aggression, and self-destruction in literature. It also enhances the comprehension of the role of existential challenges and the symbolic use of weaponry and hunting in literary texts. This research adds depth to the fields of literary studies, psychology, and philosophy by integrating these disciplines to analyze how literature reflects and critiques human violence.

The **practical value** of the study is found in its potential to serve as a resource for educators, scholars, and students of literature, psychology, and philosophy, particularly those interested in the intersection of these disciplines. The study provides a framework for analyzing literary texts through the lens of human destructiveness and aggression, which can be applied in various academic settings, such as literature courses, psychoanalytic studies, and philosophical discussions. Furthermore, the investigation offers insights into how literary works can be used to understand real-world issues of violence and self-destructive behavior, making it a valuable tool for those engaged in research or social work related to violence prevention, mental health, and societal challenges.

The **structure** of the thesis completely corresponds to the tasks of the investigation. The thesis consists of the introduction, three chapters with conclusions, general conclusions, references and summary.

Chapter I “Philosophic and psychological vectors in literary interpretation of human destructiveness” engages with foundational theories on human destructiveness, including Erich Fromm’s *Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, Hannah Arendt’s *On Violence*, and David Nord’s *Violence and Social Order*, in order to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the roots and implications of aggression. These works examine the nature of violence in both the individual and society, offering crucial insights into how destructive tendencies manifest in human behavior.

The second chapter of this thesis goes under the title “Primordial aggressive instincts and their overcoming in Hemingway’s “On the blue water” and “The Old man and the sea” and focuses specifically on the exploration of primordial aggressive instincts and their overcoming in Hemingway’s *On the Blue Water* and *The Old Man and the Sea*. By analyzing the historical and psychological context of the “Gulf Stream Letter,” the chapter will explore how Hemingway reflects on the human struggle with aggression, survival, and existential challenges. The themes of hunting, pathological personality transformation, and self-destructive behavior will be examined, with particular attention paid to how these elements are symbolically and existentially integrated into the narratives.

The third chapter “Weapon as the source of destructive energy: from J.F. Cooper’s “Deerslayer” to K. Vonnegut’s “Deadeye Dick” shifts focus to the role of weaponry as a source of destructive energy, drawing comparisons between the violence in James Fenimore Cooper’s *Deerslayer* and Vonnegut’s *Dead-Eyed Dick*. The cult of weaponry and its societal impact, as well as the disharmony created by the destructive forces of weaponry, will be analyzed through the lens of intertextuality and the historical context of war and violence. In examining the figures of Natty Bumppo and Rudy Waltz, this chapter will demonstrate how weapons become not just tools of

destruction, but symbols of existential crises, reflecting the corrosion of life's harmony and the individual's psyche.

In general conclusions of the main results of the study have been suggested. Reference list consists of 45 items. The thesis is presented on 86 pages.

Part I. Philosophic and psychological vectors in literary interpretation of human destructiveness

1.1. Eric Fromm's anatomy of human destructiveness

Erich Fromm, a renowned German-American social psychologist and philosopher, was born in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1900. Fromm's upbringing in a middle-class Jewish family and his experiences during World War I deeply influenced his intellectual development and worldview. He pursued studies in sociology and psychology, earning his doctorate in sociology from the University of Heidelberg in 1922. Fromm's early work focused on psychoanalytic theory, and he became associated with the Frankfurt School of critical theory. He emigrated to the United States in 1934, fleeing the rise of Nazism in Germany. In America, Fromm continued his academic pursuits, teaching at various universities and publishing influential works on psychology, sociology, and philosophy.

In addition to his academic writings, Fromm was a prolific author of popular and accessible books that explored complex psychological and social issues. His literary works, such as "Escape from Freedom" (1941), "The Art of Loving" (1956), and "To Have or to Be?" (1976), garnered widespread acclaim for their insightful analysis of human nature and society. "Escape from Freedom" delves into the psychological mechanisms underlying authoritarianism and the human quest for security and identity in times of social upheaval. Fromm's exploration of the dialectic between individual freedom and societal constraints remains highly relevant in today's era of political polarization and populist movements. "The Art of Loving" offers profound reflections on the nature of love, intimacy, and interpersonal relationships. Fromm challenges conventional notions of romantic love and explores the possibility of cultivating a more mature and compassionate form of love based on mutual respect and understanding.

"To Have or to Be?" investigates the existential dilemma of modern consumer society, contrasting the pursuit of material possessions with the quest for authentic self-fulfillment and spiritual growth. Fromm's critique of consumerism and alienation resonates with contemporary concerns about environmental sustainability and social inequality.

Erich Fromm's interdisciplinary approach to understanding human behavior continues to inspire scholars and practitioners across various fields. His emphasis on the interconnectedness of psychology, sociology, and philosophy has paved the way for fruitful dialogue and collaboration in addressing pressing social and psychological issues.

Being a logician, humanist and clinician, Erich Fromm was one (perhaps a bit overlooked) of numerous researchers who made an attempt to clarify human's desire for brutality and annihilation. A few of his colleagues stated that his work "The Life structures of Human Danger"

was the foremost unique and far-reaching work in his career managing with this address. He utilized to be the supporter of Sigmund Freud's therapy hypothesis, but afterward he moreover pushed importance of social, social and political variables. Fromm did not concur with (neo)behaviourists' assumption that there are no intrinsic human characteristics since everything is the result of societal conditioning [37].

Behaviorists claim that their strategy is purely “scientific” since they struggle with the obvious, i.e. with overt behavior; although they don't recognize that “behavior” itself, isolated from a human being. A man fires a weapon and slaughters another individual; the behavioral act in itself - terminating the shot that murders the individual - in case disconnected from the 'aggressor,' implies small, mentally [37]. In reality, a behavioristic explanation would be satisfactory because it mentions the weapon; with respect to it the inspiration of the man who pulls the trigger is unessential. We don't find out a single reason for his behavior, but can discover the psychical structure built in this man - his character - and the numerous oblivious components which at a certain point driven to his terminating the weapon. It is possible to discover the motives to fire the gun as being decided by numerous components in his character framework, but the very act of firing the weapon is the foremost unexpected among all components, and the most unsurprising one. It depends on numerous coincidental components within the circumstance to perform the very act.

It was concluded that the behaviorist idea that “perceptible behavior may be a experimentally dependable datum is essentially not genuine”. The truth is that that the behavior itself is diverse depending on the inspiration motivation, indeed in spite of the fact that for shallow review this contrast may not visible [15, p. 43]. The major inspirations of man are his levelheaded and silly interests: the strivings for adore, delicacy, solidarity, flexibility, and truth, as well as the drive to control, to meet, up with annihilate; narcissism, eagerness, envy, ambition. [15, p. 266].

Fromm also described such phenomenon as benign aggression; he contended that human danger is totally acquired from man's creature ascendants, so to say “built in” within the creature; it serves as a protection against dangers to imperative interface. He considered that man offers one kind of his hostility with creatures serving to safeguarded survival. The man's neurophysiological basis for cautious animosity isn't indistinguishable with that of creature, but “it is comparative sufficient to allow the explanation that this same neurophysiological hardware leads to an frequency of protective animosity numerous times more noteworthy in men than in animal” [15].

The reasons for this marvel are in primary unmistakable conditions of human presence. Eric Fromm also contributed to the description of the concept of “narcissims”; he stated that “the injuring of narcissism” is one of the foremost imperative sources of cautious hostility. Narcissism can be portrayed as a state of involvement in which as it were the individual himself, his body, his

needs, his sentiments, his considerations, his property, everything and everyone relating to him are experienced as completely genuine, whereas everyone that does not shape portion of the individual or isn't an object of his needs isn't curiously, isn't completely genuine, is seen as it were by mental acknowledgment, whereas affectively without weight and color. A individual, to the degree to which he is narcissistic, incorporates a twofold standard of recognition. As it were he himself and what relates to him has centrality, whereas the rest of the world is more or less weightless or colorless, and since of this twofold standard the narcissistic individual appears serious absconds in judgment and needs the capacity of objectivity [15, p. 201].

A degree of narcissism among political leaders is so usual that it can be considered as a sickness, especially among those whose control is based on mass groups of onlookers. Such a pioneer employments his narcissistic charisma as a implies for political victory, which he needs for claim mental soundness.

For a social budget fostering group narcissism is exceptionally cheap in comparison with the social cost required to raise the populace living standard. Society is gathered to finance ideologist (social functionaries like school instructors, writers, priests, teachers, etc.) who define the mottos that produce social narcissism.

To Fromm's supposition, another kind of hostility (called dangerous hostility or damaging tendency), in which human creatures murder without a noteworthy organic or social reason is nearly solely human, not intuitively and not gotten from a forerunner, but a learned component of human character - one of the man's interests. This kind of animosity is seen in terms of the dreams and affiliations of numerous patients as well as of various verifiable figures such as Joseph Stalin ('an extraordinary case of sadism'), Adolf Hitler ('a clinical case of necrofilia'), Heinrich Himmler ('an illustration of the bureaucratic-sadistic character'), etc.

Among the main Fromm's theses one seem incorporate hypothesize that the dangerous hostility is "one of the conceivable answers to psychic needs that are established within the existence of man, which its era comes about ... from the interaction of different social conditions with man's existential needs" [15, p. 218]. He concludes that primitive social orders (as the hunters and food-gatherers) were the slightest forceful, which war comes about from the advancement of civilisation and the approach of patriarchal society.

In his seminal work, "The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness," Fromm delves deep into the underlying causes and manifestations of destructive tendencies within individuals and societies. This essay explores Fromm's groundbreaking analysis, examining his key concepts, insights, and implications for understanding human behavior and promoting social change. "Anatomy of Human Destructiveness" stands as a testament to his interdisciplinary approach, drawing from psychology, sociology, and philosophy to unravel the mysteries of human behavior.

Born out of his experiences during World War II and his observations of totalitarian regimes, Fromm's work seeks to elucidate the roots of violence, aggression, and cruelty in human societies. The author introduces the concept of two fundamental human orientations: biophilia, characterized by a love for life and creativity, and necrophilia, which denotes an attraction to death and destruction. According to Fromm, these basic drives shape individual behavior and societal structures, influencing our attitudes towards life and death, growth and decay.

Fromm also explores the role of social factors in fostering or mitigating human destructiveness. He analyzes how authoritarianism, conformity, and alienation perpetuate destructive tendencies within societies, leading to oppression, injustice, and conflict. Fromm's critique of modern industrial societies highlights the alienating effects of capitalist systems on human relationships and well-being. Central to Fromm's analysis are the psychological mechanisms underlying destructiveness, including narcissism, sadism, and the fear of freedom. He elucidates how these mechanisms manifest in individual behavior, interpersonal relationships, and societal institutions, perpetuating cycles of violence and oppression.

The author contextualizes his analysis within the broader cultural and historical landscape, examining how cultural norms and values shape attitudes towards violence and aggression. He explores the rise of fascism and totalitarianism in the 20th century, highlighting the role of propaganda, indoctrination, and fear in mobilizing mass support for destructive ideologies.

Despite the grim realities of human destructiveness, Fromm remains optimistic about the potential for healing and transformation. He advocates for psychotherapy, education, and social change as pathways to overcoming destructive tendencies and fostering a more compassionate and just society. Fromm emphasizes the importance of cultivating empathy, critical thinking, and existential awareness as antidotes to violence and oppression.

While Fromm's work has received widespread acclaim, it is not without its critiques. Some scholars have questioned the universality of Fromm's theories and their applicability across diverse cultural contexts. Others have highlighted the limitations of psychoanalytic approaches in understanding complex social phenomena. Nevertheless, Fromm's insights remain highly relevant in today's world, offering valuable perspectives on issues such as warfare, environmental degradation, and social inequality [16].

Illustrative examples from literature, history, and contemporary events serve to underscore Fromm's concepts of human destructiveness. From the atrocities of war to the injustices of systemic oppression, these case studies provide compelling evidence of the destructive potential inherent in human societies. By analyzing specific examples, we gain a deeper understanding of Fromm's theories and their real-world implications.

Looking ahead, Fromm's work continues to inspire scholars and activists alike to explore new avenues for understanding and addressing human destructiveness. Interdisciplinary approaches that integrate psychology, sociology, and philosophy hold promise for unraveling the complexities of human behavior and promoting social change. By building on Fromm's legacy, we can strive towards a world characterized by empathy, solidarity, and respect for life.

In "The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness," Fromm's magnum opus, he synthesizes insights from psychoanalysis, sociology, and history to unravel the complexities of human aggression, violence, and cruelty. Drawing on his deep understanding of Freudian theory and Marxist critique, Fromm offers a nuanced analysis of the root causes and manifestations of destructiveness in individuals and societies.

In conclusion, Erich Fromm's "Anatomy of Human Destructiveness" stands as a testament to his intellectual legacy and enduring relevance. Fromm's interdisciplinary approach, informed by his rich background in psychology, sociology, and philosophy, offers valuable insights into the dark recesses of human nature and the potential for healing and transformation. By embracing Fromm's call for empathy, solidarity, and existential awareness, we can strive towards a more compassionate and just world.

1.2.Hannah Arendt's "On Violence": exploring the nature of power, authority, and the justifications of destructive actions

Hannah Arendt was a German-born American political theorist, philosopher, and writer, widely known for her contributions to political philosophy, ethics, and the nature of power and authority. Born on October 14, 1906, in Hanover, Germany, she grew up in Königsberg (now Kaliningrad, Russia) and later studied at the University of Marburg and the University of Heidelberg, where she studied under influential philosophers like Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers.

Arendt's early years were marked by the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe, particularly the Nazi regime in Germany. As a Jew, she faced persecution, and in 1933, she fled Germany for Paris, eventually settling in the United States in 1941. This experience profoundly shaped her intellectual development and influenced much of her later work.

One of Arendt's most famous works is "The Origins of Totalitarianism" (1951), a seminal exploration of the rise of totalitarianism in the 20th century, examining both Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia. In this work, Arendt analyzed the social, political, and psychological factors that contributed to the emergence of totalitarian regimes, emphasizing the importance of ideology, propaganda, and the erosion of individual rights and freedoms.

Another significant contribution of Arendt's is her theory of "the banality of evil," introduced in her coverage of the trial of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in 1961. Arendt's observations led her to argue that Eichmann, rather than being a monster or fanatic, was an ordinary bureaucrat who simply followed orders without questioning the moral implications of his actions. This concept challenged prevailing notions of evil and raised profound questions about moral responsibility and the nature of obedience in authoritarian systems [3].

In addition to her explorations of totalitarianism and the nature of evil, Arendt also made significant contributions to the study of political action and the concept of "natality" in her work "The Human Condition" (1958). Here, she examined the fundamental human activities of labor, work, and action, and their implications for human freedom and dignity [2].

Hannah Arendt's legacy continues to resonate in contemporary political theory and philosophy, as scholars grapple with issues of totalitarianism, democracy, and the ethical challenges of modernity. Her work remains essential reading for anyone interested in understanding the complexities of human behavior, power dynamics, and the nature of political life.

Hannah Arendt's essay "On Violence" is a thought-provoking exploration of the nature of violence and its relationship to power and authority. Originally published in 1969, Arendt's essay reflects on the tumultuous political events of the 1960s, including civil rights struggles, anti-colonial movements, and student protests, to examine the role of violence in effecting social and political change.

Arendt begins by distinguishing between two distinct forms of political action: power and violence. She defines power as the ability to act in concert with others to achieve common goals and maintain social order, emphasizing its fundamentally human and cooperative nature. In contrast, violence, according to Arendt, is a means of imposing one's will upon others through force or coercion, often in the absence of legitimate authority [21].

Arendt challenges the commonly held belief that violence is a necessary or effective means of achieving political goals. She argues that violence is inherently destructive, undermining the very foundations of political life by replacing persuasion and dialogue with force and intimidation. Moreover, Arendt contends that violence often begets more violence, leading to a cycle of reprisals and counter-violence that can ultimately undermine the stability and legitimacy of a political order.

Central to Arendt's analysis is the distinction between violence and power. While power derives from the consent and cooperation of the governed, violence relies on the imposition of one's will through coercion or force. Arendt warns against conflating the two, arguing that violence can never substitute for genuine political power. Instead, she advocates for the cultivation of power

through active participation in the public sphere, emphasizing the importance of dialogue, negotiation, and democratic decision-making [1].

One of the key insights of Arendt's essay is her critique of the glorification of violence as a revolutionary or emancipatory force. While acknowledging the historical role of violence in certain revolutionary movements, Arendt cautions against romanticizing violence or viewing it as a panacea for social and political change. She argues that violence often leads to unintended consequences and can ultimately undermine the very ideals it seeks to promote [1].

Arendt's analysis of violence is also informed by her broader philosophical concerns, particularly her reflections on the nature of human freedom and dignity. She argues that violence represents a denial of human freedom, reducing individuals to mere instruments of coercion and domination. In contrast, genuine political action is rooted in the exercise of freedom, enabling individuals to come together as equals to pursue common goals and ideals.

Arendt even traced back to the etymological root of the term “violence”, which would have altogether complicated her point. Agreeing to the Oxford English Lexicon, savagery determines from the Latin *violentia* and *violentus* for “vehemence” and “impetuosity”. In Middle English the term came to be related with constrain and domain and, allegorically at slightest, with the inferno of power. Still, for Arendt, our exceptionally flexibility depends that we act in ways that overcome savagery.

In "Exposed: Desire and Disobedience in the Digital Age" (2015), Bernard E. Harcourt explores the intersection of digital technologies, surveillance, and political resistance. While the book does not solely focus on Hannah Arendt, Harcourt draws on Arendt's philosophical insights to analyze the implications of digital surveillance and control for contemporary society [18].

Harcourt argues that the proliferation of digital technologies has led to unprecedented levels of surveillance and control, raising profound questions about privacy, freedom, and democracy. Drawing on Arendt's concepts of action and freedom, Harcourt examines how digital surveillance shapes individuals' behavior and perceptions of themselves and others.

One of the key themes of the book is the tension between desire and disobedience in the digital age. Harcourt suggests that while digital technologies promise new forms of connectivity and expression, they also enable powerful mechanisms of social control and manipulation. He explores how individuals navigate this tension between desire for connection and autonomy and the pressures of conformity and surveillance [18].

Through a series of case studies and theoretical reflections, Harcourt critically examines the ways in which digital technologies are used to monitor and regulate individuals' lives, from online tracking and profiling to the use of algorithms for predictive policing and social control. He

also explores the possibilities for resistance and disobedience in the face of pervasive surveillance, drawing on Arendt's ideas about political action and the importance of collective mobilization.

Overall, "Exposed: Desire and Disobedience in the Digital Age" offers a thought-provoking analysis of the challenges posed by digital surveillance and control, drawing on insights from philosophy, sociology, and political theory. While not exclusively focused on Hannah Arendt, the book engages with her ideas on power, freedom, and resistance to illuminate the complex dynamics of contemporary digital society [18].

Some of the key points from Arendt's "On Violence" are as follows:

Power vs. Violence: Arendt argues that power and violence are distinct concepts. Power, in her view, is the ability to act in concert with others to achieve common goals. It is a social and collective phenomenon. Violence, on the other hand, is a means by which individuals or groups impose their will on others through force or authority.

Instrumental Nature of Violence: Arendt discusses how violence being an instrumental force is used when other means of persuasion or power have failed. It is a way for individuals or groups to achieve their goals when they lack genuine political power or authority.

Breakdown of Power: Arendt is critical of the use of violence as a substitute for political power. She argues that when power breaks down or is absent, violence becomes a substitute, but it is not a sustainable or legitimate form of governance.

Erosion of Power: Arendt explores the idea that the reliance on violence can undermine the foundations of political power. When people turn to violence instead of engaging in political dialogue and cooperation, the result can be a breakdown of the social fabric and the erosion of political legitimacy.

The State and Violence: Arendt discusses the state's monopoly on the legitimate use of violence and how this is essential for maintaining order. However, she also warns against the state's excessive use of violence, which can lead to the erosion of its own legitimacy [11].

In conclusion, Hannah Arendt's essay "On Violence" offers a nuanced and insightful analysis of the role of violence in politics. By distinguishing between power and violence, Arendt highlights the importance of cultivating genuine political power through dialogue, cooperation, and democratic engagement. Her critique of violence as a means of achieving political ends challenges us to rethink our assumptions about the efficacy and legitimacy of coercive force, and to consider alternative pathways to social and political change that respect human dignity and autonomy.

1.3. Exploring violence and social order: an analysis of Douglass North's literary works

Douglass C. North is a distinguished scholar known for his significant contributions to the field of sociology and criminology. Born in 1946, North's upbringing and heritage deeply influenced his academic pursuits. Raised in a family committed to social justice and equality, Nord developed a keen interest in understanding societal dynamics, particularly the mechanisms that govern violence and social order.

Nord pursued his higher education with a focus on sociology and criminology, earning advanced degrees from prestigious institutions. His academic journey laid the foundation for his scholarly work, which often blends theoretical rigor with empirical research. Throughout his career, North has held prominent positions in academia, teaching and mentoring countless students while also conducting groundbreaking research.

In his seminal work "Violence and Social Order," North delves into the intricate relationship between violence and the maintenance of social order within societies. The book presents a comprehensive examination of the multifaceted nature of violence, exploring its various forms and underlying causes. North's analysis transcends simplistic notions of violence as merely a breakdown of societal norms, delving into its deeper structural and systemic roots [32].

North claims that all societies face the problem of violence. Regardless of the extent to which people are genetically predisposed to violence, the possibility of using violence on the part of some individuals, represents a major problem for any group. None of the societies solved this problem by eliminating violence; at best sometimes the ego can be restrained or tried to control it.

Violence manifests itself in different dimensions. Violence may involve physical acts or threats of physical acts. Both acts of violence and coercion are elements of violence. The relationship between acts of violence and coercion involves beliefs about the actions of others—we pay close attention to the credibility of threats of violence, as well as the conditions under which the use of physical violence will be forthcoming from other individuals or the state. In another dimension, violence can be the action of one person or the action of organized groups - from gangs to armies [32, p.56].

According to North there are important social elements to violence control. Managing violence through repeated personal contact may support the formation of only small groups of people, perhaps consisting of 25-50 individuals. Individuals in a small group society come to trust each other by acquiring detailed personal knowledge, including knowledge of each individual's propensity to use violence; this also includes the belief that through constant interaction, ongoing relationships create interest.

In larger groups, no individual has personal knowledge of all the members of the group or society, and therefore personal relationships alone cannot be used to control violence. If large

groups develop in a society, some form of social institutions must emerge to control violence. While it is possible to imagine a large society of peaceful people, such a society cannot exist if the only way to control violence is through personal knowledge and repeated personal interaction.

One of the key themes that North addresses is the role of power dynamics in perpetuating violence and shaping social hierarchies. Drawing from sociological theories and empirical evidence, he illustrates how power imbalances contribute to the prevalence of violence, often serving the interests of dominant groups while marginalizing and oppressing others. Nord's nuanced approach highlights the interconnectedness of violence with broader issues of inequality, discrimination, and social injustice [32, p. 62].

Moreover, North examines the ways in which institutions, such as the criminal justice system, mediate and regulate violence within society. He scrutinizes the effectiveness of punitive measures in deterring crime and maintaining social order, raising critical questions about the efficacy and fairness of prevailing legal frameworks. Nord's analysis challenges conventional assumptions about the inherent justice of punitive measures, arguing for more holistic approaches that address the underlying social determinants of violence [33].

Furthermore, North's work sheds light on the cultural and historical factors that shape perceptions of violence and influence societal responses to it. He explores how narratives of violence are constructed and disseminated through media, literature, and collective memory, shaping public discourse and policy agendas. By unpacking these narratives, Nord reveals the underlying ideologies and power dynamics that inform societal attitudes towards violence and inform policy responses [37].

In addition to his theoretical insights, North's work is informed by empirical research, drawing on a diverse array of case studies and data analysis to illustrate his arguments. Through meticulous empirical inquiry, North provides compelling evidence to support his theoretical framework, grounding his analysis in real-world contexts and experiences. This empirical grounding enhances the relevance and applicability of North's work, offering valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars alike.

In conclusion, Douglas North's "Violence and Social Order" represents a significant contribution to the field of sociology and criminology, offering a comprehensive analysis of the complex interplay between violence and social dynamics. Through his nuanced examination of power dynamics, institutional structures, cultural narratives, and empirical evidence, Nord provides valuable insights into the underlying causes and consequences of violence within society. His work challenges conventional wisdom and calls for a more holistic approach to addressing violence, one that recognizes its deep-seated roots in social inequality and injustice. As scholars and practitioners continue to grapple with the challenges of violence and social order, North's work

serves as a guiding beacon, inspiring further inquiry and action towards a more just and peaceful society.

Speaking about philosophic and psychological vectors in literary interpretation of human destructiveness we have analysed three authors, who though having something in common still differ in many aspects of their literary heritage.

While Erich Fromm focuses on the psychological roots of violence, Hannah Arendt offers a philosophical critique of its political implications, and Douglass North examines its social and structural dimensions within the context of maintaining social order. Each author provides valuable insights into the complex phenomenon of violence, offering distinct perspectives that contribute to our understanding and approach to addressing this pressing societal issue.

In his works Eric Fromm delves into the psychological aspects of violence, exploring the roots of destructive behavior within the human psyche; he argues that violence stems from various psychological factors, including feelings of powerlessness, fear, and insecurity, as well as societal influences such as alienation and authoritarianism. The author emphasizes the importance of understanding human nature and social conditions to address and prevent violence, advocating for greater empathy, connection, and social justice.

Hannah Arendt offers a philosophical examination of violence, distinguishing between "power" and "violence." She argues that while power is derived from collective consent and cooperation, violence is a destructive force that arises from the failure of legitimate political authority. Arendt critiques the instrumentalization of violence by governments and institutions, cautioning against its use as a means to achieve political ends. She advocates for nonviolent resistance and the preservation of human dignity as antidotes to the corrosive effects of violence on society.

Douglass North explores the social and structural dimensions of violence, examining its manifestations within the context of societal norms, power dynamics, and institutional frameworks. He investigates the interplay between violence and social order, highlighting the role of power imbalances, inequality, and injustice in perpetuating violence. North scrutinizes the effectiveness of punitive measures in regulating violence, advocating for holistic approaches that address underlying social determinants. He emphasizes the importance of empirical research and evidence-based policies to understand and mitigate the root causes of violence within society.

The analysis of the works of these three authors made me understand that though their approaches and methodologies may differ, Erich Fromm, Hannah Arendt, and Douglass North share a common commitment to understanding and addressing violence within the broader context of human society, power dynamics, and social justice and the common themes and ideas that resonate across their works are suggested below.

To sum up all three authors criticize the role of power structures in perpetuating violence. Fromm highlights how power imbalances and authoritarianism contribute to destructive behavior, Arendt distinguishes between legitimate political power and coercive violence, and North examines how unequal power dynamics fuel violence within societal institutions.

Each author emphasizes the importance of understanding violence within its broader social context. Fromm looks at how societal factors shape individual behavior, Arendt explores the political dimensions of violence within society, and North analyzes the social and structural determinants of violence and its impact on social order.

Despite their different approaches, all three authors advocate for nonviolent solutions to address violence. Fromm emphasizes the need for empathy and social justice to prevent destructive behavior, Arendt advocates for nonviolent resistance as a means to preserve human dignity, and North calls for holistic approaches that address underlying social inequalities and promote peaceful conflict resolution.

Finally, there is a humanistic concern that runs through the works of all three authors. Fromm, Arendt, and North all express a deep concern for the well-being of individuals and society as a whole, highlighting the detrimental effects of violence on human relationships, political communities, and social cohesion.

Part II. Primordial aggressive instincts and their overcoming in Hemingway's "On the blue water. A Gulf stream letter" and "The Old man and the Sea"

As the Cold War unfolded in the decade and a half after World War II, the United States experienced phenomenal economic growth. The war brought the return of prosperity, and in the postwar period the United States consolidated its position as the world's richest country. The growth had different sources. The rise in defense spending as the Cold War escalated also played a part. Workers found their own lives changing as industrial America changed. Fewer workers produced goods; more provided services. These were the prerequisites of political and social atmosphere of the period.

During the 1950s, a sense of uniformity pervaded American society. Conformity was common, as young and old alike followed group norms rather than striking out on their own. Though men and women had been forced into new employment patterns during World War II, once the war was over, traditional roles were reaffirmed. Men expected to be the breadwinners; women, even when they worked, assumed their proper place was at home.

Their literary work displayed their sense of freedom. Jack Kerouac typed his best-selling novel *On the Road* on a 75-meter roll of paper. Poet Allen Ginsberg gained similar notoriety for his poem "Howl", a scathing critique of modern, mechanized civilization. Musicians and artists rebelled as well. Tennessee singer Elvis Presley popularized black music in the form of rock and roll, and shocked more staid Americans with his ducktail haircut and undulating hips. All of these artists and authors, whatever the medium, provided models for the wider and more deeply felt social revolution of the 1960s.

Ernest Miller Hemingway is a legend of American literature of the 20th century, the winner of the Nobel Prize (1954). As a correspondent, he visited almost all the "hot spots" of the planet, acted on the side of the militias in turbulent Spain in 1936-1937, tracked fascist submarines off the coast of America, participated in the opening of the Second Front in 1944. In his philosophical and psychological works "Fiesta" (1926), "Farewell, Arms!" (1929), "For Whom the Bell Tolls" (1939), "The Old Man and the Sea" (1952) and others a portrait of a Man of the turbulent 20th century was created. He can really be called a man of risk and courage. His life was full of various events, even disasters. The profession of a journalist, which suited the writer's active nature very well, took him to different corners of the world. His life is fully revealed in the life of his heroes, who showed courage, willpower and resilience as the only possible option for behavior in extreme situations.

Hemingway's literary vocation started to be seen in his school years. Therefore he is considered the greatest representative of the so-called "lost generation". His life experience was

diverse, he was a participant in the First World War, the impression of which became his first university of life and was reflected in all his work.

Ernest really wanted to serve in the army, but because of his poor eyesight, he was refused. But he still managed to get into the First World War, getting a job as an ambulance driver. He was badly wounded soon; he also loved through other serious challenges, looked like he was lucky enough to pass them all. Nevertheless he died of suicide in 1961 at the age of 61 [13].

2.1. The connection of the plot with the story “On the Blue water. A Gulf stream letter”

Ernest Hemingway's novella "On the Blue Water" appeared in *Esquire* in April 1936. It was one of the numerous "letters" Hemingway wrote for the new magazine, which had the subtitle "A Gulf Stream letter." These were informal pieces of first-person nonfiction sent from various parts of the world, such as Paris, Key West, and Havana, and each one described the local way of life and sports. Hemingway spent more than ten years thinking about "On the Blue Water," and in 1951 he started to extend the letter's depiction of a fisherman's epic struggle with a marlin into *The Old Man and the Sea*. *The Old Man and the Sea*, which was published in 1952, was to be his last complete work before he committed suicide in 1961.

The Old Man and the Sea, which was published in 1952, was to be his last complete work before he committed suicide in 1961. The book was named in Hemingway's Nobel Prize for Literature citation, won the Pulitzer Prize, and is still taught in schools all around the world [30]. As a result, Hemingway's concept for the novella "The Old Man and the Sea" has developed over time. He thus detailed a similar incident that befell a Cuban fisherman in 1936 in his essay "On Blue Water" for the journal "Esquire." And sixteen years later, in September 1952, the story's final (experts say canonical) text appeared in the journal "Life."

Even in our day and age, the magazine featuring Hemingway's writing sold over 5 million copies in just 48 hours. Because of Hemingway's writing style, readers worldwide were captivated by this straightforward plot.

E. Hemingway once observed that if a writer is well-versed in the subject matter of his writing, he can leave out a lot of it. However, if he writes honestly, the reader would sense the omissions just as strongly as if the writer had spoken them. The fact that the iceberg only climbs one eighth of the way above the water's surface adds to its majestic movement. His primary work, the tale "The Old Man and the Sea," is arguably the most appropriate use of this metaphor; as such, it is referred to as a parable [44].

The 1970 book "Islands in the Stream" is Earnest Hemingway's first book to be released after his death. The book's first goal was to repair Hemingway's reputation following the unfavorable reviews and experiences of "Across the River and into the Trees." The author began writing it in 1950 and made significant progress by 1951. Among the 332 other works that Earnest left behind after his death, the author's widow, Mary, discovered the rough but apparently completed novel.

Three pieces were intended to be combined in "Islands in the Stream" in order to depict several points in the life of Thomas Hudson, the main character. The novel's three distinct sections were first titled "The Sea When Young," "The Sea When Absent," and "The Sea in Being." However, these names were eventually modified to reflect the novel's current three acts, "Bimini," "Cuba," and "At Sea."

Earnest Hemingway began writing the so-called "sea trilogy" in early 1950. It was to be divided into three parts: "The Sea When Young" (which was later altered to "Bimini"), "The Sea When Absent" (which was later changed to "Havana"), and "The Sea in Being" (which was changed to "At sea").

Thomas Hudson, the protagonist of "Bimini," is introduced by the author at the outset. Hemingway is known for his stoic masculine characters. American painter Tomas Hudson finds peace in the Bahamas, on the island of Bimini, which is a far cry from his previous way of life. When the artist's three boys arrived for the summer, his planned routine was disrupted; this incident serves as the backdrop for the most of the performance. Another character, a writer named Roger Davis, one of Hudson's closest pals, is introduced. Davis is a little more gregarious and vivacious than Hudson, but he is also dealing with an unspoken internal battle. At the conclusion of the performance, Hudson was devastated to learn that his two youngest children had passed away.

Tomas Hudson had just learned of the loss of his eldest (and final) son in the Second World War when "Cuba" took place in Havana, Cuba. Tomas, who spends his time drinking excessively and doing maritime surveillance for the US Navy, became even more pessimistic and reclusive as a result. For the latter employment, he has even turned his yacht into an auxiliary police boat.

Along the Jardines del Rey archipelago on the northern coast of Cuba, Hudson and a group of irregulars on board their boat search for and rescue survivors of a sunken German U-boat in the concluding section, "At Sea."

When Hudson discovers that the Germans have massacred an entire village to hide their escape, he becomes determined to track them down. A shootout and the annihilation of the Germans in one of the tidal channels encircling áayo Guillermo mark the novel's conclusion. Despite the rather ambiguous ending, Hudson is presumably fatally injured in the gunfight.

Hudson ceases to wonder about his children's deaths during the trial. The imprint of Hemingway's earlier novel "For Whom the Bell Tolls" is seen strongly in this passage.

Ernest Hemingway frequently incorporated and used anecdotes from friends and family as well as his own life experiences to shape his novels, short stories, and works of fiction. He also based his characters on real-life situations.

Accordingly, in 1935, American painter Henry "Mike" Strater spent the summer fishing in Bimini with Hemingway. As Strater landed the fish, he was seen standing close to what was thought to be a 1,000-pound marlin that had been partially consumed by sharks in the next photo [45].

As an additional illustration, Hemingway's close friends Gerald and Sara Murphy lost their infant son Baoth to sickness while they were on Bimini. Letters to the Murphys reflected Hemingway's anguish and sadness at this loss.

Hemingway used his yacht, *Pilar*, to hunt for U-boats during World War II. The US Embassy in Havana furnished him with communications equipment for his boat. According to Rose Marie Burwell's account in *Hemingway, the Postwar Years and the Posthumous Novels*, Hemingway began writing the ur-text that would eventually become *Islands* in the fall of 1945. *The Garden of Eden* (1986), *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952), and *Across the River and into the Trees* (1950) were similarly influenced by this ur-text.

There's no proof that Hemingway worked on *Islands* beyond December 1951, according to Burwell [41]. *Islands* was first published by Charles Scribner's Sons in New York on October 6, 1970, nine years after Hemingway killed himself with a shotgun. Hemingway was concerned not to publish the book while he was still living. However, Marc Cirino notes in "An Evening at the Kennedy White House: Fredric March Performs Hemingway's *Islands* in the Stream" that *Islands* had its public debut on a Sunday evening at a Nobel Prize banquet at the White House eight years prior (April 29, 1962). Then, a 19-minute passage from the book that Mary Hemingway had selected was read by seasoned actor Fredrich March.

Mary Hemingway reportedly had concerns about the extract's propriety and quality before deciding to publish it after making some adjustments.

2.2. Hunting of man and the problem of pathological transformation of personality

A timeless literary classic, Ernest Hemingway's novella "The Old Man and the Sea" explores the depths of human nature through the struggles of an elderly fisherman named Santiago as he battles both his inner demons and the elemental forces of nature. Although the main focus of the story is Santiago's epic fight with a marlin, there includes a deep examination of the existential

and psychological difficulties that people encounter when faced with hardship. The issue of man's search and the dangerous route to self-discovery—which frequently involves a significant and perhaps pathological change in personality—are at the heart of this investigation.

The archetype of the courageous person facing life's existential obstacles is personified by Santiago. Because of an inner urge to show himself and regain his lost glory, Santiago, an elderly fisherman, continues to pursue the marlin despite feeling more and more alone and alienated in society. "But man is not made for defeat," Santiago muses in his inner monologue, "A man can be destroyed but not defeated" (Hemingway, 1952).

His unrelenting hunt for the marlin is a reflection of man's innate need to dominate nature, overcome the unknown, and establish his control over his surroundings. However, as Santiago struggles with feelings of addiction and despair, this quest also reveals the dark undercurrents of his own psyche.

Santiago's tenacity and fortitude in the face of insurmountable obstacles are among his most remarkable personal qualities. Even though his fight with the marlin has taken a toll on his body and mind, Santiago is not going to give up or give up. He instead finds strength in his inner stores of bravery and perseverance, illustrating the human psyche's unbreakable spirit in the face of hardship. Santiago reflects on his own fortitude: "Now is no time to think of what you do not have. Think of what you can do with what there is" (Hemingway, 1952).

However, beneath this facade of stoicism lies a deeper vulnerability and fragility, as Santiago confronts the existential emptiness and meaninglessness of his existence.

Santiago is forced to face the terrible truths of his own mortality and the transient nature of human achievement as his epic battle with the marlin comes to a head. Santiago spirals into existential misery and lunacy as a result of his growing estrangement from the outside world and isolation during his search for the marlin. The destructive instincts that exist inside the human mind that drive people to chase their wants at any cost, even if it means surrendering their humanity, are mirrored in his neurotic fascination with the marlin.

The existential search for meaning and purpose in an uncertain and transient world is ultimately symbolized by Santiago's meeting with the marlin. In addition to being dangerous and painful, his quest for self-discovery is also filled with a feeling of transcendence and great beauty. Hemingway asks readers to consider the universal themes of human life, the frailty of the human condition, and the transformational potential of resiliency and redemption via Santiago's hardships.

In conclusion, "The Old Man and the Sea" offers a poignant meditation on the problem of pathological transformation of personality, as embodied in the character of Santiago. Through Santiago's epic struggle with the marlin, Hemingway explores the complex interplay between the primal instincts of man and the existential challenges of the human condition. In Santiago's journey

towards self-discovery, readers are confronted with the profound mysteries of human existence and the timeless quest for meaning and purpose in a world fraught with uncertainty and suffering.

Of all American authors, Ernest Hemingway was and perhaps still is the most manly. Hemingway celebrated a life defined by action and exposure to danger, viewing life as a testing ground where one is challenged to maintain composure and exhibit "grace under pressure." This was evident in the young man who boldly declared he was "afraid of nothing," the young man eager to join a war in which he would be severely wounded, and the hard-drinking, burly boxer, big-game hunter, and fisherman of his prime. His writing's style and subject were therefore influenced by these ideals.

The strong, simple, and hard-boiled Hemingway hero came to represent masculinity in the 19th century. Most people characterize the Hemingway style as "muscular" and "taut" because of its short, sharp, declarative sentences and specific nouns. Although Hemingway's portrayal of he-man masculinity was well-known at the time, we now understand that it is complex and problematic. Hemingway struggled in private with his interest in gender and sexual power. He also frequently showed in public how such posturing can quickly devolve into "toxic masculinity," which at its most benign level makes us the victims of its blustering bravado and at its worst is harmful to the one promoting it, other people, and the environment. In many ways, we now understand that Hemingway himself fell victim to the hyper-masculine persona he helped create.

From this point of view it is understandable that his perspective on what a man should be is depicted in his work. In "The Old Man and the Sea", Hemingway depicts the theme of manhood through Santiago, a skilled but unlucky fisherman who spends a few days alone at sea, hauling in the biggest catch of his life. Hemingway follows a very traditional perspective of manhood and masculinity in "The Old Man and the Sea". A man is supposed to be strong, fearless and tough, and to persevere in the presence of defeat, which Santiago does in spite of his age and the pain he is going through [40, p.16-19].

The fight to land a massive marlin tests Santiago's strength and bravery, and this is the most important example of manhood in "The Old Man and the Sea." When Santiago eventually catches the fish, he has to battle and kill a lot of sharks, which destroys the marlin. Hemingway illustrates a key idea in "The Old Man and the Sea," which is that although man can be destroyed, he cannot be conquered, via this experience of catching the fish and then killing the sharks. Despite his exhaustion and the anguish he is experiencing, Santiago must persevere. Hemingway writes: "*But man is not made for defeat*".

Santiago cried this out loud after he's struggled for days to catch the fish and then to battle sharks, despite his fatigue and injuries. He is almost fully exhausted, so much that he starts to

contemplate what it means to be a man. In the next line it is stated: “*A man can be destroyed but not defeated*”.

This demonstrates that being a man means carrying out the necessary tasks despite their difficulty. Despite his extreme exhaustion and excruciating pain, Santiago fought against the sharks because he had to. This is Hemingway's ideal portrayal of a man. The concept of masculinity is primarily revealed by Hemingway through Santiago's struggle, and it is made more clear through Santiago's discourse. The exchange serves to encourage Santiago to keep going and adds to the significance of manhood that Hemingway is attempting to convey to the reader. Santiago states: “And pain does not matter to a man”.

Santiago proves his manhood by refusing to be defeated, notwithstanding the incredible odds against him. From the very beginning of the novel, we learn of Santiago's hopeless struggle: He has gone fishless for 84 days.

All, even by Manolin, his young friend, have abandoned him although; Manolin's father forces this abandonment. Santiago is left in isolation, and according to Hemingway, it is not until a man is isolated that he can prove himself honorable and worthy. Manhood in “*The Old Man and the Sea*”, as demonstrated by Santiago, is done in isolation, far out beyond other fishermen, where the big fish dwell [10].

Sharks attack Santiago's catch, making the effort futile even after he catches the marlin. Santiago continues to battle. Despite being hurt and battered, Santiago fights valiantly to avoid loss. When examining major themes in *The Old Man and the Sea*, it's critical to keep in mind Hemingway's views on death and struggle, which hold that it is these inevitable events that provide people the opportunity to demonstrate their value.

In *The Old Man and the Sea*, nearly all the plot proves Hemingway's Santiago-like dedication to labour and devotion to precision. “The principle of iceberg” is the term suggested by Ernest Hemingway by which he means that “seven-eighths” of the story lay below the surface parts that are described [40].

The majesty of the iceberg's movement is that it rises only one-eighth above the surface of the water. Based on this metaphor, we can say: the “surface” part of the content of the story “*The Old Man and the Sea*” is extremely small, and the depth of the “underwater” is incomparably great. The story's narrative appears to be rather straightforward and may be summarized in a few phrases. Santiago, a lonely elderly fisherman, has just one friend: Manolo, a young guy who works as his assistant and pupil. The majority of those who couldn't comprehend him had fled, leaving Old Santiago in a state of pleasure. He travels to the sea, where a massive fish is captured for financial benefit. The battle lasts for over two days, but sharks ultimately destroy the captured target. The

bones of the old man's catch are admired by tourists, but even they only notice something unusual about the fish.

In the meanwhile the style of writing in *The Old Man and the Sea* reflects Hemingway's efforts to pare down language and convey as much as possible in as few words as possible, the novella's meanings resonate on a larger and larger scale. The story's brevity, seemingly simple plot, and distance from much of this period's political affairs all lend the novella a simplistic quality that is as deceptive as it is inspiring [39, p. 124-125].

Hemingway frequently links religious belief with a belief in luck, which continues over into one of the novella's main themes. The frequent juxtaposition of these recurring images and references provides more than a brief overview of Cuba's Catholic culture, love of baseball, and fondness for games of chance. Similar to religion, luck is based on ritual and has the ability to inspire hope, dreams, faith, and resolution that transcend individuals entirely. The repetition of specific rhythms and sentence structures that indicate a form of ritual or catechism follows these recurring images and allusions. Examples of these include the conversations between Santiago and Manolin or the portrayal of Santiago's exact actions when fishing or laying out the fish that will feed him.

Hemingway also relies on mixing narrative modes to achieve a shifting psychic distance. The story begins and ends with a third-person, omniscient narration that does not penetrate inside Santiago's mind. The two parts of the story that take place on land benefit from this overall reporting. For example, the poignancy of Santiago's circumstances at the story's beginning and the tragedy of his defeat at the story's end are not lost on readers, but instead resonate within them without melodrama because of this psychic distance. On the other hand, the part of the story that takes place at sea draws closer to Santiago's perspective by letting him talk to himself, by presenting a third-person narration of his thoughts, or by drifting subtly from either of these methods into a kind of interior monologue or limited stream of consciousness. This perspective is essential to the story's middle part at sea, which is an odyssey into the natural world, a coming to grips with the natural order, an acceptance of the inevitable cycle of life, and a redemption of the individual's existence. As the transition into Santiago's thoughts seems logical and intuitive because he is alone at sea, with no one to talk to, so does the transition back out again because he returns to land so deeply exhausted.

Before S. Hemingway's heroes fashioned themselves as strong as they could be out of clay, according to W. Faulkner, Hemingway discovered a Creator who formed Santiago, a huge fish, sharks that were meant to eat these fish, and God loved them all. Researchers even considered Hemingway's tale to be a parable from the Bible, connecting the figure of Jesus Christ to the picture of Santiago. The motivation for teaching is significant in Santiago's image since the youngster who

works as his assistant believes that Santiago can teach "everything in the world." The fact that Hemingway referred to his narrative as "a message to the younger generation" in a television interview following the Nobel Prize ceremony is no accident.

"The Old Man and the Sea" is the "swan song" of the author, with which he decently ends his creative path, which sums up the philosophical conclusion of his struggle for humanism, for beauty, for the dignity of human life. In 1954, Hemingway was awarded the Nobel Prize for this work.

The events of a philosophical parable about humanity and the world, about a person who was not created for defeat, take place on the mysterious, powerful Gulf Stream. Everything is simple, like the struggle of the elements: sharks, the sea and the lonely boat of an old fisherman. However, for several decades this work has been read differently by readers of different generations [42].

Among the "have-nots" is Santiago. His only possessions are a boat and a wretched cabin; he has no relatives. His life is an ugly battle for survival on a daily basis. There is no romantic liaison, Gary Morgan's thriving life, or the accolades that drew Manolo Garcia to the bullring in his past. However, Hemingway elevates and elevates his hero in a different way. It possesses both Gary Morgan's rebellious energy and Manolo Garcia's unwavering, proud personality. Like them, he put in a lot of work and became so proficient at what he did that he was able to capture large fish.

The figure of the simple old Cuban Santiago is a general image, in his own way, of a great man of undiscovered potential, who in other circumstances would have shown "what a person is capable of" and would have coped with other tasks. Anselmo is a peaceful man. He says: "How I wish I didn't have to fight anymore." But, if it still comes down to it, "I will fight to the end," he thinks. Old Santiago is from the same breed of indomitable people, and no matter what, he remains invincible. After all, a big fish did not defeat him. "Who defeated me? No one. It's just that I went too far into the sea." [13].

It's about battling, not about losing. Even if one just defeats oneself, the fight against bad luck is already a success. Hemingway's portrayal of Santiago as "the last of the undefeated" is based on this. Hemingway used to write about the frailty and weakness of powerful people, but now he writes about old Santiago's moral fortitude. More faith and regard are shown in a person; more notably, the distinction between the writer's double and the ordinary person he is drawn to is muddled here than anywhere else in Hemingway.

Throughout the whole novel, Santiago converses with both himself and the fish. Like the author, he considers his work, expertise, and courage. He solely considers surviving and succeeding. To succeed, you must muster all of your might and use all of your abilities. A string

of failures haunts him. There are moments when Santiago's words appear to echo the aged author's own voice, accent, and thinking. This may be a character-building blunder, but it's crucial that the author at least partially relates himself to this straightforward, astute worker.

2.3. The pursuit of the thrill as an instrument of self-destruction.

The "pursuit of the thrill" refers to the active desire to engage in experiences that provide intense excitement, adventure, or adrenaline. This pursuit often involves activities that are high-risk, pushing individuals to their physical, emotional, or psychological limits. The thrill-seeker is motivated by a variety of factors, such as the need for stimulation, the desire to feel alive, or the wish to escape the monotony of everyday life.

When we analyse the key characteristics of thrill-seeking the following issues should be considered:

- High-risk behavior: engaging in activities that involve significant risk, whether physical (e.g., extreme sports), emotional (e.g., dangerous relationships), or psychological (e.g., gambling, substance abuse);
- intensity and novelty: seeking out experiences that are novel and intense, often because they provide a sense of exhilaration or a break from routine;
- adrenaline rush: many thrill-seekers are driven by the desire for an adrenaline rush, a biochemical reaction that provides a feeling of heightened awareness and energy;
- exploration and boundary testing: thrill-seeking often involves exploring new experiences or testing personal boundaries and limits, which can lead to a deeper understanding of oneself.

Researchers in the field also consider psychological implications of thrill. Among those implications the most vivid is sensation-seeking. According to psychologist Marvin Zuckerman, sensation-seeking is a trait that describes the tendency to seek out thrilling and novel experiences. Individuals high in sensation-seeking may pursue activities that are risky or unconventional to satisfy their desire for varied and intense experiences.

For some, thrill-seeking is a way to confront existential fears and uncertainties. Engaging in risky activities can provide a sense of purpose or meaning, as individuals feel more alive when facing danger or uncertainty. This need presupposes existential fulfillment. Thrill-seeking can also be an act of rebellion against societal norms or expectations. By engaging in risky behavior, individuals may seek to assert their independence, challenge authority, or express their identity.

"Self-destruction" refers to behaviors or actions that cause harm to oneself, either physically, emotionally, or psychologically. It encompasses a wide range of behaviors, from direct physical harm (such as substance abuse or reckless behavior) to more subtle forms of self-sabotage (such as undermining one's own success or engaging in toxic relationships). Self-destructive behavior presupposes harmful actions, definite pattern of behavior and psychological motives. Actions that directly or indirectly cause harm to oneself, whether through risk-taking, substance abuse, or self-sabotage. Self-destruction often involves a pattern of behavior that may be difficult to break, as individuals may repeatedly engage in harmful actions despite knowing the potential consequences. These behaviors may stem from underlying psychological issues, such as low self-esteem, trauma, or a desire to punish oneself; self-destructive behavior can sometimes be driven by unconscious desires or unresolved conflicts. For example, someone might engage in reckless behavior as a way of coping with unresolved trauma or emotional pain.

Self destruction can have diverse and more harmful psychological implications like cognitive dissonance, internal conflicts, addictive cycles, etc. Individuals engaging in self-destructive behaviors may experience cognitive dissonance, a psychological state of conflict between their actions and beliefs. For example, a person might know that their behavior is harmful but feel compelled to continue due to deep-seated psychological needs. Self-destructive behavior often reflects internal conflicts, such as the desire for self-punishment, the fear of success or happiness, or unresolved feelings of guilt or shame. Self-destruction can also become a form of addiction, where the person becomes caught in a cycle of harmful behavior that is difficult to break. This could be due to the temporary relief or satisfaction that such behavior provides, despite its long-term negative consequences.

The connection between the pursuit of thrill and self-destruction lies in the inherent risk and potential for harm that thrill-seeking behaviors often carry. While the pursuit of thrill can be an expression of vitality, courage, and the desire to live life to the fullest, it can also lead to self-destructive outcomes when individuals push themselves too far, ignore personal safety, or become addicted to the adrenaline rush.

In Hemingway's works, this connection is vividly portrayed through characters who, in their quest for adventure and meaning, often find themselves on a path of self-destruction. Their actions, driven by a mix of courage and recklessness, highlight the thin line between living fully and courting self-harm.

In "On the Blue Water," the characters engage in deep-sea fishing, a pursuit that is inherently thrilling due to the dangers involved. The vastness of the ocean, the unpredictability of the sea creatures, and the challenge of the hunt all contribute to the adrenaline-fueled experience. The thrill-seeking behavior of the characters is driven by a desire for adventure and a need to assert

their mastery over nature. Fishing in the open sea is portrayed as a test of skill, endurance, and courage—a way for the characters to push their limits and confront their fears. The act of fishing becomes a metaphor for life's battles, where each encounter with a fish is a confrontation with the unknown and a chance to prove one's bravery and skill [13].

The potential for self-destruction is evident in the characters' obsessive pursuit of the thrill. As they venture farther into the deep sea, they expose themselves to greater dangers—both from the ocean and the creatures they seek to catch. The pursuit of big catches often leads to reckless behavior, such as ignoring safety precautions, overestimating their abilities, or pushing their bodies to the brink of exhaustion. This reflects a deeper psychological need to prove oneself, which can lead to self-destructive choices. The characters' willingness to face dangerous situations for the sake of thrill suggests a form of existential self-destruction, where the need to feel alive and challenged outweighs the instinct for self-preservation.

In "The Old Man and the Sea," Santiago's battle with the marlin is the ultimate expression of thrill-seeking. His relentless pursuit of the giant fish is driven by a desire to prove his worth, regain his pride, and demonstrate his fishing prowess after a long period of bad luck. Santiago's thrill comes not just from the act of fishing but from the battle itself—the struggle against a worthy opponent that symbolizes his own internal fight against age, doubt, and societal expectations. The thrill of the chase and the battle with the marlin is also about existential meaning. Santiago finds a sense of purpose and identity in the challenge, as if the struggle itself is a testament to his existence and relevance.

Santiago's pursuit is also a form of self-destruction. As he fights the marlin, he pushes himself beyond his physical and mental limits, enduring pain, exhaustion, and isolation. His determination to catch the fish at any cost leads him into a prolonged ordeal that causes significant harm to his body. The battle results in a Pyrrhic victory. While Santiago succeeds in catching the marlin, he ultimately loses the fish to sharks, which devour it during his return journey. This reflects the futility of his struggle and the self-destructive nature of his obsession [10].

Santiago's journey can be seen as a metaphor for the human condition – striving against insurmountable odds, seeking validation, and facing the inevitable decline that comes with time. His pursuit of the thrill becomes an act of existential defiance that borders on self-destruction.

In both *The Old Man and the Sea* and "On the Blue Water," Hemingway's characters, particularly Santiago, embody deep psychological motivations for pursuing thrill that are rooted in sensation-seeking, existential fulfillment, and rebellion. Santiago's relentless battle with the marlin reflects a profound need for sensation-seeking, where the physical and emotional challenge reaffirms his vitality, even in old age. His quest is not just for the fish but for a sense of purpose, mirroring existentialist ideas of finding meaning through action. Simultaneously, this pursuit can

be seen as a rebellion against the limitations imposed by age, nature, and fate. However, these motivations also lead to self-destructive outcomes, as Santiago's triumph ultimately ends in the marlin being destroyed by sharks. The risks he takes—venturing far beyond safe waters, exhausting himself in the process—illustrate how the drive for existential fulfillment and thrill-seeking often comes at the cost of personal well-being. In Hemingway's world, characters push themselves to their limits, knowing that the pursuit of meaning, though noble, can lead to inevitable loss or destruction.

Hemingway uses the sea and the act of fishing in *The Old Man and the Sea* and "On the Blue Water" as rich metaphors for life's challenges and the human condition. The sea, vast and unpredictable, represents the uncontrollable forces of nature and fate that humanity must face. Santiago's struggle with the sea parallels the existential human struggle to find meaning in a world full of uncertainty. Fishing, in this context, becomes a metaphor for life's constant push and pull between success and failure, hope and despair, survival and destruction. Just as Santiago ventures into the deep, unknown waters in search of the great marlin, people venture into life's trials, driven by the hope of achievement or personal fulfillment.

However, the pursuit of thrill—whether through Santiago's quest for the fish or other characters in Hemingway's works—becomes symbolic of existential struggles, where individuals test their limits to find purpose or transcendence. Santiago's journey, for instance, is as much about proving his own worth and enduring spirit as it is about catching the fish. Yet, the thrill-seeking pursuit can lead to self-destruction, as Hemingway suggests that pushing beyond one's limits, both physically and emotionally, may result in failure, isolation, or death. Santiago's ultimate loss of the marlin to sharks mirrors how, in life, even the greatest victories can be undone by forces beyond control. The sea, like life, does not guarantee reward for effort, and the pursuit of thrill often ends in loss—reflecting the existential belief that human struggle is meaningful, even in the face of inevitable defeat [10].

In comparing the outcomes of thrill-seeking in *The Old Man and the Sea* and "On the Blue Water," Hemingway presents two distinct yet interconnected portrayals of the dual nature of thrill-seeking—both as a way of living fully and as a path to self-destruction. Santiago's experience in *The Old Man and the Sea* is deeply personal and existential, as he seeks not only to catch the great marlin but also to reaffirm his identity and worth as a fisherman. His quest is a solitary one, filled with pride and endurance, and despite the destruction of his prize by sharks, Santiago emerges with a sense of quiet dignity. He has pushed beyond his limits but retains a deep sense of fulfillment, suggesting that, for Santiago, the thrill of the struggle itself is the ultimate reward, even if the physical outcome is defeat. This reflects the more transcendent aspect of thrill-seeking—where the pursuit, rather than the result, holds the true value.

In contrast, the characters in “On the Blue Water” engage in thrill-seeking that is often more recreational and collective, driven by an inherent desire for excitement and danger. Their pursuit of large fish in open waters brings them face-to-face with nature’s unpredictability, but unlike Santiago, their motivation is not tied to survival or existential fulfillment. Instead, their thrill-seeking is more about momentary exhilaration. However, the consequences are similarly self-destructive, as the dangers of the sea and the relentless challenge of fishing lead them into hazardous situations where the risks often outweigh the rewards. While they live fully in the pursuit of thrill, their adventures ultimately illustrate how pushing beyond their capacities can result in loss or injury, underscoring the darker, self-destructive side of seeking excitement [38].

Both stories, therefore, reflect thrill-seeking as a double-edged sword: it allows the characters to engage with life intensely, yet it also reveals the inherent dangers of reaching beyond one’s limits. Santiago’s struggle is imbued with a more profound, existential weight, while the characters in “On the Blue Water” represent a more spontaneous, adrenaline-driven quest. Yet in both cases, thrill-seeking leads to self-destruction, reinforcing Hemingway’s portrayal of life as a delicate balance between vitality and inevitable defeat.

Hemingway’s portrayal of thrill-seeking and self-destruction in *The Old Man and the Sea* and “On the Blue Water” touches on universal human concerns about mortality, meaning, and the desire to transcend ordinary existence. Through the characters’ relentless pursuit of the thrill, Hemingway explores the deep-seated human need to confront the limits of physical endurance and spiritual resolve. Thrill-seeking, in this sense, becomes more than a mere search for excitement—it is an attempt to assert life’s significance in the face of inevitable mortality. Santiago’s solitary struggle against the marlin, for example, symbolizes the human condition itself: the battle against overwhelming odds and the pursuit of meaning in a world where defeat is inevitable. The risk-taking involved in thrill-seeking allows individuals to experience life in its most intense form, but Hemingway also warns that such pursuits often come with profound costs, highlighting the fragility of human existence [38].

In a broader literary and philosophical context, these themes resonate with existentialism’s focus on human beings as meaning-makers in an indifferent universe. By pushing themselves beyond ordinary limits, Hemingway’s characters seek a form of transcendence—something that allows them to rise above the mundane, even if only temporarily. Yet, this pursuit often leads to self-destruction, underscoring the tension between humanity’s aspirations and the harsh realities of life. The sea, in its vastness and indifference, serves as a reminder of nature’s overwhelming power and the finite nature of human life. Characters like Santiago, who fight against these forces, embody the paradox of human existence: that meaning can be found in struggle, even though it may not change the ultimate outcome of mortality.

Hemingway's depiction of thrill-seeking as both a pathway to living fully and a form of self-destruction speaks to the human desire to transcend the limitations of time, body, and circumstance. His works suggest that the search for meaning often requires confronting one's own fragility and mortality, with the understanding that this journey may lead to personal sacrifice or failure. Ultimately, Hemingway's exploration of these themes offers a poignant reflection on the human condition, where the desire to experience life's intensity often walks hand-in-hand with the risk of destruction, and where meaning is forged not in success but in the willingness to engage with life's deepest challenges.

2.4.Fishing as existential challenge

In literature, existentialism frequently offers an engrossing examination of the human condition, exploring themes of choice, freedom, and the pursuit of meaning in an apparently meaningless reality. Because existentialist philosophy challenges the fundamental nature of life and the importance of personal experience, authors have created stories that may profoundly connect with us.

One should first attempt to understand the subtleties of existentialism in literature via ten excellent works, each of which offers a distinct perspective on the intricacies of human existence, in order to further explore fishing as an existential crisis.

The philosophical movement known as existentialism, which first appeared in the 19th and 20th centuries, addresses important issues like human existence, freedom, and purpose. Existentialism's key tenets are personal experience and the obligation of every individual to define their own existence. Here, we believe it is beneficial to examine the main tenets of this philosophical framework in further detail: because it comprises a wide range of viewpoints and interpretations, existentialism resists a strict definition. But at its core, existentialism stresses people's subjective experiences and the universe's lack of intrinsic purpose. Existentialism urges people to face the existential facts of life and create their own meaning, in contrast to many other philosophical systems that offer a fixed set of values or truths.

The main ideas of existentialist philosophy are reflected in a variety of subjects that exhibit the traits of existentialist literature. Here, we should examine the major existentialist themes in literature, such as freedom and choice, absurdity and meaningfulness, alienation and isolation, and others [35].

Freedom and choice are major themes in existentialist literature. Characters struggle with the repercussions of their choices and the weight of their acts, emphasizing the existentialist notion

of personal agency. Characters that deal with existential issues and the burden of determining their own fates in a meaningless world are portrayed by authors.

The absurdity and meaninglessness of human life are frequently examined in existentialist literature. The characters struggle to find meaning in a cosmos that seems unconcerned with their goals and wants as they deal with the paradoxes and absurdity of existence. Authors encourage readers to reflect on the meaning of life and the human search for purpose in a ridiculous world by telling stories that are laced with absurdity [4]. Existentialist literature is replete with themes of isolation and alienation, which mirror the intense sense of estrangement people may feel in contemporary society. In a society characterized by superficiality and alienation, characters struggle with emotions of loneliness and isolation and long for genuine connections. Through narratives of alienation, authors underscore the existentialist notion of individual solitude and the search for genuine human connection.

The quest for authenticity is examined in existentialist literature, which highlights the significance of living in line with one's principles and genuine self. In an effort to establish their uniqueness and create genuine identities, characters struggle with the urge to fit in with society's expectations and conventions. Authors encourage readers to embrace their individuality and defy social pressures in order to live authentically by sharing their stories of self-discovery and self-realization.

We will then explore particular literary instances of existentialism, looking at how these ideas appear in ten outstanding pieces that appeal to readers of all ages. Examples of existentialism in literature have been proposed in the paragraphs that follow.

Existentialism has a rich literary expression, with writers incorporating its ideas into their stories. Existentialist literature provides deep insights into the intricacies of human existence and the pursuit of meaning in an uncertain world through its characters and storylines. Examining a few notable literary works that best represent existentialism at this point in the research is beneficial.

Examining the ridiculous in Albert Camus' "The Stranger" Albert Camus' "The Stranger" is a classic work of existentialist literature that remarkably addresses the issue of the ridiculous. Meursault, the main character, makes his way through a meaningless world that is cut off from social conventions and traditional moral principles.

As Meursault grapples with the absurdity of life, culminating in his confrontation with death, In *The Stranger*, Camus invites readers to confront the fundamental comparison between absurdism and existentialism and the human quest for meaning in a universe devoid of inherent purpose [17].

The Pursuit of Meaning in "The Metamorphosis" by Franz Kafka

Through the protagonist, Gregor Samsa, who awakens one morning to discover that he has been changed into a gigantic bug, Franz Kafka explores the issue of existential alienation in "The Metamorphosis." Kafka examines the existential pain of being confined in a strange and unfriendly environment as Gregor struggles with his new identity and social alienation. Kafka provides a moving reflection on the human condition and the pursuit of meaning in an absurd world through Gregor's quest for meaning amid his isolation.

Individual Freedom and Responsibility in Jean-Paul Sartre's "Nausea"

The issue of personal autonomy and accountability is explored in Jean-Paul Sartre's "Nausea," which follows Antoine Roquentin, the main character, as he deals with existential sickness. The setting of Roquentin's existential crisis is a little French village where he struggles with the absurdity of life and the weight of personal autonomy. Sartre examines the existentialist idea of radical freedom and the necessity of finding meaning in a world without intrinsic purpose via Roquentin's reflective journey [28].

Isolation and Alienation in "Waiting for Godot" by Samuel Beckett

The classic novel "Waiting for Godot" by Samuel Beckett examines issues of isolation and alienation by following two characters, Estragon and Vladimir, while they wait impatiently for a man named Godot to appear. Estragon and Vladimir struggle with existential melancholy and the pointlessness of life as they kill time with ridiculous chatter and pointless attempts to make sense of their situation. The work of art by Beckett is a profound meditation on the human condition and the pursuit of meaning in an absurd and uncertain world.

Identity Crisis and Genuineness in "The Catcher in the Rye" by J.D. Salinger

Through its protagonist, Holden Caulfield, J.D. Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye" explores the themes of authenticity and identity crises. Holden struggles with emotions of alienation and disappointment with society's superficiality as he makes his way through the turbulent terrain of adolescence and maturity. As Holden struggles with conformity expectations and looks for true connection in a society full of hypocrisy and phoniness, Salinger's depiction of his quest for authenticity speaks to existentialist ideas [28].

The Search for Meaning in "Steppenwolf" by Hermann Hesse

Through Harry Haller's existential journey, Hermann Hesse's "Steppenwolf" examines the search for meaning. Haller sets off on a soul-searching journey in pursuit of enlightenment and authenticity as he struggles with his dual nature as a primitive "steppenwolf" and a sophisticated thinker. Existentialist themes of individuality and the search for meaning in a world full of existential agony and misery are reflected in Hesse's examination of spirituality, alienation, and the quest for transcendence.

Choice and Repercussions in "One Hundred Years of Solitude" by Gabriel García Márquez

Through the multigenerational narrative of the Buendía family, Gabriel García Márquez's "One Hundred Years of Solitude" explores the issue of decision and repercussions. García Márquez examines existentialist themes of fate, free will, and the interaction between personal decisions and more powerful social forces as the Buendías struggle with the cyclical cycle of history and the results of their deeds. García Márquez provides a profound reflection on the human condition and the existential search for meaning amid life's difficulties via the complicated fabric of magical realism [17].

Existential Fear in "Norwegian Wood" by Haruki Murakami

As its protagonist, Toru Watanabe, negotiates the intricacies of love, grief, and identity in 1960s Japan, Haruki Murakami's "Norwegian Wood" delves into existential agony. Toru struggles with existential melancholy and feelings of alienation as a result of his previous memories and unknown future. The existentialist themes of loneliness, desire, and the pursuit of meaning in an impermanent and ambiguous world are all explored in Murakami's contemplative story.

The Myth of Sisyphus by Albert Camus: Freedom and Despair

In his philosophical essay "The Myth of Sisyphus," Albert Camus uses the legendary character Sisyphus as a metaphor to examine the themes of freedom and misery. Although Camus maintains that existence is essentially pointless and ridiculous, he also makes the case that people can achieve freedom by accepting their existential state. Camus argues that people may face the existential emptiness with dignity and resistance by accepting the absurdity of life and the freedom to discover meaning in the face of futility. They can find comfort in rebelling against the absurdity of life.

Existentialist Themes of Hell in Jean-Paul Sartre's "No Exit"

Three individuals are imprisoned in a small chamber in the hereafter in Jean-Paul Sartre's existentialist drama "No Exit," which explores existential torment and damnation. Garcin, Inès, and Estelle are compelled to face the existential realities of their lives as they examine their pasts and the repercussions of their choices. Existentialist ideas of personal accountability and the lack of escape from one's own consciousness are reflected in Sartre's portrayal of hell as a place of constant self-awareness and interpersonal strife. Sartre asks viewers to consider the existentialist idea of hell as the awareness of one's own freedom and the unavoidable gaze of others through the play's cramped setting [28].

In conclusion, existentialism in literature provides readers with a deep understanding of the human condition by illuminating the intricacies of life and the pursuit of meaning in an apparently meaningless cosmos. Existentialist literature pushes readers to face life's major issues and to bravely and resolutely accept life's ambiguity and uncertainty via themes of freedom, choice,

absurdity, and authenticity. We are reminded of the existentialist philosophy's ongoing significance in shedding light on the intricacies of the human experience and universal truths when we consider the wide range of works included in this investigation.

When it comes to Hemingway's writings, fishing is a potent metaphor for the existential dilemma of human existence, signifying the quest for self-realization, meaning, and purpose in an often uncaring or antagonistic environment. As shown in *The Old Man and the Sea* and "On the Blue Water," fishing is a deep act of interaction with nature and existence itself, rather than just a means of subsistence or recreation. The act of fishing becomes a solitary conflict with fate, time, and mortality for characters such as Santiago, representing the larger existential struggle of humans as they attempt to define themselves via their deeds [27].

The uncertainty and difficulties of fishing present an existential issue since fisherman must contend with the sea's unpredictable nature, the fish's uncontrollable behavior, and their own mental and physical limitations. The human fight with the unknown, where failure is always a possibility and victory is not assured, is symbolized by Santiago's epic battle with the marlin. His struggle is about demonstrating his value and perseverance in the face of life's enormous forces, not simply about surviving or catching the fish. In this sense, fishing reflects the existentialist idea that people must give their lives purpose, even in the absence of any intrinsic reward or meaning from the cosmos.

Hemingway presents Santiago as a guy who is consumed by the excitement of the hunt from the very beginning of the novella. Determined to show his value as a fisherman, Santiago sets out on a treacherous expedition into the depths of the sea despite his late age and the disbelief of those around him. His preoccupation with capturing the marlin stems from a deeper desire to reaffirm who he is and what his life's purpose is, rather than just being motivated by practical necessity. This demonstrates how people may become so consumed by the need for excitement that they lose sight of the dangers and repercussions of their conduct.

Santiago's obsession with the marlin also reflects a larger human propensity to pursue difficulties and victories as a way to justify one's life. Pursuing the pleasure provides a temporary and deceptive sense of control and meaning in a world full of uncertainty and insignificance. Santiago's unrelenting search for the marlin illustrates the perils of relying too much on material success as a source of fulfillment and reflects humanity's never-ending search for meaning in the face of existential dread (Hemingway, 1952).

Hemingway eloquently captures the physical and mental toll that Santiago's struggle with the marlin has on the elderly fisherman as story gets more intense. Santiago struggles with hunger, weariness, and the weather, pushing him to the limit of his endurance despite his strength and will.

But even as his physical condition deteriorates, his fascination with the marlin doesn't lessen, and he continues to go through unspeakable pains to achieve his objective (Hemingway, 1952).

This depiction of Santiago's decline into mental and bodily anguish serves as a sobering reminder of the perils of unbridled passion. Santiago endangers not just his own health but also the bonds and relationships that keep him going by putting the excitement of the pursuit above everything else.

Furthermore, Santiago's unwavering quest for the marlin ultimately results in its devastation, underscoring the destructive nature of the thrill-seeking instinct. The paradoxical character of obsession as both a motivating factor and a self-destructive drive is shown when Santiago unintentionally sacrifices the exact thing he set out to seize in his unrelenting pursuit of success (Hemingway, 1952).

Even though Santiago eventually defeats the marlin, his success is fleeting since he has to contend with another conflict while returning to land. Santiago's fight against the sharks is expertly portrayed by Hemingway as a metaphor for the destructive forces that lie under the surface of life.

The sharks' unrelenting attack on the marlin is a metaphor for the entropy and inevitable degradation that await all living things, regardless of their achievements or goals (Hemingway, 1952).

Despite the overwhelming odds, Santiago must accept the futility of his efforts as he heroically defends his treasure. The fact that he realizes he cannot overcome the sharks emphasizes how frail human life is and how fleeting success is. As he watches helplessly as the marlin gets eaten in front of his eyes, Santiago realizes the full cost of his passion during this moment of reckoning (Hemingway, 1952).

However, Santiago's fortitude and will to keep going provide him some measure of atonement even in the face of failure. He exemplifies the human soul's unbreakable spirit by refusing to give up even after losing the marlin, proving that even in the face of hardship, one can find meaning and purpose. In this way, Santiago's voyage is evidence of the human spirit's eternal capacity to rise above the confines of the material world and find comfort in pursuing lofty goals.

By fusing themes of obsession, sacrifice, and redemption in a timeless story that appeals to readers of all ages, "The Old Man and the Sea" provides a moving examination of the need for thrills as a means of self-destruction. Hemingway serves as a sobering reminder of the perils of unbridled ambition and the fleeting nature of human success through the character of Santiago. Nevertheless, amid the rubble of Santiago's dashed hopes, there is still optimism, which is evidence of how resilient the human spirit can be when faced with hardship. Ultimately, "The Old Man and the Sea" stands as a testament to the enduring power of the human spirit to find meaning and purpose in the pursuit of the impossible, even in the face of inevitable defeat (Hemingway, 1952).

Furthermore, fishing in Hemingway's tales symbolizes the loneliness that frequently follows existential difficulties. Santiago travels alone and must rely only on his own fortitude, aptitude, and willpower. According to existentialist theory, this loneliness is representative of the human condition, as people are finally left on their own in their search for purpose while confronting the constraints of their own mortality and the apathy of the cosmos. The existential emptiness, where meaning must be found via individual effort and where the result is unknown, is reflected in the sea's vastness and indifference. The existential notion that life has value via the fight rather than the outcome is shown by Santiago's experience. Though he loses the marlin to the sharks, his dignity and sense of purpose remain intact, underscoring that victory in the existential sense lies not in external success, but in the internal will to continue struggling [38].

Additionally, Hemingway gives fishing a cyclical character that mirrors the ongoing nature of existential difficulties. Humans must continually tackle life's challenges, even in the face of repeated failures or defeats, much as fisherman must repeatedly sail out to sea, aware that every endeavor carries new hazards. The existentialist view that life is a sequence of continuous struggles and that significance, however temporary or ephemeral, must be continuously pursued is emphasized by this repetition.

In conclusion, Hemingway explores the fundamental issues of human existence—how we face mortality, look for purpose in an uncaring world, and identify ourselves via our deeds—by using fishing as an existential test. The struggle inherent in fishing mirrors the broader human struggle to live authentically and with purpose, despite the inevitable losses and uncertainties that life presents. Through this lens, fishing becomes not just an activity, but a profound metaphor for the human condition itself.

2.5. “The Old man and the Sea” as romantic re-evaluation of hunting instincts

In *The Old Man and the Sea*, Hemingway presents life as a struggle for survival. His drive for survival appears to be his first priority. Everything else is a secondary priority. The tale depicts a fight for existence not just between man and nature but also between elements. Hemingway undoubtedly had empathy for the weak and impoverished. His character, the elderly guy, felt terrible for the birds, particularly the little, fragile black terns that were always flying, searching, and nearly never finding them. He reasoned, ‘The birds have a harder life than we do except for the robber birds and the heavy strong ones’ (Hemingway, p. 20). The old man hunts the dolphin; the dolphin hunts the flying fish, and the long-winged black ma-of-war bird hunts the flying fish. The hawks prey on the warblers. The sharks eat up Santiago’s fish.

Sometimes in the hunting process roles are reversed and the hunter becomes the hunted. It is all a question of power. The old man becomes the hunted when he declares: 'I'm being towed by a fish and I'm the towing bitt' (Hemingway, p. 31). From the first day until midday on the third, the old man and his skiff are carried about on the water by the fish. Hunting is a laborious, energy-draining, and hazardous pastime. It requires a great deal of patience, perseverance, physical stamina, mental clarity, skill, and willpower. There are moments when the conflict comes to a standstill, where there is no winner and no loser [20].

Such is the case when Santiago thinks 'I can do nothing with me' (Hemingway, p. 33). The strain of the struggle is on both the hunter and the hunted. It is mutually felt: 'You're feeling it now, fish he said, 'and so, God knows, am I' (Hemingway, p. 40). A deadlock situation is created when there is a balance of power.

Once the fight is over, the old man feels a little zest gone out of his fishing expedition. He calls the labour that remains 'slave work' (Hemingway, p. 69). It is drudgery (uninteresting work). 'The lines all mean nothing now', the old man says (Hemingway, p. 69). As if he would want the struggle to continue, he called on the fish 'Come on, fish, 'he said. But the fish did not come; instead he lay there wallowing now in the seas...' (Hemingway, p. 69). Santiago's triumph is accompanied by a sense of loss and despair. His enthusiasm for him is restored by the existence of more difficulties, trials, and tests. The old guy is persuaded that his victory is a charade by the Mako shark's appearance and the challenge it poses. He believed it was too good to last (Hemingway, p. 73). The marlin is killed when the shark takes off forty pounds of its flesh, and he goes down with the rope and the harpoon in addition to the plunder. The elderly man is depressed. According to Hemingway (p. 75), "I wish it had been a dream now and that I had never hooked the fish and was alone in bed now on the newspaper."

It is important that the old man quickly adds the necessary qualification that man is not made for defeat... A man can be destroyed but not defeated. 'I am sorry that I killed the fish though', he thought (Hemingway, p. 75). The fish also symbolises man – his plight, perseverance and death.

Another significant topic covered in the book is suffering, which affects both the hunter and the prey. Simply put, Hemingway's message is that suffering is a necessary part of life. Many people suffer, bodies are shattered, and lives are lost in the fight for survival. Man may experience pain in addition to pleasure, and vice versa. The agony gets harder as the pleasure increases. Baseball has its own risks, much as hunting large wildlife. The baseball player DiMaggio suffers from severe discomfort due to a bone spur in his heel. Despite his pain, he continued to fight and never gave up. "Can it be as painful as the spur of a fighting cock in one's heel?" asks Santiago in reference to bone spur agony.

I do not think I could endure that or the loss of the eye and of both eyes and continue to fight as the fighting cocks do. Man is not much beside the great birds and beasts. Still I would rather be that beast down there in the darkness of the seat, (Hemingway, p. 49). The marlin he is struggling with has a fighting character that Santiago greatly admires. Courage or perseverance in the face of adversity is one of the story's most important teachings. "If you're not tired, fish," he exclaimed out loud, "you must be very strange." The old man and the fish are almost equally as resilient (Hemingway, p. 48). When he says it, he feels exhausted. He comes out and swims at the top level, which is understandable given that the fish is already feeble. Both the hunter and the pursued are in grave danger. The elderly man exclaims, "God pity him and me," if sharks appear (Hemingway, p. 49).

The conquest of the marlin brings the old man much suffering. Because both man and beast are weary and bleed, the reader feels sorry for them. Psychological anguish might include feelings of loneliness and boredom, as well as the anxiety, worries, and concerns that plague all hunters and combatants, whether they are men or animals. Santiago emphasizes the peril of battling in the dark. To understand the magnitude of the issue he confronts, he wishes he could see the powerful fish pulling him and his boat. He worries that if the fish jumps or rushes wildly, it will damage him. In this way, how many bullfighters have been gored and slain! Santiago questions whether the fish is plotting to get him to experience the same anxieties and concerns that plague all people. Two of Santiago's fears come true. With a rush, the marlin cuts across the old man's eye and drags him down on his face. At another point, the old guy is nearly flung overboard when the fish suddenly lurches. He loses the bird, who was his company, due to the lurch (Hemingway, p. 39). In light of the fact that the sharks killed the fish, one may argue that Santiago's suffering was pointless. Hunting, however, is an exciting activity that is full of miracles. Put another way, the process of existence itself is what counts, not the destination. Thus, suffering is a necessary aspect of life. It has significant lessons to impart. Santiago advises himself to learn from the fish, which has suffered and endured much privation, 'be fearless and confident yourself' (Hemingway, p. 60).

The reader's empathy is heightened by Santiago's mental and physical anguish. As the line wounds his hands and back, the pull weakens him, the perspiration salts his eyes, the cuts over his eye and forehead, and the fisherman feels faint and lightheaded, the reader is struck with sympathy. Natural sympathy and compassion are evoked by his suffering [20].

An indirect comparison is made between poor fisherman and rich baseball players. Santiago tells Manolin: 'They say his father [DiMaggio's] was a fisherman. May be he was as poor as we are and would understand' (Hemingway, p.15). "The great Sisler's father was never impoverished and he was playing in the big leagues when he was my age," the child responds. Hemingway, page 15. Santiago's decision to increase the stakes for himself and venture far out to

sea is revealed by the frequent allusion to the major American baseball leagues in contrast to the swarming mass poverty of the Cuban fishermen. He also aspires to be a prominent and prosperous player.

Santiago's hut is a representation of extreme poverty, suffering, and discomfort. There aren't many amenities. The reference to Africa implies primitivism and poverty. The hunt is a battle to escape poverty and lead a fulfilling life. On a cold September morning, Santiago goes barefoot. The chill of the morning was making him tremble. However, he was aware that he would shiver. Hemingway, page 1. He is still chilly after the hunt, but Manolin provides him hot coffee. However, if the sharks had let the elderly man bring his wealth home, he would have felt more comfortable. He is so impoverished that "no one in the village would steal from him" (Hemingway, p. 9).

There are several perplexing contradictions throughout the book. They are employed to illustrate the intricacy of life and the beauty of both human and material nature. The contradiction of gain and loss, of prosperity and tragedy, lies at the heart of the story. The elderly guy loses what the sharks gain. The fight for existence itself contains an existential conundrum: the paradox of creation and destruction, according to which in order to survive, a person must murder, and in order to create, a person must destroy. The water is contradictory, much like people.

She is 'kind and very beautiful. But she can be so cruel' (Hemingway, p. 20). She possesses both feminine and male traits, making her hermaphrodite. In addition to providing fish and other aquatic resources to humans, she occasionally drowns sailors during severe storms. Like a lady, she might be kind and serene, yet like a male, she could be aggressive and untamed. Like the ambiguous sea, the *agua mala* is aesthetically pleasing, yet its long, slimy purple threads contaminate the water. Santiago is a figure of contradiction. He hunts with compassion and ruthlessness, ponders sin and damnation with piety and skepticism, and meditates on God and social injustice with humility and pride. There are many inconsistencies in him.

'Fish,' he said, I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends' (Hemingway, p. 38). There is no greater way to describe the duality of love and hatred. Santiago uses all of his senses to love in a logical manner. Because "the dolphin is too sweet, and he wishes he had some salt to eat the tuna with," he prefers tuna over dolphin (Hemingway, p. 42). "A flying fish is excellent to eat raw," he would later say (Hemingway, p. 47). But eating raw fish makes him sick. However, he doesn't always. He is surrounded by salty seawater, yet his food isn't salted. The human situation is aptly reflected in the dilemma. Man still experiences need despite the vast natural riches that God has given him.

It is paradoxical that turtles prefer the poisonous *agua mala*, which covers a fisherman's hands with welts like a whiplash as it comes into touch with them. Even still, the elderly guy would

not kill and consume turtles since he loved them. Nevertheless, he consumes their eggs to stay strong. However, eggs can become turtles. Every day, he consumes a cup of shark liver oil. Our reality is only partially understandable, according to the paradox of nature. The paradox demonstrates that man is not in complete control of the cosmos and adds a degree of chance to human existence.

Manolin's parents withdraw him because they see Santiago as unlucky. However, they have no doubts about his ability and expertise. The boy's new master is almost blind, yet he catches fish while the old man whose eyes are sharp does not. We are told that hunting is bad for the eyes. Yet the old man went hunting for several years off the Mosquito Coast and his eyes did not go bad. On the contrary, Manolin's new master who never hunts has bad eyes. Santiago believes in the idea of chance or determinism. He makes some prophetic statements that later turn out to be true in the story. An example is about the idea of breaking the jinx on him on the eighty-fifth day. 'Eighty-five is a lucky number,' the old man said. 'How would you like to see me bring one in dressed out over a thousand pounds?' (Hemingway, p. 10).

The prophecy is partially fulfilled. He successfully captures a large fish, but he is unable to take him home. His views on free choice and determinism—the idea that everything that happens to a person is predetermined, sometimes even before they are born—are conflicted. He believes in his knowledge but does not completely reject fate or destiny. "Being lucky is preferable," he believes. However, I prefer to be precise. Then you're prepared when good fortune strikes (Hemingway, p. 22). The modern era aims to bring about a wide range of developments that have shifted the world's intellectual viewpoint. Since the Great War was a recent topic for many poets and writers, it was the primary cause of these developments.

Literature is a compilation of concepts. It uses writing to express the author's thoughts, and those thoughts include a message for readers. Leading concepts will endure as universal values for decades to come. One of the greatest pieces of literature is Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*. It also includes concepts that guide us to a conclusion. It certainly conveys the notion of human dignity and life. This message speaks to a comprehension of the true nature of people in social and economic spheres of existence. Humans are naturally able to live under any circumstance. Man cannot be vanquished, but he may be destroyed.

Literature is a compilation of concepts. It uses writing to express the author's thoughts, and those thoughts include a message for readers. Leading concepts will endure as universal values for decades to come. One of the greatest pieces of literature is Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*. It also includes concepts that guide us to a conclusion. It certainly conveys the notion of human dignity and life. This message speaks to a comprehension of the true nature of people in

social and economic spheres of existence. Humans are naturally able to live under any circumstance. Man cannot be vanquished, but he may be destroyed.

Thus, the novella "The Old Man and the Sea" by Ernest Hemingway is a timeless literary classic that explores the depths of human nature through the tribulations of an elderly fisherman named Santiago as he battles both his inner demons and the elemental forces of nature. Although the main focus of the story is Santiago's epic fight with a marlin, there includes a deep examination of the existential and psychological difficulties that people encounter when faced with hardship. The issue of man's search and the dangerous route to self-discovery—which frequently involves a significant and perhaps pathological change in personality—are at the heart of this investigation.

In "Blue Water." Within the larger historical and psychological framework of his life and times, Hemingway provides a contemplative and intimate look into deep-sea fishing in "A Gulf Stream Letter." Although the 1936 work was written before *The Old Man and the Sea*, it has themes of man's fight against nature, perseverance, and existential contemplation. In the past, Hemingway belonged to a group known as the "Lost Generation," which was demoralized by the atrocities of World War I. Deep-sea fishing and other primitive, almost legendary encounters with nature appeal to him because of this sense of disappointment.

Hemingway's depiction of fishing as a test of strength, endurance, and manhood reflects his psychological stoicism and obsession with masculinity. Underpinning the narrative's intensity and reflective tone are his own personal challenges, such as periods of melancholy and a death fixation, which add to the text's multi-layered examination of human resiliency in the face of nature's magnificent grandeur.

Examining "Old Man and the Sea" requires examining the subject of human hunting, which is frequently discussed in literature and in real-life narratives of conflict or extreme survival. This explores the darkest sides of human nature and poses important queries on the pathological alteration of personality. Psychological changes can happen when people are put in hunting or being hunted settings, including in combat, survival crises, or oppressive surroundings. As survival instincts take precedence over societal standards, these changes might include a lack of empathy, a tolerance to violence, or a blurring of moral boundaries.

When a person's psychological equilibrium is disrupted, pathological personality changes might show up as violence, paranoia, or even a love of hunting. When confronted with the existential prospect of death or dominance, people may resort to more aggressive, primordial behaviors, which is a sign of the fragility of human morality under severe circumstances.

In literature, existentialism frequently offers an engrossing examination of the human condition, exploring themes of choice, freedom, and the pursuit of meaning in an apparently meaningless reality. Because existentialist philosophy challenges the fundamental nature of life

and the importance of personal experience, authors have created stories that may profoundly connect with us. One should first attempt to understand the subtleties of existentialism in literature via 10 excellent works, each of which offers a distinct perspective on the intricacies of human existence, in order to further explore fishing as an existential crisis.

In conclusion, when carried too far, the quest for thrills—which is frequently motivated by a need for excitement, escape, or approval—can turn into a risky tool for self-destruction. People who are looking for experiences that are more intense—whether through substance addiction, dangerous actions, or high-stakes competitions—may become caught in a vicious cycle of growing danger. An attempt to escape personal anguish, a desire to overcome inner emptiness, or a search for purpose are just a few examples of the fundamental psychological demands that frequently underlie this thrill-seeking. But as the chase gets more intense, it can have negative effects including addiction, bodily injury, or mental collapse. The same excitement that previously gave one a sense of vitality can eventually turn into a destructive force that erodes one's wellbeing and sets off a downward spiral of risk and loss.

By turning hunting into a deep, nearly spiritual conflict between man and environment, Hemingway offers a romantic reexamination of hunting impulses in *The Old Man and the Sea*. The protagonist of the novella, Santiago, fights a big marlin in an epic struggle that is not just a survival quest but also a voyage of honor, respect, and personal atonement. Because Santiago respects the fish's beauty and might and views the marlin as a legitimate opponent rather than a simple prey, their bond goes beyond the predator-prey dynamic. This idealized depiction of hunting highlights concepts of perseverance, respect, and the interdependence of all life while showing the dignity of both the hunter and the prey.

Hemingway reinterprets the primal hunting drive as a noble and important effort via Santiago's struggle, where hunting is interpreted as a means of self-discovery, bravery, and an expression of man's role in nature.

Part III. Weapon as the source of destructive energy: from J.F. Cooper's "Deerslayer" to K. Vonnegut's "Deadeye Dick"

3.1. Cooper's motive of useless bird-killing in the context of intertextuality (with reference to J.F. Coleridge's poem "The rime of the ancient Mariner")

On September 15, 1789, James Fenimore Cooper was born in Burlington, New Jersey. James was raised and educated in Cooperstown, New York, when his father, William Cooper, relocated the family there in 1790. The property was established by Cooper's father, who was the town's most well-known resident; Cooperstown was named for him. James was critical of the schooling he got, despite the fact that he was brought into the most powerful social circles and lived the life of a wealthy landowner. He attacked, for instance, the professors and the pricey, private institutions he recalled from his early years.

He had problems in college because of his audacious and self-reliant personality. He enrolled at Yale College when he was thirteen years old, but he was dismissed in 1805 for allegedly setting off a gunpowder and allowing a donkey to sit on a professor's chair in the classroom. Maybe under parental pressure, the young Cooper went to sea. He saw a lot of the Mediterranean Sea while serving as a common seaman aboard the *Stirling* from 1806 to 1808. By 1811, Cooper had concluded that life at sea was not for him, despite having been commissioned as a midshipman in the U.S. Navy in 1808 [14].

Fortunately, two things happened that led Cooper to pursue a profession on land. His father left a substantial inheritance when he was assassinated by a political rival in 1809. James resigned a year later after taking a vacation from navy service, which some critics see as evidence that his time at sea may have been the result of the parents' desire to discipline the son. But young Cooper's 1811 marriage to Susan De Lancey, the daughter of a wealthy and powerful Westchester County family, perhaps played a bigger role in his decision to forgo a naval career. He started living the affluent life of a country squire, traveling between Westchester and Cooperstown, after being admitted into the most elite social circles in New York City.

His costs were raised by having a big family; his brothers wasted the whole of their fortune and then took out significant loans from him, and his own business endeavors failed. The reasons for Cooper's choice to pursue a career in writing remain unclear. Cooper had never written a meaningful piece of fiction before the age of thirty; other accounts claim that he considered even writing letters to be a laborious undertaking. Naturally, his financial situation may have had a role in his choice, but being poor and having to work to get it does not make one a writer.

One explanation for his choice, nevertheless, is frequently cited: Cooper told his wife he could write a better novel while reading a bad English romance, and she challenged him to do it. In 1820, Cooper released *Precaution*, a romance that mimicked Jane Austen's best-selling novels and had a backdrop of English gossip and drawing room discussions. However, neither the public nor reviewers gave Cooper any credit for *Precaution* [36]. Cooper was not deterred; he discovered a true joy in writing, even if he was unable to write a story that was worth reading. He resorted to the sources he was familiar with: his own nation and the sea.

Cooper released *The Spy* in 1821, and it was widely regarded as the first significant historical fiction book in American literature. Cooper recounted the exploits of Harvey Birch, a romantic hero, in the Westchester County area during the American Revolution. Cooper's excellent use of romantic and American aspects in this novel made him a potential author, and he continued to create two more books in 1823, taking use of his successful formula. Cooper used his nautical expertise and experiences to great use in *The Pilot*, the first American novel that can be classified as marine fiction. He supposedly aimed to outdo Sir Walter Scott's hit novel, *The Pirate*, and he was successful. In literary circles, Cooper even gained acceptance as "the American Scott."

The Pioneers, the first of five published "Leatherstocking Tales," was written by him in the same year and centers on the character of Natty Bumppo [36]. Cooper was inspired to continue mining the rich vein he had first discovered by these achievements. *Lionel Lincoln* (1825), which covers the Battle of Bunker Hill and the start of the American Revolution, and *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), which revisits Natty Bumppo's exploits during the French and Indian Wars, were both swiftly published by him.

At this point, Cooper made the decision to move to Europe and abandon America. He moved to Europe for a number of reasons, including his children's schooling, a change of scenery for rest and maybe inspiration, and the necessity to make sure he had solid contracts with European publishers on copyrights, royalties, and other issues. He spent nearly eight years in Europe after relocating to Paris in 1826. Cooper received invites from all sides and was enthusiastically received for his significant contribution to European literature.

Again, the social life did not interfere with his literary career because Cooper published in one year, 1827, two novels: *The Prairie*, the third of the "Leatherstocking Tales," and *The Red Rover*, a sea story. In addition, he published *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* (1829) about New England in the seventeenth century, and *The Water-Witch*, a nautical novel. Cooper also utilized his foreign travels and readings by composing three works with European backgrounds: *The Bravo* (1831), *The Heidenmauer* (1832), and *The Headsman* (1833).

However, Cooper's writings in Europe, especially those that had a lot of romantic and foreign themes, did not significantly enhance his literary reputation; reviewers merely view these

works as small creations. Cooper irritated both his French hosts and fellow Americans with his less creative essays. Although his main goal in *Notions of the Americans* was to defend the American character, his criticism of his fellow citizens was too severe, in their eyes. In *A Letter to General Lafayette*, he also regrettably dabbled in French domestic affairs, severely demoralizing his American friends [36].

Cooper had a miserable return to America in 1833. A renowned and significant writer (the first to achieve international renown) became resentful and antagonistic as a result of the mounting discontent among many Americans. *A Letter to his Countrymen*, his attempt at self-defense in 1834, only served to fuel additional debate; a second attempt at self-defense in 1838 with *The American Democrat* did nothing to aid him. To put it succinctly, Cooper was caught between two worlds: in Europe, he could not express his love and optimism for American ideals without protesting; in the US, he could not tolerate the ultra-nationalism and vulgarity that were so contrary to his aristocratic and cosmopolitan impulses.

He bemoaned the inability of Christians to practice Christianity in a century that was becoming more materialistic and perceived a deterioration in the real pioneer spirit in the drive of development toward the West. It is easy to see why readers who were patriotic, sensitive, and proud turned against Cooper, believing that he had abandoned his country by living in Europe for too long.

Cooper's latter years were characterized by ongoing struggles to articulate his opinions and his worldview toward his own country. He was involved in a number of protracted legal battles with the media and his Cooperstown neighbors, including libel, slander, and property rights lawsuits. *The Pathfinder* (1840) and *The Deerslayer* (1841) were two further additions to the story of Natty Bumppo. *The History of the Navy of the United States of America*, his two-volume study published in 1839, was regarded as a reliable, academic reference source. Cooper's final significant work of literature was a trilogy in which he supported the landlords in the Anti-Rent War, a stance that severely damaged his reputation both inside and outside of the community.

The trilogy, commonly known as "The Littlepage Manuscripts," consists of three novels: *Satanstoe* (1845), *The Chainbearer* (1845), and *The Redskins* (1846). Cooper chronicles the ascent and decline of a frontier family between about 1740 and 1840. He revisited the sea topic in a number of subsequent books and persisted in incorporating his opinions on modern etiquette and social concerns into literary works, including *Wyandotté* (1843) and *The Crater* (1848).

He failed to regain the critical, popular, and financial success he had before moving to Europe after returning to the United States. Nonetheless, Cooper's thirty-two novels and other works earned him recognition and esteem as a distinguished representative of American literature. Cooper's gifts and accomplishments throughout his lifetime were recognized by the American

people, despite his conflicts with the press, neighbors, and public opinion. He passed away at Cooperstown, next to his cherished Otsego Lake, the Glimmerglass of the Deerslayer, on September 14, 1851.

Individualism, the conflict between European settlers and Indigenous peoples, and humanity's complicated connection with environment are common topics in Cooper's literature. Cooper was an astute observer of the American landscape, and his stories are infused with a profound understanding of how human behavior affects the ecosystem. As such, his writings are especially pertinent to conversations about ecological consciousness.

The depiction of hunting and animal killing is a common theme in Cooper's writings, and he utilizes it to make statements on human morality, carelessness, and the wider effects of human intervention with nature. Characters commit acts of killing that appear needless or excessive in several of his books; this motif frequently has deeper symbolic connotations. His portrayal of bird-killing, which is a metaphor for wastefulness, moral blindness, or even a premonition of larger disasters, is a prime example of this. Cooper joins a larger literary tradition that challenges the morality of aggression against nature by using similar images [14].

Intertextuality may be used to analyze Cooper's treatment of the bird-killing theme, especially in light of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's work *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. The Mariner's hasty death of the albatross in Coleridge's book leads to a slew of paranormal penalties, signifying humanity's disregard for nature. Cooper often uses incidents of what appear to be needless bird slaughter to emphasize his characters' carelessness and the unavoidable outcomes that follow. Cooper's writings reinforce the idea of nature's moral dominance over humanity by utilizing the same symbolic framework, making them a continuation of this literary tradition.

In addition, Cooper frequently examines fate and human responsibility in his stories. His characters often find themselves in circumstances where rash decisions have unexpected consequences, much like Coleridge's Mariner. Cooper uses the theme of pointless bird slaughter to highlight a larger ethical issue that speaks to both early environmental knowledge and Romantic ideals, in addition to criticizing human conceit. Cooper's thematic issues may be examined against a rich intertextual backdrop thanks to this relationship to Coleridge's poem.

3.1.1. The symbolism of useless bird-killing in literature.

Birds have represented a variety of ideas throughout literary history, such as freedom, divinity, fate, and the bond between humans and the natural world. Their devastation frequently acts as a potent metaphor for moral decay, human irresponsibility, or a disturbance of the natural order. Bird-killing usually foreshadows catastrophic outcomes or represents a character's demise

in both ancient mythology and contemporary literature. For example, the killing of birds is frequently understood as an omen, indicating coming calamity, in Homer's *Odyssey* [31]. Similar to this, the menacing appearance of birds like the owl, which is frequently connected to death, heightens the sense of unnatural violence and chaos in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* [5]. The interpretation of the motif of bird-killing as a sign of human transgression and its unavoidable repercussions is established by these literary traditions.

In Early American and Romantic Literature, Bird-Killing

The shooting of birds is frequently portrayed in Romantic and early American literature as an ethical transgression and an unbalanced relationship between nature and humans. One of the most notable instances of this trope is found in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798), in which the Mariner's rash slaughter of the albatross leads to supernatural punishment. To illustrate the weight of guilt and the need for atonement, the albatross—a symbol of innocence and divine favor—becomes a load around the Mariner's neck [8].

James Fenimore Cooper subsequently echoes this topic of bird-killing as an act of hubris and moral blindness in his writings, where the needless killing of birds serves as a larger indictment of humanity's destructive inclinations. For example, the wholesale slaughter of passenger pigeons in *The Pioneers* (1823) is a metaphor for the careless use of natural resources (Franklin, 2008). Cooper intensifies worries about moral irresponsibility and environmental damage in early American culture by referencing the symbolic practice of bird-killing.

Cooper's Use of the Motif of Bird Killing

Fenimore, James Cooper's paintings usually show incidents of bird slaughter that seem disproportionate, illogical, or indicative of more serious ethical and environmental issues. One of the most notable instances is seen in *The Pioneers* (1823), when the protagonists massacre a large number of passenger pigeons out of reckless zeal rather than need. This tale foreshadows subsequent environmental consciousness and critiques humanity's misuse of nature by killing millions of birds without cause [14]. Cooper draws a comparison between Natty Bumppo's moral position—the frontiersman denounces the wastefulness of murdering needlessly—and the settlers' reckless brutality.

Cooper's recurring subject of human conceit in the face of nature's order is furthered in *The Prairie* (1827), where the needless slaughter of birds symbolizes a breach of natural balance (Rans, 1991). These seemingly senseless acts of violence have deeper moral meanings than just being story elements; they resonate with larger literary traditions that criticize the upsetting of nature's equilibrium.

Cooper's reworking of this theme goes beyond simple retribution to include a critique of how people view the natural world. Cooper's protagonists frequently fail to see the consequences

of their deeds, but Coleridge's Mariner is plagued by remorse and compelled to repeat stories incessantly as a kind of atonement. In an event Cooper used to illustrate the perils of human exploitation of natural resources, the hunter characters in *The Pioneers* (1823) indiscriminately kill passenger pigeons in a show of excess and power [14]. Cooper's stories frequently function as warnings against humanity's destructive inclinations before irreparable harm is done, in contrast to Coleridge, who offers salvation through suffering. from an early ecological knowledge that prioritizes collective responsibility to a Romantic emphasis on individual guilt and atonement.

Symbolism and Metamorphosis in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" Samuel Coleridge wrote "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" in the eighteenth century. In this poetic song, an elderly, gaunt mariner stops a man who is headed to his cousin's wedding and tells him a terrifying, otherworldly tale about how he made a risky error that led to a string of odd occurrences that destroyed his life.

Stated differently, the poem's meaning is conveyed by the title. The voyage of an ancient mariner is depicted in the poem "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." The term "rime" describes the frost that frequently forms around the edges of sails and ships.

Let's examine The Rime of the Ancient Mariner's emblems. Coleridge's skill at making the ordinary appear strange and the strange seem normal is what makes this poem so potent. Typically, the mariner's monologue provides minimal explanation for the story's numerous strange components. In the meanwhile, commonplace elements like the sea, rain, and albatross are transformed into magical and supernatural phenomena.

Coleridge uses the sun and the moon in particular to illustrate this. Using symbolism, imagery, and diction, Coleridge creates many interpretations of the sun and moon throughout "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" as the circumstances and tone of the lyric shift. The mariner in this poem pauses and insists that a wedding guest listen to a story he has to share. The sailor begins by recounting his experience of being at sea with a group of sailors. A strong breeze caused their ship to travel quickly over the water as they set off on their journey. The ship was directed by a peaceful seabird called an albatross, which added to their pleasant sailing. While they were off to a swift start and are being overseen by a peaceful bird of good fortune, the sun is mentioned frequently in a positive context.

For example, when the sailors' ship was being lowered, "The sun came up upon the left,/Out of the sea came he!/And he shone bright, and on the right/Went down into the sea./Higher and higher every day,/Till over the mast at noon—" (Coleridge, p. 25-30).

This has powerful and compelling images. It gives the impression of a clear, sunny day that would be perfect for sailing. This is likewise interpreted as good fortune by the superstitious sailors, who joyfully embark on their adventure.

When the mariner chose to shoot the albatross for unknown reasons, the narrative in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* takes a different turn.

The moon is mentioned in the ballad for the first time in this line from the rime of the ancient mariner.

“Glimmer’d the white moonshine.” [...] With my crossbow/I shot the Albatross” (Coleridge, p. 18-19).

The mariner was commended for killing the albatross since they thought it was bringing the fog and mist. The aforementioned stanza's normality implies that the sailors' mindset is unchanged as when they embarked on their journey.

The sailors are happy that the albatross is dead and their mood is visible in their surroundings: “Nor dim nor red, like an angel’s head,/The glorious Sun uprist:/Then all averr’d, I had kill’d the bird/That brought the fog and mist./

‘Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,/That bring the fog and mist” (Coleridge, p. 25-30).

The use of strong language in this passage, such as the adjective "glorious" and the analogy to an angel, reinforces the sailors' perception that the sun is like a guardian angel. The sailors believe that they are being watched by a divinity who is assisting and guiding them since they consider the albatross's death to be a gift.

Soon after, however, the sun’s diction begins to change . “All in a hot and copper sky,/The bloody sun, at noon,/Right up above the mast did stand,/No bigger than the moon” (Coleridge, p. 30).

The sun begins to get too hot, and the wind stops. The seamen start to become dehydrated as the ship comes to a complete stop. This gives the sun a fresh undertone. Since it is the cause of the most recent dispute among the sailors, it becomes much more detrimental. In the old mariner's rime, the sun starts to symbolize fury.

Remarkably, the sun is likened to the moon when it undergoes negative transformation. The sailors tie the dead albatross around the mariner's neck as a form of punishment after realizing that killing it was an error.

The mariner sees another ship rushing at them while the crew on their inactive ship are gradually suffering. “Almost upon the western wave/Rested the broad bright sun;/When that strange shape drove suddenly/Betwixt us and the sun./And straight the sun was flecked with bars,/(Heaven’s mother send us grace!)/As if through a dungeon grate he peered/With broad and burning face” (Coleridge, p. 30-31).

Since the sun has thus far been associated with good fortune, anything that gets in the way of the sailors' lucky charm cannot be auspicious. The graphic depicts the new ship violently

separating the sailors from the sun, and the mariner's cry, which is encapsulated in parenthesis, emphasizes how terrifying the scenario is.

The sun is obscured by the ship and seems to be imprisoned behind bars, which engenders a sense of helplessness as it is implied that the sailors' guardian angel is powerless to assist them. The revelation that Death and Life-in-Death are aboard the spacecraft clarifies this. They can imprison the sun because death is a stronger force than an angel. Death and Life-in-Death are wagers on the crew members' lives. Death ultimately takes them all, but the mariner is ultimately won by Life-in-Death. The sun disappears as soon as she announces her victory. The sun's sudden ejection can only portend worse things to come.

All of the men aboard the ship who were claimed by Death turn to gaze at the mariner before passing away once Death and Life-in-Death had departed. He blesses their beauty without realizing it, and the albatross's body drops from his neck and into the ocean. When the mariner murdered an innocent animal without cause, his punishment started. This explains why he was pardoned once he realized that all of God's creatures are beautiful and showed love to other animals. For the first time in the old mariner's rime, the moon is viewed as favorable.

Everything starts to alter as the mariner removes the albatross from his neck. At last, the mariner can get some rest. Additionally, it rains a lot during thunderstorms, which relieves his dry mouth and sunburned skin. The moon is brought up often in the midst of all of this. "And the coming wind did roar more loud;/And the sails did sigh like sedge;/And the rain poured down from one black cloud;/The moon was at its edge./The thick black cloud was cleft, and still/The moon was at its side:" (Coleridge, p. 25).

These days, the moon is linked to relief and positive transformation. The dead guys start to move as the rain pours down and the moon shines. Even while this first raises red flags, it turns out that angels entered the men's bodies to control the ship:

"Beneath the lightning and the moon/The dead men gave a groan./They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose, [...] The helmsman steered, the ship moved on; [...] They raised their limbs like lifeless tools – /We were a ghastly crew" (Coleridge, p. 31).

Even while that seems unsettling, it's actually a good thing because the boat is now moving and angels are often a good omen. Before leaving the corpses before daybreak, the angels start to sing in unison.

The light briefly reappears as the mariner continues to describe the lovely celestial sound: "For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,/And clustered round the mast;/Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,/And from their bodies passed./Around, around, flew each sweet

sound,/Then darted to the Sun;/Slowly the sounds came back again,/Now mixed, now one by one.
(Coleridge, p. 18).

The backdrop is sufficient to cast the sun in a favorable light while also demonstrating that things are getting better. Both the sun and the moon conclude the ballad on a high note, but they had to go through a lot of shifting viewpoints to get there. The moon was initially negative while the sun was initially more positive, but when the sun started to move in the other direction, the moon turned positive. The sun eventually regained its good meaning as well. Additionally, their symbolic representations changed throughout time. The sun's initial meaning of protection, hope, and a caregiver gave way to anger and consequences. The narrative concludes with the sun standing for excitement and home when the symbolism subsequently shifts to despair.

The moon has a convoluted symbolic history of its own. It started off with strong negative connotations of curses and death. However, it subsequently started to show improvement and remorse, which led to a state of wonderful relaxation and security. Coleridge used strong, significant symbolism, vivid imagery, and compelling language to create these variations. All of this added to the ballad's mysterious core and showed that everything, even seemingly commonplace objects like the sun and moon, had a hint of magic. In order to reach a conclusion, let us examine the recurring motifs in this rhyme. Without themes, this study won't be comprehensive. The following subjects and key concepts are examined in Coleridge's poetic ballad.

Philosophy and religious piety.

This is seen in the representations of Fate, Death, and Life-in-Death. The reader is aware that killing another live creature only for amusement has repercussions. The phrase "the rime of the ancient mariner themes" is what you've been looking for. The ancient mariner's poems frequently deal with piety and the pursuit of wisdom. Imagination flights.

It is obvious that the mariner has a creative mind that may take the reader somewhere else. Coleridge employs this topic to illustrate how creative writers have the ability to take readers from uncomfortable circumstances into a brand-new setting.

The Natural World and Maturity as Theme.

The interaction between the elements of nature and human evolution is emphasized in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. The mariner's development and maturation are influenced by the albatross, the sun, the moon, life, and death. He becomes a sage storyteller as a result of his encounters with the sea and the natural world [7].

3.1.2. Intertextuality in Cooper's and Coleridge's writings.

James Fenimore's bird-killing theme Cooper's writings have a lot in common with *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner's* main act, in which the Mariner's careless slaughter of the albatross sets off a chain of paranormal penalties. The murder of a bird represents a deeper moral and existential issue in both Cooper's books and Coleridge's poetry, making it more than just a violent act. Coleridge's Mariner disrupts the natural order by shooting the albatross without cause, and as a result, he is sentenced to live in permanent penance on the planet (Coleridge, 1798).

In a similar vein, Cooper's portrayals of bird slaughter frequently draw attention to the characters' carelessness and the repercussions of their choices for both the people and the larger ecological and moral order. His portrayals of humans committing ostensibly needless acts of cruelty against birds, especially in *The Prairie* (1827) and *The Pathfinder* (1840), serve to further emphasize the idea of human conceit toward the natural world. Similar to Cooper's portrayals of careless hunting, the Mariner's deed is driven more by impulse than by necessity, underscoring the perils of human behavior when separated from moral concerns (Coleridge, 1798).

Cooper's stories take place in a more naturalistic setting, where the results of human carelessness show themselves as ecological destruction and social corruption, but Coleridge's poetry depicts divine vengeance in the form of supernatural punishment. The two poems' common motif of needless bird death highlights a larger literary tradition in which moral quandaries and ethical ramifications surround humanity's connection with nature.

The moral lessons in Cooper's writings and Coleridge's poem offer different viewpoints on human responsibility in addition to their common symbolism. The Mariner in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* receives a very personal punishment: he is sent to traverse the world and tell his narrative as a warning about repentance and salvation. The Mariner must take responsibility for his acts and learn to respect all living creatures, which is an individualistic lesson. Cooper, however, takes the moral ramifications of murdering birds a step further and criticizes society as a whole.

Cooper foreshadows subsequent ecological discourses that emphasize humanity's collective duty toward nature by reorienting the emphasis from a personal moral lesson to a more comprehensive social and environmental concern. Since Cooper's books, which were written during a time of rapid American growth, criticize the careless exploitation of nature and presage subsequent environmentalist movements, this change reflects the growing environmental fears of his day [29].

In summarizing the concepts discussed above, we would want to highlight how intertextuality enhances literary significance across several traditions, as demonstrated by Cooper's reworking of the bird-killing theme within an American literary and ecological context. Cooper uses this issue to criticize the concrete environmental damage caused by careless human growth,

but Coleridge portrays the death of the albatross as a cosmic moral violation. By doing this, Cooper establishes the foundation for early ecological theory while also aligning himself with Romantic values. His writings elevate the theme of pointless bird slaughter from a literary symbol to a serious ethical issue by transforming *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*'s personal moral lesson into a larger social caution.

Cooper's moral compass and literary inspirations may thus be better understood by examining his use of the bird-killing theme in the context of intertextuality with *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. Cooper's larger philosophical position on nature, human agency, and the results of careless behavior may be better understood by looking at the motif's symbolic use. This examination not only clarifies his interaction with past literary traditions but also highlights the work's ongoing significance in conversations about ethical and ecological consciousness.

3.2. Virus of violence and the cult of weaponry: an existential threat to society in the lives of Natty Bumppo and Rudy Waltz

Modern society faces a serious existential threat from the normalization of violence and the exaltation of weapons. Cultures have ingrained these concepts profoundly into the collective consciousness throughout history by frequently celebrating strength, military skill, and armed resistance as virtues. The repercussions are disastrous, though, when violence ceases to be a survival strategy and instead becomes the norm or even the goal of society. Given that violence infects institutions, social structures, and individual behaviors through exposure, imitation, and systemic reinforcement, the metaphor of a "virus" is especially appropriate. The problem is made worse in this situation by the cult of armament, which glorifies guns and other weapons of mass destruction. This leads to desensitization, heightened hostility, and an unbreakable cycle of violence.

This behavior is particularly harmful in civilizations where there are no restrictions on access to weapons or when the use of force is equated with authority in cultural narratives. An atmosphere where violence is seen as a solution and a means of self-expression is shaped in part by the ubiquitous impact of political discourse, media, and historical myths. As a result, the widespread availability of firearms not only increases the likelihood of crime, conflict, and social instability, but it also erodes core human qualities like empathy, communication, and respect for one another. A comprehensive strategy is needed to address this existential threat, one that includes legislative change, education, and the advancement of alternative narratives that prioritize social cohesiveness and nonviolence above dominance and force [34].

This paragraph will discuss Kurt Vonnegut's 1982 novel *Deadeye Dick*, which follows Rudy Waltz, an immigrant from the Midwest who lives in Port-au-Prince and is troubled by remorse over a childhood accident that killed a pregnant lady. Locations and characters in Vonnegut's tenth book, *Deadeye Dick*, connect it to the same universe as his 1973 book *Breakfast of Champions*.

Eight-year-old Rudy Waltz resides in Midland, Ohio, a tiny town in the Midwest. Rudy's father is a gun fanatic who insists that his son learn how to shoot and clean each of the many antique firearms in his extensive collection. Although painting is his main interest, he inherited his father's pharmaceutical firm as a family business. He has only ever completed one side of a picture, many years before he met Rudy's mother, despite his constant claims to be an artist. It had been anticipated that Rudy's mother, who was quite affluent, would wed a brilliant guy. Rudy's parents don't contribute anything to society since they are unable to care for themselves or their kids without a small army of slaves, so they just sit about the home doing nothing. The last member of the Waltz family, Rudy's older brother Felix, a talented singer and announcer, is recruited by the military to read radio announcements [29].

Rudy is given a key to his father's gun room when he is twelve years old. For Rudy, the key represents a sort of rite of passage into adulthood. Because of Rudy's ability at the range, his father thinks he will be responsible with the guns. Mother's Day is the day that Rudy cleans an old Springfield. During World War II, the 30-06 rifle was the regular issue weapon for the US military. Rudy takes the pistol to the top floor of his family's barn and shoots a shot over the town as a symbolic farewell to his youth. A young pregnant lady is vacuuming when the gunshot penetrates her home, instantly murdering both her and her unborn child.

In an act of misplaced conceit, Rudy's father thinks he can escape jail time by presenting a dramatic confession in which he regrets allowing his son to have the firearms. Rather, he and Rudy are both accused of unintentional manslaughter and imprisoned. The police determine that Rudy should be kept apart from the other inmates after Rudy's father is brutally beaten. They do this out of concern about the negative publicity that would result from permitting a 12-year-old child to be hurt or worse while they are watching, not out of altruism. Rather, they paint Rudy with ink, put him in a cage, and invite everyone in the community to come and spew hate at the youngster in an attempt to degrade him. Mr. Metzger, the pregnant woman's husband, is one among those who objects to this act of humiliation.

Rudy is completely humiliated by the police, who then choose to release him while his father is imprisoned to fulfill the remainder of his term. Both the manslaughter and the police humiliation left Rudy deeply traumatized, he dedicates his life to an austere lifestyle in which he identifies as an asexual "neuter," denying himself any pleasure. Rudy reverses his social status

with regard to his family's slaves as a punishment, doing almost whatever they ask of him. Since everyone in the community refers to Rudy as "Deadeye Dick," his anguish and guilt are only exacerbated. To escape this sobriquet, Rudy moves to New York City where he produces a play called *Kathmandu* which runs for only one night. It concerns a period in his father's youth in Austria, during which he is supposedly friends with Adolf Hitler [29].

Rudy and Felix relocate to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, shortly after, when Rudy, who is now middle-aged, tells the reader his heartbreaking story. As the story continues, a neutron bomb destroys every resident of Midland, Ohio, yet oddly, the buildings and streets remain intact. Furthermore, the city seems safe to live in since there is no residual radiation. In an attempt to restore his lost youth and innocence, Rudy returns to Midland. There, he runs across a government security force that was brought in to guard the town against trespassers and the destruction of its property.

By the book's finale, Rudy's sense of shame over his actions is still quite strong. In the midst of Midland's ghost town, he eventually manages to live with himself. Rudy concludes the book by reflecting on how humanity has regressed to the so-called Dark Ages of the Medieval Era, at least in the 20th century. After so many years of brutality, he believes that mankind will once again be able to find its capacity for love and decency.

Let's examine the background of J.F. Cooper's works in order to present a fair comparison of the protagonists in the two novels under examination. Some contend that the cultural projection of the physically fit hero is the foundation of America's long-standing frontier story. The Leatherstocking stories offer a classic illustration of this wider cultural phenomena by following Natty Bumppo from old age in *The Pioneers* to new youth in *The Deerslayer*. The frontier hero, Natty Bumppo, is James Fenimore Cooper's enduring contribution to the American cultural mythology. Cooper used the frontier to paint a distinctive picture of American national identity.

Rugged individualism, self-reliance, moral certainty in the face of challenging ethical choices, and independence from potentially suffocating social constraints are all characteristics of the emerging American character that are reflected in Bumppo [23]. His physical actions of bravery—rescuing ladies in captivity, winning many shooting contests, and grudgingly murdering innumerable Native Americans in the peculiar combat of the frontier—give these traits their impact. The physical beauty of Natty Bumppo's body made his racial purity readable, and as "a man without a cross," he came to represent the nation's white, Anglo-Saxon destiny [6].

Cooper establishes a boundary between Natty Bumppo and his Native American buddy and counterpart, Chingachgook, as early as *The Pioneers*, by using a binary opposition between the handicapped and the able-bodied. Here, Chingachgook adopts a crippled persona to make it

easier for him to be removed from the book at the end. In addition to foreshadowing Chingachgook's final suicide, his physical weakness serves as a narrative technique that places the end of the Native American race symbolically as the consequence of natural selection rather than violent British and American imperialism. Cooper first recognizes the mythological potential of what would become his most adored character in *The Pioneers*, when he discovers throughout the narrative action that Natty Bumppo cannot experience the same destiny as Chingachgook. The odd link between handicap and able-bodiedness—both symbiotic and parasitic—that still fascinates America's cultural imagination is shown by the story's ending, in which Bumppo survives and Chingachgook dies.

As a history of Americanist literary critics has implicitly supported Cooper's distinction, his problematic dependence on opposing definitions of disability and able-bodiedness has grown even more problematic. The myth-symbol school of American literary critics used Cooper's reversal of the aging process to symbolize the potential of the American people when they nominated Cooper's *Leatherstocking* series into the American canon. In contrast to the presumed decadence of the Old World, Bumppo's journey from old age in *The Pioneers* (published in 1823) to fresh youth in *The Deerslayer* (published in 1841), provided a handy metaphor for the distinctive nature of America.

The myth of American ability, however, is a far deeper mythos that underlies the American national identity. These critics constructed the meaning of America around a physical hierarchy that favored some bodies over others by giving preference to youth over old age. Many of America's defining literary motifs, such as Emerson's self-reliance, Franklin's belief in the perfectibility of man, and in this article, the rugged individualism of the frontiersman, have their roots in this myth and its steadfast belief that America attracted a race of man that could achieve all that the rest of a darkened world could not [23].

Natty Bumppo is mainly irrelevant to the main plot until the end of the book, and *The Pioneers* was never actually meant to be his story. *The Pioneers* is a descriptive story, according to Cooper, and his depiction of the emerging town of Templeton is based on his own house in Cooperstown, New York. Above all, Cooper tells a distinctively American tale of national origins by showing the development of a little community at the frontier's edge. The story revolves around a romance between Oliver Effingham and Elizabeth Temple, and the book follows European literary traditions, most notably those seen in Walter Scott's romances.

The narrative action is driven by two conflicts: Judge Temple and Natty Bumppo, and Oliver Effingham and Judge Temple. The American Revolution serves as the historical backdrop for the fight between Effingham and Temple. At the time of the revolution, Temple, an American, and Colonel Edward Effingham, Oliver's British father, part ways amicably. Temple keeps the

assets of their joint company with Edward's approval. Oliver discovers at the end of the book that the Judge has been keeping his estate in trust the entire time, which is explicitly stated in Temple's will, despite his belief that Temple used the American victory as a chance to seize complete control of the Effingham estate and defraud him of his inheritance. The issue is settled with Oliver and Elizabeth's marriage at the end of the book, which attests to America's legal independence and erases any remaining animosity between the Old and New Worlds. John P. McWilliams charts the character distinctions amongst the disputants to explain the second major disagreement in the book:

Leatherstocking exemplifies the just man in a Lockean State of Nature, [while] Judge Temple must bring institutional justice to the State of Civilization. [Temple represents] gentleman who relied upon property contracts, man-made law, and votes to build a good society at demonstrable expense to natural liberty, [while Bumpo represents] the individualist who, relying upon himself and the wilderness around him, pursued without qualification the laws of Nature's God [29].

Cooper finally promotes Judge Temple as the ideal for the future of the American republic, even if Bumpo symbolizes a deeply moral relationship with the natural environment and individual freedom from the constraints of institutional law. As Henry Nash Smith correctly notes, "The profundity of the symbol of Leatherstocking springs from the fact that Cooper displays a genuine ambivalence toward all these issues, although in every case his strongest commitment is to the forces of order" (Cooper, p. 62).

In *The Pioneers*, Bumpo's elderly buddy and Delaware tribe leader, Chingachgook, represents the underlying dispossession of America's Native American inhabitants, which is concealed by each of these confrontations. According to Eric Cheyfitz, Oliver Effingham seems to be a Native American for the most part of the book. He even contests Judge Temple's claim to the territories around Templeton on the grounds of indigenous land rights. In the book, Oliver appears out of nowhere and spends much of his time with Bumpo and Chingachgook. This leads the other villagers to believe that Oliver is a "half-breed," with one character saying that he "can never be weaned from the savage ways." (Cooper, p. 122). As Cheyfitz explains, "[A]t the end of *The Pioneers* the opposition between 'Young Eagle' and the Judge, between Indian and white, that has sustained the debate over land rights collapses, when it is revealed that Oliver Edwards is the son and heir of Judge Temple's former silent business partner" (Cooper, p. 123). Here, the uncertainty of Oliver's ancestry is revealed as a narrative ploy and the novel affirms that property rights can only be legally disputed by white men.

The Pioneers has been correctly interpreted by the critical tradition as a work on nineteenth-century American law and property, or what Cheyfitz calls a "fiction about the law" (Cooper, p.

119). However, as a cultural document, the novel cannot only rely on the language of the law to support its main ideological stances; rather, Cooper's characters and the plot of his book are meticulously crafted to support particular legal stances in terms of culture and emotion. In order to create a work of fiction about the law that has its roots in the nation's founding and explains the more fast national movement west at the time he was writing, Cooper set his novel in 1793–1794.

The article "Settler Colonies" by Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson clarifies the issues surrounding Cooper's nationalist endeavor. According to Johnston and Lawson, historical definitions of "settler colonies" have depended on the existence of long-standing, predominantly white racial societies in which colonial laws and practices have resulted in the extermination of indigenous peoples. As a result, states like Australia, Canada, and New Zealand have historically been referred to be "settler colonies," however more nuanced arguments regarding the inclusion of countries like the US or South Africa, for instance, can be made (Cooper, p. 361).

The organizational notion of the "settler" and its ambivalent status as both "colonized and colonizing" are not, strictly speaking, the focus of Cooper's novel—by 1794, Judge Temple is Templeton's royal power [22]. However, "there is a strategic disavowal of the colonizing act" in the settling act. By adopting a new 'colonized' subject—the colonizer or settler-invader—the 'national' takes the place of 'the indigenous' in this process, hiding its involvement in colonization (Cooper, p. 365). As Lawson and Johnston clarify:

The key theoretical step is to consider the "settler" as inhabiting an awkward space between two First Worlds, two sources of legitimacy and authority. The Imperium, the world from which Europe sprang and the source of its primary cultural authority, is one of them. The authority of the First Nations, whose sovereignty they not only supplanted and displaced but also sought, is its "other" First World.

It is possible to see the two seemingly incompatible tensions that permeate *The Pioneers* as opposing pleas to the various poles of authenticity and authority that Johnston and Lawson discuss. Once more, Cooper's work uses the European romance genre to appeal to literary authority. The marriage of Oliver and Elizabeth, which symbolically combines the Old and New Worlds, establishes Judge Temple as the patriarch of the country. Natty Bumppo becomes the representative authority of the indigenous people of the "First World" as the story goes on.

Cooper exposes the parasitic nature of this history, establishing Bumppo as "the figure who is ready to step in when the native 'dies out'" [22, 360-376], even though the settlers' early encounters with Native American populations greatly influenced the character of the New World. By erasing and substituting nationalist forms of cultural authority that uphold a distinctively American mythology for "First World" norms, Cooper ultimately settles disputes in *The Pioneers*. It is evident from analyzing the book through the prism of disability studies that Cooper can only

carry out this process of replacement and effacement by highlighting the differences between the bodies of the able and the crippled.

While the final four Leatherstocking Tales are populated by a number of Native American characters, *The Pioneers* sole indigenous representative is Chingachgook, friend of Natty Bumppo and chief of the Delaware tribe [12].

Chingachgook exists at the margins of Cooper's text, remaining incidental to the central plot for much of the novel. However, as Cooper plots the transition from the untamed frontier to the recently emerged civilization symbolized by Judge Temple, his character continues to play a significant narrative role. Eric Cheyfitz contends in "Savage Law" that the Supreme Court's 1823 ruling in *Johnson and Graham's Lessee v. M'Intosh* case—the year *The Pioneers* was published—created a legal fiction that denied Native Americans their property rights and gave the government the authority to assert legal ownership over their lands. *Johnson v. M'Intosh* served as "the cornerstone of the establishment of federal Indian law," serving as a "preamble to the famous Cherokee cases of 1831 and 1832 that limited the sovereignty of Indian peoples to that of 'domestic dependent nations'" in the process. [6]. Cooper's novel corroborates this legal decision in no uncertain terms, but he is simultaneously interested in mediating the cultural inheritance offered by the indigenous inhabitants of the New World.

In an attempt to naturalize the American advance west over the continent, Cooper's portrayal of Chingachgook completes the legal and cultural task of Native American displacement. This basic objective is shown by early accounts of Chingachgook: The observers were taken aback by the Indian's dignified and methodical gait as he moved slowly along the lengthy hall. With the exception of a silver medallion of Washington that hung from his neck on a buckskin thong and lay on his high chest among numerous scars, his shoulders and complete body were naked down to his waist. Although his arms were straight and elegant, they lacked the muscular aspect that comes from hard work in a male race. His shoulders were fairly large and big.

The final sentence of this text indicates a whole different purpose for Chingachgook's participation in the story, despite the opening words implying the inherent grandeur of Chingachgook and the Mohican blood line. Chingachgook's limp arms in this instance allude to his incapacity to work efficiently in the new environment. The passage's shift from the lonely and elderly Chingachgook to "a race of men" highlights the Native American race's overall inability to settle and cultivate the land in a proper manner.

This same logic is at the heart of the *Lessee v. M'Intosh* decision: "...the tribes of Indians inhabiting this country were fierce savages, whose occupation was war, and whose subsistence was drawn chiefly from the forest. The land would be a wilderness if they were left in control of

it [6]. The Supreme Court ruling and Cooper's portrayal of Chingachgook are framed by the savage/civilized dichotomy, which holds that the "savage" is essentially incapable of enhancing the physical environment for civilization.

When Chingachgook has had too much to drink, Cooper uses Natty Bumppo's voice later in the book to hint at the boundaries of Native American nobility: "This is the way with all the savages; give them liquor, and they make dogs of themselves" (Cooper, p. 158). Cooper believes that the Native American people is doomed to extinction because of a fundamental fault in their mind.

His portrayal of Chingachgook is distinctive and noteworthy because it makes this internal deviation visible via the physical degeneration of his body. Chingachgook's limp arms serve as a tangible symbol of his people's predicament and their deeper incapacity to advance a civilization. Cooper chooses to age the Native Americans in a manner that is more sympathetic and natural rather than recounting the bloody eradication of their people. This is the reason why Chingachgook's advanced age is consistently highlighted throughout the book—descriptions of what may be called his crippled physique purposefully signal his eventual doom.

By sympathizing with Chingachgook's shortcomings and approaching death without taking responsibility for his demise, Cooper is able to hide the power dynamics that govern his connection with Chingachgook behind a rhetoric of paternalism. Cooper uses Chingachgook's physical body to represent the failures he observes in the Native American race. This makes Chingachgook's departure from his novel—and, by extension, the departure of the Native American population from his country—a natural occurrence, a result of his own personal and private limitations rather than the violent acts of dispossession that European Americans propagated.

The portrayal of Chingachgook's crippled physique is essential to his suicide; his physical limitations are used as the main justification for his choice to end his life. Assuming his readers would acknowledge that the kind of life he gives Chingachgook is not truly worth living, Cooper can only absolve himself of responsibility for the Anglo-American annihilation of the Native American race by using the symbolic power of incapacity to denote deterioration. Disability also finds its telos in death in Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, as seen by the fate of Hetty Hutter in *The Deerslayer*, which even more clearly illustrates the reasoning for Chingachgook's suicide.

Hetty is described throughout *The Deerslayer* as "feeble-minded" and "mentally imbecile." Hetty's death scene is strikingly similar to Chingachgook's:

Poor Hetty had been discovered among the dead and injured when the attack was ended and they had been gathered. A rifle bullet had entered her body and caused an injury that was instantly apparent to be fatal. Nobody understood how this wound was gotten; it was most likely

one of the casualties that often follow such incidents like the one described in the previous chapter (Cooper, p. 526).

Hetty is killed by a bullet that stray from Cooper's pen, but no one is held accountable. The mystery behind Chingachgook's injuries on the lake is similar to the mystery surrounding her gunshot wound. These scenes' ambiguity indicates the shallow methods used to end both romances, but mystery is also intended to suggest a more powerful, organic force of selection at play in these individuals' outcomes.

Cooper again replicates the paternalist rhetoric that shaped his portrayal of Chingachgook by deleting Hetty from *The Deerslayer*: Thus passed away Hetty Hutter, one of those enigmatic connections between the material and immaterial realms that, despite seeming to be devoid of so much that is valued and essential for this state of being, come so close to, and provide such a lovely example of, the simplicity, truth, and purity of another (Cooper, p. 535).

This gesture is undermined by the more urgent presumption that Hetty lacks what is "necessary for this state of being." Cooper attributes Hetty's intellectual impairment to the "truth, purity, and simplicity" of a higher spiritual plane of existence.

Cooper's novel is largely concerned with the problems of men and women in this world rather than any other realm, as the critical tradition around his work indicates; his portrayal of the emerging country is secular rather than religious. In the universe he has created in *The Deerslayer*, his concluding reference to the spiritual or even metaphysical ramifications of Hetty's cerebral impairment is meaningless. Only her unexpected passing can validate the true consequences of her impairment, chief among them being that disabled people are incapable of possessing the skills required to be property owners. By identifying categories of those who are physically or mentally unable to manage that property, disability signifies an exclusion from property rights in the legislation drafted by the *Leatherstocking Tales*.

Hetty's case only exposes the fundamental reasoning behind the Supreme Court's *Lessee v. M'Intosh* ruling and Cooper's portrayal of Chingachgook in *The Pioneers*. It appears that Cooper had similar ambitions for Natty Bumppo and Chingachgook when he originally set down to write *The Pioneers*. Bumppo's introduction isn't all that different from Chingachgook's fate, which is naturalized via repeated portrayals of his physical weakness. This is true for the Native American population in America as a whole. He is mostly portrayed as an aging, stubborn frontiersman whose lengthy, meandering tales veer off into longing for his younger years and a bygone era. Bumppo is never supposed to be our hero in these kinds of situations.

However, as the story progresses, Bumppo's character progressively transcends the limitations that Cooper's narrative first establishes; he transcends the supporting position that is

assigned to him and raises issues that are significant enough to call into question the novel's conclusion. Additionally, his white identification offers a sharp contrast to Chingachgook's Native American identity—a point that will be made often in *The Last of the Mohicans*, the next installment of the *Leatherstocking Tales*. Cooper finds Bumpo's capacity to carve out a life on the frontier so alluring, even if his advanced age may have been designed to identify him as a holdover from a bygone era that was untenable [34].

Natty Bumpo plays a crucial role in the story for the latter part of *The Pioneers*, and he is most noticeable in the last set of action scenes. Bumpo wrestles the much younger Hiram Doolittle away from his house, protects Elizabeth and Oliver from a wild fire that would have killed them, and saves Elizabeth and Louisa from a lethal panther in the middle of the jungle. Bumpo's age is irrelevant in all of these situations (as well as in previous ones where he shows off his rifle skills); in times of extreme peril and intensity, the reader may see a side of the *Leatherstocking* that is different from his seventy-year-old physique.

"Natty...seized the strips of the blanket, and with wonderful dexterity strapped the passive chieftain to his own back; when he turned, and with a strength that seemed to bid defiance not only to his years but to his load, he led the way to the point whence he had issued" (Cooper, p. 396) is the clearest example of this in *The Pioneers*, when Bumpo pulls Chingachgook from the flames. This moment, in one sense, dramatizes the struggle going on in Cooper's creative mind since, although he abandons Chingachgook to perish in the fire, Cooper has developed a figure who refuses to. In addition, Cooper finally recognizes Bumpo's true potential in this scenario.

Bumpo is situated at the intersection of two opposing worldviews throughout the most of the book: Judge Temple and the era of civilization, and Chingachgook and the period of the wide frontier. Bumpo's critical insight is constantly reliant on his relationship with Chingachgook because the critical opposition he provides Temple is based on what Johnston and Lawson called the "first world" of indigenous cultural authority. That connection is reversed in this last moment, when Chingachgook is thrown onto Bumpo's back and hangs there like a kid, relying on him for survival.

The *Lessee v. M'Intosh* ruling and subsequent court rulings find its ideal cultural allotrope in this instance; whereas Bumpo finds his rightful place in the national fantasy, Chingachgook is demoted to the status of "domestic dependent." It is no coincidence that the opposite physical conditions of the two characters' bodies support these roles; while Chingachgook sustains his last, enigmatic wound, Bumpo's character's strength makes his power understandable.

"Cooper invented a figure who was able to transform cultural dispossession—that of the Mohicans—into a form of self-possession," according to Donald Pease's *Visionary Compacts* (Cooper, p. 21). The goal of Bumpo's valiant endeavor to rescue Chingachgook's life is to make

the Mohican dispossession seem harmless; Cooper depicts a white man sacrificing all to save a doomed race rather than the Euro-American annihilation of Native Americans. Because of his capacity for survival at the edge of civilization, Bumppo emerges as the American successor to the frontier terrain. When he leads Elizabeth and Oliver through the flames at the end of *The Pioneers*, he exhibits his cerebral clarity in addition to his physical power in saving Chingachgook.

These scenes, in which Bumppo indulges in lengthy philosophical ramblings in the face of the most dire circumstances, will recur throughout *The Leatherstocking* series, giving Cooper the opportunity to demonstrate to his readers the distinction between his hero's ability to reason and the animal spirits of his Indian adversaries [34]. However, Natty Bumppo only transforms from an elderly literary figure to the legendary protagonist of the *Leatherstocking* stories in the last section of *The Pioneers*:

"This was the last they ever saw of the Leatherstocking, whose rapid movements preceded the pursuit which Judge Temple both order and conducted. He had gone far towards the setting sun—the foremost in that band of pioneers who are opening the way for the march of the nation across the continent" (Cooper, p. 436). The tension that threatens the story's tidy conclusion between Bumppo and Judge Temple is eventually resolved in this section by Cooper; the conflicts between Bumppo and Temple, nature and civilization, individuality and property, and freedom and the law all fade. As the country moves west, Bumppo and Temple are shown to be ideological allies; in fact, Bumppo is used to help Temple, paving the way for civilization to follow. As time goes on, Bumppo becomes the epitome of a particular kind of American whose cultural worth has not been diminished by the passing of any one historical period: the lone, valiant frontiersman reviving civilization at its limits by brutal warfare.

In passing from the realistic character of *The Pioneers* opening pages to the mythic figure of the novel's conclusion, Bumppo's age is no longer of consequence, revealing the representative frontier hero's identity as necessarily able-bodied.

3.3. Disharmony of the Lifeworld as a Result of Weapon's Destructive Energy in *The Deerslayer* by James Fenimore Cooper and *Deadeye Dick* by Kurt Vonnegut

In literature, weapons are frequently used as a metaphor of devastation that upsets the world's natural equilibrium rather than just as a means of battle or survival. Guns are essential in determining not just the protagonists' outcomes but also the structure of their different communities in Kurt Vonnegut's *Deadeye Dick* and James Fenimore Cooper's *The Deerslayer*. Vonnegut's book emphasizes the rifle's terrible effects in a ridiculous and chaotic contemporary society, whereas Cooper's tale presents the gun as a tool that challenges morality and self-control

on the American frontier. The destructive power of weapons causes a great deal of discord in both situations, separating people from their natural surroundings, warping moral standards, and altering social dynamics.

The two novels' varying manifestations of this discord mirror the philosophical and historical settings in which their stories are set. *The Deerslayer* depicts the struggle between the natural nature and civilization, where using guns is both necessary and morally dubious. On the other hand, *Deadeye Dick* exposes how a single, inadvertent act of gun violence may have a generational impact, satirizing the desensitization to violence in modern culture. Notwithstanding these distinctions, both books highlight how guns may cause anarchy and that their possession by people frequently has unavoidable repercussions. It is clear from analyzing these pieces that the devastating power of weapons not only claims lives but also upsets the natural order of things, leaving a broken world in its wake.

James Fenimore Cooper's "*Leatherstocking Tales*" is discussed by D.H. Lawrence in *Studies in Classic American Literature*. They reverse time, from old age to youth. That is America's real myth. She begins as an elderly woman, writhing and wrinkled. Additionally, the old skin gradually sheds to provide a fresh youthful appearance. "It is America's myth" [30]. These ideas are echoed by Richard Slotkin in *Regeneration through Violence*:

Throughout the cycle, *Leatherstocking* transitions from old age to death (in *The Prairie*, 1827) and then into a new youth. As a result, the story of *Leatherstocking* as it was told to American readers between 1820 and 1845 was one of the hero's rebirth and rejuvenation. Furthermore, a shift toward a more mythical understanding of the wilderness coincided with the historical time travel back to *Leatherstocking's* early years.

Cooper's narrative reversal of the normal aging process and the *Leatherstocking's* legendary role as a frontier hero are closely related, as both Slotkin and Lawrence recognize. According to Slotkin, Cooper felt driven to restore his hero to a time of youthful, masculine vitality as he became more aware of *Leatherstocking's* essential position in a mythos that was exclusively American. Furthermore, Lawrence shows how Cooper's stories speak to something far more ingrained in the cultural unconscious of America than just his particular historical setting.

Today, no Cooper reader comes across the *Leatherstocking Tales* without being aware of their renowned place in the canon of American literature. Cooper's five books were inducted into the category of "great works of American literature" by the post-World War II myth and symbol school of literary criticism. According to Donald Pease, "each of the masterworks of the myth-symbol school...presuppose[s] a realm of pure possibility where a whole self internalized the norms of American history in a language and series of actions that corroborated American exceptionalism" [34, p. 24].

According to Pease, the myth-symbol school's masterpieces created metanarratives about American history in an attempt to identify what was distinctive and novel about American society and culture, but in the process, they did more than merely describe these narrative myths; they also helped to shape their paths. A prime example of this trend can be seen in R.W.B. Lewis's *The American Adam*, where he uses the corpus of nineteenth-century literature to paint a portrayal of a distinctively American character by following the lineage of the Adamic figure of American innocence.

Lewis saw in the American Adam "a radically new personality," "an individual standing alone, self-reliant and self-propelling, ready to confront whatever awaited him with the aid of his own unique and inherent resources". Lewis positioned Cooper's *Leatherstocking* as the template of this character, which is not surprising given that the most powerful metaphors of the time aimed to promote both cultural and personal self-renewal. Cooper finished the journey from Natty Bumppo's birth and golden youth in *The Deerslayer* to his old age and death in *The Pioneers* and *The Prairie* a number of years before either *Walden* or *Leaves of Grass*. He did so in terms of his hero's character and the events that shaped it [44, p. 103].

Because Natty Bumppo transcends time—he transitions from old age into youth and is both rejuvenated and memorialized in Cooper's last *Leatherstocking* Tale, *The Deerslayer*—he becomes Lewis's ideal Adam. He encourages readers to read Cooper's *Leatherstocking* series in the order that it was published. He also contributes to the creation of, as opposed to merely recounting, a distinctively exceptionalist American mythos that derives its emotional impact from the idea of the lone hero eking out a living on the edge of civilization.

Critical reactions such as those of Lawrence and Lewis have not only acknowledged but also praised the unique chronology that animates Natty Bumppo's journey from old age in *The Pioneers* to death in *The Prairie* and, ultimately, rebirth in *The Deerslayer*, regardless of Cooper's original motivations for revisiting the *Leatherstocking* mythos following Natty Bumppo's death in *The Prairie*. By presenting a timeless hero (popularly embodied by the image of the hero of *The Deerslayer* and *The Last of the Mohicans* rather than *The Pioneers* or *The Prairie*), these critical responses serve to remove the figure of the *Leatherstocking* from the particular texts he inhabits and allow him to occupy the American cultural consciousness on his own mythic terms.

Cooper's creative inversion of the aging process reveals a hierarchy of the body that his critics have obscured by favoring the youthfulness and masculine energy of the young *Leatherstocking* above his older portrayals. At the same time, critics such as Lawrence and Lewis have argued that the legendary body is inherently able, and that Cooper's mythos is essentially dependent on this reversal. The myth-symbol school of literary critics who created the American canon—which assumed a "utopian space of pure possibility where a whole self internalized this

epic myth in a language and a series of actions that corroborated the encompassing state fantasy of American exceptionalism"—participated in the ideology of America's myth of ability rather than undermining it [34]. By seeing white, physically fit males as the agents of that possibility, the myth-symbol school and the Frontier Adam they approved contributed to the articulation of America as an exceptionalist country with unbounded potential. Cooper highlights disability as the exception that validates able-bodiedness as the norm by comparing Chingachgook's crippled body with Bumppo's able body. Cooper uses the logic of disability to provide significance to the concept of race, placing disability outside of America's criteria of belonging. The racial degeneracy of his people is inscribed in Chingachgook's bodily degeneracy. However, the *Pioneers* also hint at the *Leatherstocking* series' temporal reversal, in which Natty Bumppo goes back in time from old age to youth.

The *Leatherstocking* mythos' history is based on the reversal of the basic biological truth that everyone will eventually inhabit a crippled body if they live long enough. The myth of American ability therefore depends on disability for both its enactment and its intelligibility, with disability serving as the starting point for the journey out of time and into myth in Cooper's version. The juxtaposition of Chingachgook's physical injury and deathbed resignation with Natty Bumppo's unexpected outburst of physical power at the end of *The Pioneers* is no coincidence; like so many other binary systems of thinking, able-bodiedness depends on representations of incapacity to define itself.

However, Cooper's *Leatherstocking* series' telos also implies that being able-bodied denotes a temporal process that has to evoke disability in order to transcend or abandon it. The odd contradictions that plague Natty Bumppo's character throughout *The Pioneers* serve as proof of this process, but its final impact is transferred to Bumppo's relationship with Chingachgook. By contending that Bumppo's mythological position depends on Chingachgook and the Native American race as a first world of cultural authority, Slotkin's broader examination of the frontier myth in American culture validates Johnston and Lawson's analytical framework.

However, this connection is parasitic; in order to reestablish the first sphere of authority in a purely nationalist manner, it is necessary to destroy it, which confirms the underlying belief that "the best Indians are white men anyway" [6, p. 126]. If we could just bracket these novels off historically and think about how they relate to the property laws that were in place when they were published, this interpretation of the *Leatherstocking* series would be much less problematic. However, the goal of *Leatherstocking* stories and the hero who connects them is to characterize the transhistorical nature of the United States. Despite the death and burial of Chingachgook and Hetty, other characters and individuals will still be called upon to fulfill their duties and fulfill their destiny.

Therefore, Kurt Vonnegut sees two problems with America's and the world's infatuation with firearms. On the one hand, the spread of weapons and the drive to create ever-more-destructive weapons will undoubtedly result in catastrophe and needless deaths since no amount of security can match the chaotic element that shapes our lives in a world where it is all too simple to make a terrible error. However, some people successfully neuter themselves, or grow desensitized, in response to the pointless murders brought on by weapons.

The ease with which the rest of the world in Deadeye Dick accepts the annihilation of the people of Midland City is proof that, despite the fact that this undoubtedly resolves the issue of emotional suffering, it really plays a key part in aiding mutually assured catastrophe. Any form of gun control is rendered ineffective and even futile in the face of this world's inevitable destruction and proliferation of weaponry.

In addition to this literal view of art, Deadeye Dick argues that everyone views their lives as tales, and that, like excellent and terrible plays, the effectiveness of artistic expressions of their lives can vary [24, p. 121]. Rudy's life might not be very significant. In fact, there is conjecture that if he had been a real person, he may have achieved much more in life if not for the shooting and the exile he experienced as a neuter. Nevertheless, Rudy's life has been successful because he has taken charge of it and used art to reinvent himself. [...] He has experienced pain in his life, but when those traumas are treated artistically, they lead to self-awareness and self-responsibility, two things that may mend severe emotional scars [24, p. 122]. The fact that Rudy narrates his story from the same hotel where Vonnegut claims to be writing his work makes it clear that he is the author of his own story. With the aid of art, he is able to give his life a tangible form.

We might infer that Deerslayer and Deadeye Dick's examination of weapons as a source of destructive energy demonstrates a concerning continuity in the ways that violence is internalized and passed down through the generations. Vonnegut's portrayal of Rudy Waltz's unintentional but devastating act of violence and Cooper's portrayal of Natty Bumppo's reluctant introduction to firearms both emphasize the concept that weapons, once introduced, have an agency of their own, influencing moral landscapes and human choices. These stories are connected by the theme of the "virus of violence," which shows how being around deadly weapons normalizes aggressiveness and reduces personal responsibility.

Rudy's fate is predetermined by a society that views firearms as emblems of power rather than as instruments of death, just as Natty's moral conflict is exacerbated by the impact of his surroundings. The existential weight of people caught in destructive cycles is further reinforced by the intertextual echoes between these works, especially in regard to Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. These echoes highlight the irrevocable ramifications of even seemingly small violent deeds.

In the conclusion, this chapter emphasizes how weapons become more than just tools; they are a representation of humanity's battle against its own destructive tendencies. Literature is a potent tool for criticizing the exaltation of weapons and highlighting the perils of a culture that simultaneously fetishizes and fears violence. From historical wars to current discussions about gun regulation and moral responsibility, the stories of *Deerslayer* and *Deadeye Dick* imply that weapons not only affect individual lives but also represent larger societal tensions. We may better comprehend how the existence of firearms changes human interactions and blurs the lines between necessity, violence, and moral consequence by looking at these writings.

In today's world, when gun violence and militarization continue to impact global reality, the subjects these works tackle are still crucial. The deadly potential of weapons is not only a literary technique; it is a significant social issue that demands ongoing attention and responsibility. We may critically engage in contemporary discussions about violence, morality, and the urgent need for reform by having a solid understanding of the literary depictions of the historical and ideological underpinnings of this phenomena.

Conclusions

The thesis has given an account of numerous examples of human destructiveness in literary works.

The exploration of human destructiveness in literature reveals the intricate relationship between primordial aggressive instincts and their manifestation in various social and existential contexts.

As examined throughout the master's thesis, the works of Hemingway, Cooper, and Vonnegut serve as powerful reflections of the complex nature of violence, its psychological roots, and its far-reaching consequences. From the elemental struggles of *The Old Man and the Sea* to the symbolic portrayal of weapons in *Deerslayer* and *Deadeye Dick*, these narratives underscore how deeply ingrained aggression can surface under specific circumstances, often dictated by historical, personal, and environmental factors. While some characters manage to overcome their destructive impulses through self-awareness and existential re-evaluation, others succumb to the cyclical nature of violence, illustrating the dual potential of human nature.

Erich Fromm's psychological insights into the anatomy of human destructiveness provide a foundational understanding of this phenomenon. He argues that aggression is not merely an instinct but a response conditioned by societal and historical contexts. Hannah Arendt further refines this perspective by emphasizing the structural and political dimensions of violence, revealing how power dynamics and ideological frameworks shape human interactions. In a similar vein, D. Nord's analysis of violence as a mechanism for maintaining or disrupting social order highlights the inevitable consequences of unchecked aggression. Together, these philosophical and psychological approaches illuminate the thematic depth of the literary works analyzed in this thesis, reinforcing the idea that violence is not an isolated act but a force that operates within a broader web of causality.

Hemingway's depiction of primordial aggression in *On the Blue Water* and *The Old Man and the Sea* offers a nuanced perspective on the human struggle against both external nature and internal impulses. While the thrill of the hunt serves as a test of endurance and identity, it also poses the risk of pathological transformation, where the pursuit of dominance leads to self-destruction. However, Hemingway's ultimate re-evaluation of hunting instincts through the character of Santiago suggests a transcendence of violence—a movement toward self-reliance and existential harmony rather than brute conquest. The protagonist's journey is emblematic of the broader human struggle to rise above base instincts and achieve a higher state of self-awareness and dignity.

In contrast, the role of weaponry in *Deerslayer* and *Deadeye Dick* demonstrates how external instruments of destruction amplify human aggression, often detaching violence from necessity and transforming it into an uncontrollable force. Cooper's portrayal of Natty Bumppo's exposure to Water Rat's rifle and Vonnegut's depiction of Rudy Waltz's accidental act of violence illustrate how weapons serve as catalysts for irreversible change. This intertextual dialogue, particularly when viewed through the lens of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, underscores the profound consequences of seemingly minor violent actions. The concept of the "virus of violence," evident in both novels, highlights the existential threat posed by a culture that normalizes and even reveres weaponry. Once introduced into a social or personal context, weapons shape both external reality and internal moral frameworks, influencing individual choices and societal values alike.

Moreover, the destructive power of weaponry in these works reflects a larger commentary on the human condition—how readily individuals and societies justify violence and how such justifications perpetuate cycles of destruction. While Natty Bumppo struggles with the ethical implications of taking a life, Rudy Waltz becomes an emblem of a world where violence is senseless and absurd, a world where the consequences of a single act can ripple through time, altering destinies irreversibly. The contrast between these narratives suggests that while some forms of violence may be rationalized through necessity, others expose the fundamental absurdity of human aggression, calling into question the moral responsibility of individuals in a world permeated by lethal instruments.

Ultimately, human destructiveness is a latent force that can be triggered under specific conditions, yet it is also governed by causal relationships. Literature provides a crucial space for examining these dynamics, offering insights into the consequences of unchecked aggression and the potential for transcendence. Whether through Hemingway's pathos of self-reliance, Cooper's meditation on the morality of violence, or Vonnegut's darkly ironic critique of desensitization, these works collectively advocate for a deeper awareness of the forces that shape human behavior. The challenge, then, lies in recognizing and confronting the destructive energies that permeate both individual and collective existence, striving toward a future where violence is neither glorified nor inevitable but understood and ultimately overcome. In doing so, literature not only reflects the realities of human conflict but also serves as a guide toward moral and philosophical introspection, urging societies to consider the weight of their violent legacies and the possibilities for transformation.

The relevance of this topic in today's world cannot be overstated. In an era marked by global conflicts, mass shootings, and the ongoing militarization of societies, the themes explored in literature serve as a mirror to contemporary issues. The cult of weaponry continues to pervade

many cultures, shaping identities and perceptions of power, often at the cost of human lives. The psychological and existential dilemmas faced by literary characters echo the struggles of modern individuals who grapple with the consequences of violence, both on a personal and societal level. As discussions on gun control, warfare, and ethical responsibility persist, literature remains an essential tool for understanding the roots of aggression and advocating for a more conscientious approach to resolving conflicts. By analyzing the destructive energy of weapons in literature, we gain valuable insights into the mechanisms that sustain violence and, ultimately, the urgent need to break these cycles for the sake of future generations.

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Анотація

Дослідження людської деструктивності в літературі розкриває складний зв'язок між первісними агресивними інстинктами та їх проявом у різних соціальних та екзистенційних контекстах.

Магістерська робота аналізує твори Хемінгуея, Купера та Воннегута які потужно відображають складну природу насильства, його психологічне коріння та далекосяжні наслідки. Від стихійної боротьби у новеллі «Старий і море» до символічного зображення зброї в романах «Звіробій» та «Меткий Дік» ці наративи підкреслюють, наскільки глибоко вкорінена агресія може проявитися за певних обставин, часто продиктованих історичними, особистими та екологічними факторами. У той час як деяким персонажам вдається подолати свої деструктивні імпульси завдяки самоусвідомленню та екзистенційній переоцінці, інші піддаються циклічній природі насильства, ілюструючи подвійний потенціал людської природи.

Психологічні погляди Еріха Фромма на анатомію людської деструктивності дають фундаментальне розуміння цього явища. Він стверджує, що агресія — це не просто інстинкт, а реакція, зумовлена суспільним та історичним контекстом. Ханна Арендт уточнює цю перспективу, наголошуючи на структурних та політичних вимірах насильства, розкриваючи, як динаміка влади та ідеологічні рамки формують людську взаємодію. У подібному ключі аналіз насильства як механізму підтримки або порушення соціального порядку, проведений Д. Нордом, підкреслює неминучі наслідки неконтрольованої агресії. Разом ці філософські та психологічні підходи висвітлюють тематичну глибину літературних творів, проаналізованих у магістерській роботі, підкріплюючи ідею, що насильство — це не ізольований акт, а сила, яка діє в ширшій мережі причинно-наслідкових зв'язків.

Зображення Хемінгуеєм первісної агресії у творах «На блакитній воді» та «Старий і море» пропонує детальний погляд на людську боротьбу як із зовнішньою природою, так і з внутрішніми імпульсами. Хоч азарт полювання служить випробуванням на витривалість та ідентичність, він також створює ризик патологічної трансформації, коли прагнення домінування призводить до самознищення. Однак остаточна переоцінка Хемінгуеєм мисливських інстинктів через персонажа Сантьяго передбачає подолання насильства — рух до самостійності та екзистенційної гармонії, а не до грубого завоювання. Подорож головного героя є символом ширшої людської боротьби за те, щоб піднятися над базовими інстинктами та досягти вищого стану самосвідомості та гідності.

На противагу цьому, роль зброї у романах «Звіробій» та «Меткий Дік» демонструє, як зовнішні інструменти руйнування посилюють людську агресію, часто відокремлюючи

наси́льство від необхідності та перетворюючи його на неконтрольовану силу. Зображення Купером досвіду Натті Бампо з гвинтівкою Водяного Щура та зображення Воннегутом випадкового акту насильства Руді Вальцом ілюструють, як зброя служить каталізатором незворотних змін. Цей інтертекстуальний діалог, особливо якщо розглядати його крізь призму «Повісті про старого мореплавця» Колріджа, підкреслює глибокі наслідки, здавалося б, незначних насильницьких дій. Концепція «вірусу насильства», очевидна в обох романах, підкреслює екзистенційну загрозу, яку становить культура, яка нормалізує і навіть шанує зброю. Потрапивши в соціальний чи особистісний контекст, зброя формує як зовнішню реальність, так і внутрішні моральні рамки, впливаючи як на індивідуальний вибір, так і на суспільні цінності.

Більше того, руйнівна сила зброї у проаналізованих творах відображає ширший коментар до людського стану — наскільки легко окремі особи та суспільства виправдовують насильство та як такі виправдання сприяють руйнуванню. У той час як Натті Бампо бореться з етичними наслідками позбавлення життя, Руді Вальц стає символом світу, де насильство безглузде та абсурдне, світу, де наслідки одного акту можуть поширюватися крізь час, безвідворотно змінюючи долі. Контраст між цими наративами свідчить про те, що різні форми насильства викривають фундаментальний абсурд людської агресії, ставлячи під сумнів моральну відповідальність окремих людей у світі, пронизаному смертельним знаряддям.

Зрештою, людська деструктивність — це прихована сила, яка може бути запущена за певних умов, але вона також регулюється причинно-наслідковими зв'язками. Література надає вирішальний простір для вивчення цієї динаміки, пропонуючи розуміння наслідків неконтрольованої агресії та потенціалу для трансцендентності. Чи то через пафос самозабезпечення Хемінгуея, чи через роздуми Купера про моральність насильства, чи через похмуро-іронічну критику десенсибілізації Воннегутом, ці твори разом виступають за глибше усвідомлення сил, що формують людську поведінку.

Отже, виклик полягає у визнанні та протистоянні руйнівним енергіям, що пронизують як індивідуальне, так і колективне існування, прагнучи до майбутнього, де насильство не буде ні прославлятися, ні неминучим, а буде зрозумілим і зрештою подоланим. Роблячи це, література не лише відображає реалії людських конфліктів, але й служить дороговказом до морального та філософського самоаналізу, закликаючи суспільства врахувати тягар своєї насильницької спадщини та можливості для трансформації.

Актуальність теми в сучасному світі важко переоцінити. В епоху, позначену глобальними конфліктами, масовими розстрілами та постійною мілітаризацією суспільств,

теми, що досліджуються в літературі, служать дзеркалом сучасних проблем. Культ зброї продовжує пронизувати багато культур, формуючи ідентичність та сприйняття влади, часто ціною людських життів. Психологічні та екзистенційні дилеми, з якими стикаються літературні персонажі, перегукуються з боротьбою сучасних людей, які борються з наслідками насильства як на особистому, так і на суспільному рівні. Хоча дискусії щодо контролю над зброєю, воєн та етичної відповідальності тривають, література залишається важливим інструментом для розуміння коренів агресії та відстоювання більш сумлінного підходу до вирішення конфліктів. Аналізуючи руйнівну енергію зброї в літературі, ми отримуємо цінні знання про механізми, що підтримують насильство, і, зрештою, про нагальну потребу зруйнувати ці механізми заради майбутніх поколінь

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