

THEMES OF DAVID COPPERFIELD

Ms.N.RAVEENA M.A.,B.Ed.,M.Phil.,

Assisitant Professor, Department of English,

Bon Secours College for Women,Thanjavur.



SOCIAL CLASS

Social status and class are ubiquitous as issues throughout the novel. In fact, the novel can be viewed in large measure as a commentary on social status and class-based wealth. Favoritism and undeserved respect are shown constantly for those of a higher class. For example, in the case of [Steerforth](#), it is obvious that he is treated much better than David and the other students at Salem House. Furthermore, he is highly regarded by David and even by Mr. [Peggotty](#) and [Ham](#), both of whom are of a lower class, when in fact Steerforth is the one who should be respecting them for their moral character. He constantly puts down those below him in status, such as Mr. Mell and Ham once he gets engaged to Little Em'ly

TRUE HAPPINESS



-
- Many times throughout the novel, the search for true happiness takes prominence. The narrator notes in particular the innocent joy David had as a child before his mother married Mr. Murdstone. The plot in general focuses on David's search for true happiness, and it is up to the reader to judge whether or not he has succeeded.
 - All of the characters find or try to find their own routes to happiness. Some, such as David and the Peggottys, find true happiness through their families and spouses. Others, such as the Micawbers and Uriah, believe that money will bring them great happiness, although the Micawbers are also happy just remaining with one another. Still others, such as Dora, find happiness in simple, frivolous pleasures. Dickens appears to question whether any of these characters can ever find true happiness, for each of these methods of reaching happiness has its pros and cons.



GOOD VS. EVIL

- Dickens makes the symbols of good and evil very easy to distinguish in the novel, although one must note that these concepts are more complex than they might seem, not least because they are embodied as fairly complex characters. The theme of good versus evil is prevalent especially as a symbolic battle for David's soul between Agnes Wickfield and Steerforth. Agnes represents David's "good angel," as he calls her. She is his voice of reason and is the person who is able to calm him and give him the advice that he needs. Steerforth, in contrast, is his "bad angel," as Agnes says. He is the one who feeds David's desire for upper-class, shallow wealth and leads him to do things like get very drunk and embarrass himself in public.

Female Empowerment



- The novel explores feminine power to some degree, seeming to favor strong, powerful women, such as Peggotty and Miss Betsey. In contrast, women who do not hold much power or who simply exist in their marriages, such as [Clara Copperfield](#), do not fare very well. Miss Betsey, an admired character throughout the novel, fights against her husband and manages to acquire a divorce, a feat that was not simple for women at the time (although he continues to bother her for money some time afterward). [Mr. and Mrs. Micawber](#), however, are a good example of a married couple in which each spouse holds almost an equal amount of power, and they are a very happy couple, even though they are broke. Thus, Dickens seems to be a proponent of feminine power in the sense of basic equality in institutions such as marriage.

THANK
YOU