

## JENNIE GERHARDT

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**Abstract:** In this article, first of all, you will get acquainted with the literary period named “Naturalism”. Secondly, Theodore Dreiser, a great representative of this period, as well as the novel "Jennie Gerhardt", which is considered one of the best examples of his work, and which caused him to reach the peak of his popularity.

**Аннотация:** В этой статье, прежде всего, вы познакомитесь с литературным периодом под названием «Натурализм». Во-вторых, Теодор Драйзер, яркий представитель этого периода, а также роман «Дженни Герхардт», который считается одним из лучших образцов его творчества и благодаря которому он достиг пика своей.

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqolada siz birinchi navbatda “Naturalizm” nomli adabiy davr bilan tanishasiz. Ikkinchidan, shu davrning buyuk namoyandasi Teodor Drayzer, shuningdek, ijodining eng yaxshi namunalaridan biri sanalgan, mashhurlik cho‘qqisiga chiqishiga sabab bo‘lgan “Jenni Gerxardt” romani.

**Key words:** Naturalism, Philosophical Naturalism, Literary Naturalism, Scientific Naturalism, underprivileged.

**Ключевые слова:** Натурализм, философский натурализм, литературный натурализм, научный натурализм, обездоленные.

**Kalit so‘zlar:** Naturalizm, falsafiy naturalizm, adabiy naturalizm, ilmiy naturalizm, kam imtiyozli.

Naturalism is a philosophical and literary movement emphasizing that everything arises from natural properties and causes, and supernatural or spiritual descriptions are excluded or discounted. It is closely linked to realism but goes further

by inferring a deterministic view of human life and actions. In the following paragraphs, I will give notice to the key aspects of naturalism.

**Philosophical Naturalism:** “This is the belief that everything which exists is part of the natural world and can be studied by science. It contradicts the existence of supernatural phenomena and grasps that human beings are subject to the same laws and processes as all other natural entities”. [1]

**Literary Naturalism:** “In literature, naturalism is an extension of realism, characterized by a deterministic view of human beings. It suggests that environment, heredity, and social conditions form human behavior, often portraying life’s harsher realities. Noticeable naturalist writers such as Emile Zola, Theodore Dreiser, and Stephen Crane contributed to it”. [2]

**Scientific Naturalism:** “This form pays attention to the idea that scientific methods and empirical evidence are the best ways to know the world. It holds that all phenomena can ultimately be explained in terms of natural causes and laws”. [3]

Naturalism often depicts characters as victims of circumstance, driven by basic instincts, social conditions, and environmental factors, highlighting the influence of heredity and social conditions on human fate.

Overall, “naturalism challenges us to consider the extent to which human life is determined by forces beyond our control, encouraging a deeper examination of the interplay between nature, nurture, and individual agency”. [4] By highlighting the natural world's influence on human affairs, naturalism fosters a greater appreciation for the complexity of human existence and the factors that shape it.

Now, I am going to illustrate a review from the book "Jennie Gerhardt" which was written in naturalism by Theodore Dreiser. "Jennie Gerhardt" was published in 1911. It is a moving and reflective book that chronicles the life of Jennie Gerhardt, the title character. Jennie was raised in poverty in Columbus, Ohio, and has faced many obstacles since she was a young child. She takes on the role of raising her younger siblings after her mother passes away and her father battles alcoholism.

When Jennie meets Senator Brander, an old man who offers her financial support in exchange for her companionship, her life dramatically changes. Even though their ages are too different, Jennie finds comfort and stability in their relationship, which gives her the opportunity to further her education and better herself. But when Jennie falls in love with the wealthy and aspirational young man Lester Kane, her life gets even more complicated. Their relationship goes against social norms and forces Jennie to make challenging decisions as she balances the demands of her class, her love, and her own fulfillment.

The novel “Jennie Gerhardt” delves into various themes that are central to Theodore Dreiser’s corpus of work. These themes include:

Let's begin with Social Class and Inequality. What I mean by this is that the novel represents the glaring differences that existed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century America between the wealthy elite and the working class. The difficulties that people from underprivileged backgrounds encounter in their pursuit for acceptance and upward mobility in a culture characterized by inflexible social hierarchies are brought to light by Jennie's story.

When it comes to, Love and Sacrifice, “Jennie Gerhardt” is fundamentally a love story that dies social conceptions and expectation. To be more precise, Jennie's associations with Senator Brander and Lester Kane highlight the intricacies involved in passionate love, allegiance, and selflessness. Her decisions are a reflection of the universal human need for closeness and connection, in spite of hardship.

Next crucial matter is Moral Ambiguity and Judgment. Dreiser's story subverts conventional ideas of virtue and morality by showcasing multifaceted, morally nuanced characters. Jennie Gerhardt is not completely perfect or utterly flawed; rather, she struggles with moral issues and makes her way through a society that frequently does not care about her problems.

Another vital issue which is argued in the novel is Character Analyses. As it is known, like in real life, each character in the work is unique. Let's take Jennie Gerhardt as the first example. Jennie is a strong, kind heroine whose courage comes from her capacity to bear suffering and stay true herself in the face of difficulty. Her compelling and relatable character is characterized by personal growth and self-discovery throughout her journey from poverty to relative prosperity.

On the subject of Lester Kane, he is a symbol of the attraction of wealth and social standing, but he also struggles with inner demons and fears. His connection with Jennie highlights the complexity of human desire as well as the limitations of monetary success.

Concerning Senator Brander, by providing Jennie with stability and support, Senator Brander acts as a father figure in her life. He shows Jennie true concern and affection in spite of their unusual relationship, which challenges conventional ideas of propriety and morality.

If we reflect on Writing Style, Dreiser captures the subtleties of daily life with vivid clarity in his prose, which is distinguished by its naturalism and attention to detail. His evocative passages transport readers to the America of the early 20th century by conjuring a sense of place and time. The story progresses slowly, allowing for contemplation and introspection on the experiences and motivations of the characters.

To put it into a nutshell, “Jennie Gerhardt” is a timeless and profoundly moving book that sensitively and nuancedly addresses themes of love, social class, and moral ambiguity. This book is a gripping and thought-provoking read that appeals to readers of all ages because of Theodore Dreiser's skillful storytelling and deep

characterizations. Dreiser provides significant insights into the intricacies of the human heart and the never-ending search for fulfillment and dignity in an unfair world via Jennie's journey.

**Used literatures:**

1. Philosophical Naturalism: "The Blind Watchmaker" by Richard Dawkins (1986)
2. Literary Naturalism: "Germinal" by Emile Zola (1885)
3. "The God Delusion" by Richard Dawkins (2006)
4. "Naturalism" by David Parizeau (1993 and "Maggie: A Girl of the Streets" by Stephen Crane (1896)