

On Darwinism in *The Bridges of Madison County*

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Abstract

American writer Robert James Waller wrote *The Bridges of Madison County* in 1992. It is a love story related to the extramarital relationships. In this essay, we will discuss the novel from the view of Darwinism. In this essay, we will analyze the characteristic and the discourse of Kincaid, then we can prove that Waller is influenced by Darwinism, while, he does not believe in it completely as he shows his faith in God at the same time. Meanwhile, we should also pay attention to the theory of Freudian in this novel. Waller adopted both Darwinism and Freudian to describe the love between Kincaid and Francisca.

Key words: Darwinism; Freud; Waller's Darwinism; Theory of evolution; Natural selection

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INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of This Essay

The Bridges of Madison County was written by Robert James Waller, an American writer, who won his fame with the publication of this novel in 1992. It is a love story about the anticipation and consequences of passion. It tells the story of a married but lonely Italian woman, Francesca, living in 1960s Madison County, who engages in an affair with a National Geographic photographer,

Kincaid, who is visiting Madison County in order to create a photographic essay on the covered bridges in the area. The two leading characters fell in love with each other. They only spent four days together, but that became their best memories ever. In the end, Francesca refused to go with Kincaid. Between love and responsibility, she chose the latter. She devoted the rest of her life to the family-to her husband and children. Kincaid left alone and he did not marry again.

This essay will analyze this novel from Darwinism. Through the analysis the characteristic and the discourse of Kincaid, this essay will prove that the author, Waller, is influenced by Darwinism, but, he does not believe in it completely as he shows his faith in God in this book.

The Characteristics of This Essay

It has stirred up a lot of controversy since the publication of *The Bridges of Madison County*. With regard to extramarital relationships, it is illegal or morally reprehensible in almost all the countries in the world. In this novel, Waller described the extramarital relationships from a special viewpoint. Generally, people would hate the extramarital relationships. While, after reading this novel, readers would rather show sympathy for Kincaid and Francesca as they could not have a happy ending. The description of the characters' heartfelt candor makes it one of those rare books that successfully evoke the human spirit. Although the novel has been much examined, it is rarely considered the Darwinism in this novel. The previous researches are focus on many other aspects, for example: the image of the bridge in *The Bridges of Madison County*, the ecological idea in *The Bridges of Madison County*, the love and responsibility in *The Bridges of Madison County* from psychoanalysis and the discourse analysis in *The Bridges of Madison County*. The research on it has gained plentiful and substantial achievements. However, they did not mention the Darwinism in this book. The American naturalism has been flourished from the end of the 19th

century to the beginning of the 20th century. Darwinism, as its main theory, has influenced many writers and artists, even the social life of the 20th century. The author, Waller, mentioned this theory in this book numerous times. So, it is obvious that he is deeply influenced by Darwinism, but, at the same time, he does not accept it completely because he has his own belief in God.

1. DARWINISM AND THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY

1.1 Darwinism

If you want to know what Darwinism is, we should learn the American naturalism firstly. The American naturalists accepted the more negative interpretation of Darwinism theory and used it to account for the behavior of those characters that were regarded as more or less complex combinations of inherited attributes in literary works, their habits conditioned by social and economic forces. American naturalism is evolved from realism when the author's tone in writing becomes less profound and less sympathetic but more ironic and more pessimistic. It is no more than a gloomy philosophical approach to reality or to human existence. In *The Bridges of Madison County*, Waller was influenced by the naturalism, more specifically, Darwinism theory in his novel.

Charles Darwin spent more than twenty years working on his theory of evolution. And Darwinism is a term that comes from this theory. Darwinists think that those who survive in the world are the fittest, and those who fail to adapt themselves to the environment will perish. They believe that man has evolved from lower forms of life. Humans are special not because God created them in His image, but because they have successfully adapted to the changing environmental conditions and have passed on their survival-making characteristics genetically. Influenced by this theory, some American naturalist writers apply Darwinism as an explanation of human nature and social reality.

1.2 Waller and Darwinism

In *The Bridges of Madison County*, “the theory of evolution” has been mentioned by Kincaid several times. After Kincaid had left Francesca, he did not marry again and he never loved any other people in the rest of his life. He spent his life roaming all over the world until he died alone. According to the theory of evolution, those who fail to adapt themselves to the environment will perish. Kincaid chose his death voluntarily, which means that he failed to adapt to the environment so that he would die. Meanwhile, Kincaid regards the Darwinism as “Darwin logic” instead of “Darwin theory” which is commonly believed. He thinks that “he was at the terminus of a branch of evolution and that it was a dead end”. We can find the evidence in the novel, for example:

He could see the approaching death of cowboys and others like them, including himself. And she began to understand what he meant when he said he was at the terminus of a branch of evolution and that it was a dead end. (Waller, 1997)

Here, we could clearly see that Kincaid accepted the more negative interpretation of Darwinism theory. He believed “he was at the terminus of a branch of evolution” and “it was a dead end”. That is, he was sure that he would die out when he realized that Francesca would not leave with him. While, according to the Darwinism, man is the soul of the universe and will not die out. And now it is an age when the population explosion arrived, if so, how can human become extinct? If Kincaid was at the terminus of a branch of evolution, he must not be a human being. Although he considered himself as a leopard, he was still a human being. As long as he is a human being, he would not die out. It shows that Waller is not a traditional Darwinist, he does not believe in Darwinism completely and he has his own idea about Darwinism and its theory of evolution.

1.3 Waller's Darwinism

Waller has mentioned that Kincaid was not a traditional Darwinist many times in *The Bridges of Madison County*. For example, Francesca described Kincaid as follows: “. . . And Francesca Johnson characterized him as living ‘in strange, haunted places, far back along the stems of Darwin's logic’” (Waller, 1997).

What does “far back along the stems of Darwin's logic” mean? It means the origin of the life. Obviously, Kincaid, as a human being, cannot live in such a place. He is not a creature which lives before the origin of life. But why does Waller put it that way in the novel? Charles Darwin's theory of evolution is that all life is related and descends from a common ancestor: the birds and the bananas, the fishes and the flowers—all related. Darwin's general theory presumes the development of life from nonlife and stresses a purely naturalistic “descent with modification” (Darwin, 1859). That is, complex creatures evolve from more simplistic ancestors naturally over time. In a nutshell, as random genetic mutations occur within an organism's genetic code, the beneficial mutations are preserved because they aid survival—a process known as *natural selection*. Darwinism rejects all supernatural phenomena and causations. And since the Darwinism became widely accepted by common people, more and more people believe that God does not exist at all. However, in *The Bridges of Madison County*, we can feel that Waller has his belief in God. He believes that there can be no proof of the existence of God, while it also does not deny the possibility that God exists. He believed in the Darwinism, but at the same, he also believed in God. This is the reason why he said Kincaid lived “in strange, haunted places, far back along the stems of Darwin's logic”. We can put Waller's Darwinism in this way: Waller accepted Darwin's theory of evolution; while he

also showed his belief in God. He believed that before the origin of the life, God did exist. It is him who created life on the earth, and then all the creatures evolved from a lower form into a higher form following the theory of evolution.

2. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WALLER'S DARWINISM AND THE DARWINISM

2.1 Darwin Logic and Darwin Theory

We have mentioned in the preceding paragraph that Waller called "Darwin logic" instead of "Darwin theory". For example, ". . . and Francesca Johnson characterized him as living 'in strange, haunted places, far back along the stems of Darwin's logic'" (Waller, 1997).

This example shows that Waller does not believe in Darwin's theory of evolution not only because he described Kincaid as living "far back along the stems of Darwin's logic", but also because that he called "Darwin logic" instead of "Darwin theory". He used the "Darwin logic" to interpret his own idea about Darwinism. The change of only one word, *logic* and *theory*, makes a great deal of difference in the meaning. Logic means a way of thinking or explaining. It is a kind of product of thinking and always from the consciousness of the subjective point of view. Although it is partly based on science, it is not real science. On the contrary, theory means a formal set of ideas that intend to explain why something happens or exists; it is the principles on which a particular subject is based. It is based on practice and has been proved by practice, and it is the objective truth corroborated by a wealth of facts. As a result, we usually use theory to describe the science knowledge which has been already proved by experiment but not the word logic. We cannot establish a scientific theory just through subjective reasoning. Therefore, the use of "logic" has fully proved that Waller does not believe in the Darwinism completely, he just takes it as a kind of product of thinking and hypothesis. He accepts the idea that human beings are evolved from lower forms of life, but he thinks that the concept of "survival of the fittest in natural select" is merely a kind of logic but not theory at all. In his opinion, Darwin's theory of evolution is not testified by facts, and it is no more than a hypothesis. So, it is the most convincing proof to distinguish Waller's Darwinism and the traditional Darwinism. Waller believes what Darwin said is partly true. It may be a logical conclusion, but the fact may be another possibility. Of course, we can also learn his writing style from this example, the use of the word logic instead of theory in his writing also prove that Waller is very careful in the selection of words and very scrupulous in his thinking. He has the ability to put the proper words in the right place.

2.2 Waller's Incomplete Theory of Evolution

2.2.1 Waller's Attitude Towards Evolution

As for Darwin's theory of evolution, its main idea is the natural selection. "The ancient Greek philosophers such as Anaximander postulated the development of life from nonlife and the evolutionary descent of man from animal; Charles Darwin simple brought something new to the old philosophy--a plausible mechanism called 'natural selection'" (Kirk, Raven, & Schofield, 1984, pp.100-142). Natural selection acts to preserve and accumulate minor advantageous genetic mutations. Suppose a member of a species developed a functional advantage. Its offspring would inherit that advantage and pass it on to their offspring. The disadvantaged members of the same species would gradually die out, leaving only the advantaged members of the species (Denton, 1985, p.250). Natural selection is the preservation of a functional advantage that enables a species to compete better in the wild. Darwin's theory explained why species were so well adapted to their environment and how new species would form. It suggested that all living things were related, from the beetle to the lotus, and that everything descended ultimately from a single common ancestor. Evolution thus removed the need for divine explanations of diversity and, along with evidence emerging at that time of the extreme age of the earth; it further suggested that the wider universe might also owe nothing to divine intervention and everything to natural laws. Creationism is the religious belief that humanity, life, the Earth, and the universe are the creation of a supernatural being, God. All kinds of the species are created and determined by God and once it was determined, the species cannot change or transform any more (Qi, 2002, February). Darwinism denies the Creationism radically and at the same time he was greatly troubled.

Waller's attitude towards the theory of evolution is so incompletely that he characterized Kincaid as living "in strange, haunted places, far back along the stems of Darwin's logic." The place he referred to is the origin of life. Although Charles Darwin's ideas have spread widely, his revolution about the origin of life is not yet completely. Since the ancient times, a lot of scientists were looking for this place-the origin of life. They worked hard and try to unlock its mystery. But they all failed as the situation was so complicated. In the year 2006, the scientists announced a so called rough draft of the sequence of human genome. But until then, we still do not have the confidence to say that our human beings are very clear about the origin of life. We cannot reveal the secrets about that "place". Then, here is the question. Waller wrote this book in 1992, and at that time, it was impossible that he would know anything about the origin of life. But he wrote it in his book and clearly declared that the character, Kincaid, lived in such a mysterious place. He also referred to the theory of evolution. We all know that as modern man,

Kincaid could not live in that “place”. This is the evidence which can prove that Waller’s theory of evolution is different from the Darwin’s theory of evolution. Waller does not believe in the theory of evolution completely, he believes that species were created before the origin of life, and then they followed the theory of evolution and evolved from lower form of life to the higher form of life.

2.2.2 Freud and the Regression of Dreams

Sigmund Freud was an Austrian neurologist who founded the discipline of psychoanalysis. He developed the theories about the unconscious mind and the mechanism of repression. He believed that the writer was a man who felt the inner restraint. While he was writing a book, it is actually the process of his day-dreaming. As a writer, he must find raw material from his earlier experiences and reorganize them in his works. If the writer’s desire was not satisfied in real life, then they would put it in their dreams or in their literary works (Freud, 1986). The perfect works always come from his real feelings. Freud’s theory has shocked the literary world and his theory was widely used to interpret the literary works since then. In his book, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, he has explained his theory of dreams in detail. He said “experience teaches us that the path leading through the preconscious to consciousness is closed to the dream-thoughts during the day by the resisting censorship. At night they gain admission to consciousness” and “if we call the direction which the psychic process follows from the unconscious into the waking state progressive, we may then speak of the dream as having a regressive character. This regression is therefore assuredly one of the most important psychological peculiarities of the dream-process” (Freud, 2007).

From the preceding paragraph, we have learned something about the Freud’s regression of dreams and his view on the process of writer’s writing. Now, we can put this to the process of Waller’s writing of *The Bridges of Madison County*; it is the process of his day-dreaming. Waller does not believe in Darwinism completely, and he showed his belief in God in this book. He characterized Kincaid as living “in strange, haunted places, far back along the stems of Darwin’s logic” (Waller, 1997). And this indicates that Waller had the “regressive” hallucinatory dream in his writing. Freud believes that “to regression . . . only such thoughts undergo this transformation as are intimate connection with suppressed memories or with memories which have remained unconscious” (Freud, 2007). In *The Bridges of Madison County*, Waller adopted this “regressive” dream unconsciously. In his heart, he was suspicious about the Darwinism and had the belief in God or some unknown supernatural spirit. So in his work, he described Kincaid in that way through Francesca. As we all know, Kincaid could not live in “far back along the stems of Darwin’s logic”, because it is a place far before the origin of life, which could not be true in the modern

society. It is impossible for Kincaid to live in that place. According to the Freudian, it is just Waller’s imagination. Because he was repressed by this idea in his mind, and he could not satisfy his desire in the real life, so, he put it in his novel. However, it is his subconscious that reveals his real feeling. In this novel, he not only adopted the theory of evolution, but also absorbed the Freudian’s “regressive” hallucinations. He used the *evolution* and *regressive* simultaneously to describe *love*, especially the extramarital relationships in the modern society. That is why his work is so popular around the world. *The Bridges of Madison County* moved a lot of people. It makes them to think about the real love in the extramarital relationships and whether it is right for Francesca chose the responsibility but not the real love at last. If it is the right choice, why so many people feel sympathy for them and feel that the rest of the Francesca’s life is unhappy although she lived with her family. The Freud’s regressive hallucinations used in this book fully proved that Waller has his own opinion. He imagined that Kincaid lived in that “place”, it is not only related to the Darwinism, but also shows Freud’s “regressive” hallucinations. Waller mixed the two theories in writing and it was a huge success in literary works. This phenomenon is very rare in literature.

2.2.3 Evolution and Retrogression

We usually believe that the word *evolution* means that the thing will change from a lower stage to a more advanced or mature stage. In biology, it also means that the sequence of events involved in the evolutionary development of a species or taxonomic group of organism, while all of the words used to interpret the word evolution are positive and upward. Does it really mean that actually? Of course it is not true. We would like to use the following definition of *devolve* which is to degenerate or deteriorate gradually. As such, the question carries the connotation that evolution is positive while devolution is negative. Nowadays, there are many scientists believe that evolution occurs regardless of whether the outcome is interpreted as positive or negative for the species involved. Evolution is mechanism, while devolution is a judgment (Tian, 2003, December). Darwin’s natural selection only requires that the members of a species survive long enough to successfully reproduce. Beyond that, there is no judgment about how *good* or *bad* any particular adaption is from an evolutionary perspective (Adam, 2008, June). This also means that no adaptation can be effectively evaluated except against the long-term survival of the species and its contemporaries. Another phrase, *survival of the fittest*, is frequently misunderstood by people, too. Many people assume that *the fittest* refers to the strongest, biggest, or most cunning individuals. This may or may not be the case. From an evolutionary perspective, the fittest individuals are simply the ones who have the combination of traits that allow them to survive and produce more

offspring that in turn survive to reproduce. In fact, they may be relatively weak, small, and not particularly intelligent. What makes an individual fit all depends on the environment at the time and the combination of traits that are most suited to flourishing in it.

Thomas H. Huxley (1825-1895) was an English biologist, known as “Darwin’s Bulldog” for his advocacy of Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution. In his book, *Evolution and Ethics*, he said:

It is an error to imagine that evolution signifies as a constant tendency to increased perfection. That process undoubtedly involves a constant remodeling of the organism in adaptation to new conditions; but it depends on the nature of those conditions whether the directions of the modifications effected shall be upward or downward...

The word “evolution”, now generally applied to the cosmic process, has had a singular history, and is used in various senses. Taken in its popular signification it means progressive development, that is, gradual change from a condition of relative uniformity to one of relative complexity; but its connotation has been widened to include the phenomena of retrogressive metamorphosis, that is, of progress from a condition of relative complexity to one of relative uniformity. (Huxley, 2010)

Therefore, from the theory of evolution aspect, Kincaid evolved from a condition of relative complexity to a condition of relative uniformity. Firstly, Kincaid choose his death voluntarily. After leaving Francesca, he spent the rest of his life traveling and photographing, but Francesca was always on his mind as he was on hers. He did not marry again and died alone without any people surrounding him. This behavior indicates that he choose his *retrogression*. Of course, it is also a kind of evolution. His behavior (even that he chose his death voluntarily) follows the Darwin’s theory of evolution. Because that the word evolution also includes “the progress from a condition of relative complexity to one of relative uniformity”. Secondly, Waller characterized Kincaid as living “in strange, haunted places, far back along the stems of Darwin’s logic” (Waller, 1997). He regarded Kincaid as the animal living in the top-level of the evolutionary chain, which means that Kincaid lived before the origin of life. Such a description is also a kind of retrogression. At last, we can conclude that Waller believes in the Darwin’s theory of evolution and he also holds the idea that the theory of evolution also includes the concept of retrogression. The evolution will not only occur in the situation that the species evolve from a lower stage to a higher stage, but it will also occur in the situation that the species evolve from a higher stage to a lower one. That is what Waller thinks about the theory of evolution. It is different from the traditional concept. And meanwhile, Waller successfully proved this idea to readers through his book, *The Bridges of Madison County*. The words he used to describe Kincaid clearly show his attitude towards evolution.

3. THE APPLICATION OF WALLER’S DARWINISM IN *THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY*

3.1 Waller’s Darwinism

Once again, we will stress the difference between Waller’s Darwinism and the traditional Darwinism. He belongs to the Neo-Darwinism, but he still has his own idea on it. He is so unique that if we have not read his novel seriously, we could not find any evidence to get close to his real thought. Here is the evidence:

Once, in talking about what he called “last things”, he whispered: “‘Never again’, cried **the High-Desert Master**. ‘Never and never and never again’”. He saw nothing beyond himself along the branch. His kind was obsolete. (Waller, 1997)

This conversation happened when Francesca refused to go with Kincaid. Then Kincaid felt so depressed that he uttered those words very painfully. He used three *never* to show his despair. At that time, he had already realized his fate: “He saw nothing beyond himself along the branch, his kind was obsolete”. Kincaid was so despair that he could see his destiny in the not far future, here he put it that his fate was to “die”. And “his kind” would also die out. He loved Francesca deeply and he wanted to spent the whole life with her, but when he asked her to go with him, she refused. She chose her family which stands for responsibility but not love. Although Francesca refused him, she loved him forever. Kincaid knew that so he did not force her. He only showed his depression in their conversation. The implication is: if they had acted on their desire, they would not have deserved such a love. It is also Waller’s gift that he made the housewife, Francesca, feel virtuous afterward.

This conversation also indicates Waller’s unique idea about Darwinism. We have mentioned before that Kincaid regarded him as a leopard, but he was still a human being. According to the Darwinism, human beings are the soul of the universe and will never die out. It took hundreds of millions of years for human being to evolve. At last, they finial climb the top of the *food chain*. It is not easy for them to die out. But here, why Kincaid asserted he and “his kind” would die out? Obviously, this is another evidence to show Waller’s Darwinism in this book. His thinking is permeated between the lines in his novel.

3.2 The Natural Selection

Su Tchou (1900-1962) was a famous Chinese biologist and popular science writer of our time. In his book, *The Evolution of Living Things*, he held the idea that the most important thing in Darwin’s theory of evolution was the natural selection (Zhu, 1980). Darwin’s process of natural selection has four components: variation, inheritance, high rate of population growth, and differential survival and reproduction. From one generation to the next, the struggle for resources (what Darwin called the “struggle

for existence”) will favor individual with some variations over others and thereby change the frequency of traits within the population. This process is natural selection (Darwin, 1959). The traits that confer an advantage to those individuals who leave more offspring are called adaptations. Darwin said that “. . . as natural selection acts by competition for resources, it adapts the inhabitants of each county only in relation to the degree of perfection of their associates” (Darwin, 1859).

In *The Bridges of Madison County*, Kincaid described himself as the last one “along the branch” and “his kind was obsolete”. This indicates that he would die for love. He and his kind would become extinct at last. While, according to Darwin’s natural selection, Kincaid and his kind, human beings, would never die out. Darwinists think the species that cannot reproduce will lose in the competition of natural selection. As for Kincaid, he chose to lose in the natural competition. He did not struggle for his life at all. And he thought it was his rights to choose the way he lives including his death. The experience was so hard that the common people could never understand.

3.3 The High-Desert Master

3.3.1 The Phrase: the High-Desert Master

Kincaid was so painful that he had to leave Francesca. But he loved her so much that he did not care about his own life. He felt that he did the right choice while Francesca also did so. She was right to choose her family. Although her husband did not understand her as Kincaid did. Francesca received high education and had her master degree. She chose to live in this small village and married a common man. Actually, she was a romantic woman, and she wanted the true love in her life. It was obvious that her husband could not satisfy her desire. Then, she met Kincaid occasionally. They fell in love soon. For Kincaid, he was alone for many years. He had been married once but divorced soon. After that, Kincaid met many women and also had some affairs. But he did not love them as much as he loved Francesca. In his opinion, they were the soul mates, while they all realized that it was so hard to find the soul mate in the world and they wanted to be together eagerly. However, from the moral aspect, they should not. We can hardly understand the mood Kincaid had experienced. So at last, he uttered these words “the High-Desert Master”. It was his embodiment.

Let us see this phrase “the High-Desert Master” carefully. Every word in this phrase has its own meaning. “High” means a level which is a long way above the ground or above the level of the sea. “Desert” means a large area of land that has very little water and very few plants growing on it, and many deserts are covered by sand, which also means lifeless. “Master” means a person who is skilled at something. This phrase can be put it in this way: one that has been discarded thoroughly. It also indicates the two people would be apart and never met again. But Kincaid knew that whether they were close

together or far apart, Francesca would be in his heart forever.

3.3.2 Use Freud’s Psychoanalysis to Interpret the Phrase: the High-Desert Master

According to the Freud’s psychoanalysis, every new phrase has its special meaning and it always refers to the “sexual” meaning (Freud, 2009). “The High-Desert Master” occurred in this novel when Kincaid knew that Francesca refused to go with him. At that time, Kincaid must be painful that his “love” desire could not be satisfied. According to Freudian, once one’s desire cannot be satisfied, he will realize it in another way. For writers, writing is their way to realize their dreams which cannot be realized in real life. Kincaid uttered this phrase when his heart was broken. According to Freud, the unconsciousness is the source of our motivations, whether they are simple desire for food or sex, neurotic compulsions, or the motives of an artist or scientist. And yet, we are often driven to deny or resist becoming conscious of these motives and they are often available to us only in disguised form. So, Kincaid did not aware that this phrase came from his inner mind and this represented his unconsciousness. The High-Desert Master actually stands for himself.

3.3.3 Who Is the High-Desert Master?

Waller created the High-Desert Master in his novel. Who is the high-desert master? The author did not answer in his book. But we can find some clues. For example, when Kincaid had to say goodbye to Francesca, he repeated never again three times. It can indicate that the High-Desert Master refers to Kincaid. Waller created this phrase to stand for the kind of people like Kincaid.

Then they held each other for a long time. And he whispered to her, “I have **one thing** to say, **one thing only**; I’ll never say it another time, to anyone, and I ask you to remember it: In a universe of ambiguity, this kind of certainty comes only once, and never again, no matter how many lifetimes you live” . (Waller, 1997)

In this conversation, Kincaid repeated “never again” once again. He stressed it over and over in order to show that he was heartbroken and no one could understand him. He wanted Francesca knew that although he had to go, his heart would stay with her. In this world, there was no one could love her in that way. It was his last love and he would keep it forever. The “never again” also indicated that “the High-Desert Master” was Kincaid himself. Waller used it to describe Kincaid’s inner world.

In conclusion, the High-Desert Master is the invisible man standing for Kincaid. The High-Desert Master is also the one who failed in the natural selection. As Kincaid chose his death voluntarily, it means that the High-Desert Master will also choose the same ending. Waller accepted the Darwinism and Freudianism simultaneously in writing *The Bridges of Madison County*, but he may not aware of this. And in the end, he wrote such a wonderfully story to readers. It touches upon the deep side of people’s heart

that they are all moved by the extramarital relationships. If it was just a novel about a love story, it will never be accepted by readers so widely.

CONCLUSION

The Bridges of Madison County is a story about the extramarital relationships which is not accepted by most of countries in the world. Kincaid and Francesca met each other in the summer. They spent only four days together but they all regarded each other as their soul mates. They had the true love in the four days and separated forever. They never met again. When Francesca decided to stay with her family she already realized that. And when Kincaid knew that Francesca refused to go with him, he saw their ending as well. But Kincaid would rather die alone. He let Francesca stay for her moral responsibility. He knew clearly that if Francesca agreed to go with him, then the rest of their life may not be happy. At last, Kincaid did not marry again and he did not fall in love with another woman. He traveled around the world purposelessly, but he paid close attention to Francesca and so did Francesca. They loved each other the whole life. This is more precious than living together.

In this essay, we have proved that Waller was deeply influenced by Darwinism. But he had his own opinion on it. He was suspicious about the origin of life suggested by Darwin. He showed his belief on God and he was suspicious about the theory of evolution. He called it "Darwin logic" instead of "Darwin theory". Waller also adopted Freudianism and applied it in his writing. Therefore, we can find that Waller mixed the Darwinism and Freudianism in his novel. It described such a beautiful picture of love happened in the small village. The novel was beyond time and space and greatly favored by readers around the world. Although it was not a wonderful ending that in the end Kincaid and Francesca had to be apart, it was this unfinished ending that made the whole story perfect. If Francesca left with Kincaid and they lived together in the end, then the novel may lose something in moral aspect even their love and may not be accepted by readers. In the meanwhile, if Francesca chose Kincaid and abandoned her husband and children, would they deserve the true love? This is the question the writer left

for readers. He wants them to think over the relationship between Francesca and Kincaid. The true love happened, but it was not admitted because Francesca had married. Then the marriage became the obstacle before them. Actually, no matter what kind of life Francesca chose, the ending will neither happy nor perfect. They felt they were in a dilemma. Waller adopted the Darwinism to describe their love. Maybe it was his unconsciousness, but he asked a most difficult question to answer. The question was that if we faced this kind of relationship, we should choose love or choose responsibility.

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