

## BEYOND THE MASK OF MORALITY: DECONSTRUCTING LARKIN'S SELECTED POEMS TO REVEAL SEXUAL LIBERATION

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### Abstract

The aim of the research is to spotlight hidden and ambiguous meanings and elements of sexual liberation from the poems High Windows, Annus Mirabilis and Wild Oats. Larkin's poetry encompasses multiple meanings and variety of ideas. His texts display manifold meanings; he means to convey one idea and also conveys some other meaning which is derived through deep exploration and fragmentation. In this research, qualitative method descriptive design has been used to find out sexual liberation in selected poems. Deconstruction theory by (Derrida, 1967) has been applied with textual analysis and close reading to provide supplements of meanings, to emphasize ambiguity and uncertainty and to challenge the idea of fixed meanings. This work has unmasked morality in selected poetic text and brought to light sexual freedom that previous generations couldn't benefit but new generations are taking benefits with the help of sexual revolution and scientific advancement in the shape of contraceptives. Morality is discovered as conscious appeal, on the other hand desire for sexual liberty is found subconsciously prevalent in maximum areas of text. This research has decentered the texts and examined it closely with the view that there is nothing outside the text.

**Keywords:** Deconstruction, Ambiguity, Fragmentation, Sexual Liberation

### Introduction

Sexual intercourse has always been needing and desire of every normal human being since the beginning of mankind. This is the basic requirement for the production and continuity of human beings. Like things which are necessary to stay alive as food, water and shelter; sex is also requirement of every individual. When this is an integral part of our lives, humans perform it in any circumstance or restriction. The advent of civilizations and religions set certain codes of ethics, terms and conditions for this activity in order to maintain smooth and peaceful atmosphere. Sexual intercourse is always thrilling and exciting activity, people like to perform it and if there are certain restrictions then banned things become more inviting. Resultantly, sexual liberation has been keen desires among people of all regions, religions and races.

From the start when people were not developed scientifically, they didn't have pregnancy controlling measures. A sexual intercourse meant certain pregnancy; pregnancy was not always desired because people do this activity for pleasure seeking as well. But pregnancy became first hurdle in sexual liberation whether in or out of the matrimonial bond. This restricted people to be liberal and free in pleasure seeking. Women have been subject to oppression in old days. They were considered low and unequal to men because they were physically weak. They were thought to be made for the sake of men. Men used them, tortured them, subjugated them, and made love with them. In old wars and battles women were enslaved by victors. The most beautiful woman

awarded to the bravest man.

Literature has been the biggest source for the creation of human emotions. Poetry has the longest history in literature in which poets have been the representatives of mankind. Poets have written on a lot of topics and they have written on love the most which is the relationship between male and female. Poets have been the most daring people for the expression of human desire of love and no love between male and female can be fulfilled without sexual intercourse. Along with the progress of time and space the concepts or morality also changed. Poets negated religion, civilizations and codes for the true rights of men and women.

From Chaucer, John Donne, Shelley, Milton, Eliot, D.H. Lawrence and modern poets like Philip Larkin (1922-1985) talked on sexual liberation in their poetry. He has explored themes of love and relationships in his famous poems *High Windows*, *Annus Mirabilis* and *Wild Oats*. Larkin's poetry needs more work to be done in order to extract new and hidden meanings. Though many researchers and critics have delved into his poetry and brought out his views on sex and its liberty, there are many verses which need pondering. His poems contain diversity and variety of meanings. They display certain aspects of his mindset. His poetry is profound and deep. His poetry invites the scholars worldwide for drawing out meanings and messages. He has been discussed many times as gloomy, sorrowful, death stricken and pathetic. His themes of love and wistfulness have yet to be discovered.

Derrida's (Derrida, 1967) Deconstruction reveals the ambiguity and instability in the underlying meanings. This methodology can help to show how text can have multiple and conflicting interpretations. Researcher can question the idea of fixed meaning. With its help researcher can embrace differences of meanings and challenge the centre of text.

### **Background of Study**

Larkin (1922-1985) didn't always follow the canons of morality. He is a liberal spirit that cannot be confined in any coded cage of rules. Sexual urges with freedom have been his dilemma. He has lamented on the restrictions and barriers coming in the way of fulfilling his desires. That marks his quest and attraction towards the opposite sex. He somewhat seems jealous of the new generation for having liberty and freedom for sex. He also points out that the way of the world is changing and has changed for sexual relationships. Codes and ethics are no longer adhered. The bond of matrimony is no longer necessary to fulfill sexual desires. One can have intimate relationships with a girl or girls prior to marriage. He is of the view that religious restrictions and societal norms hinder people to maintain sexual relationships, resultantly people waste their energy and time to find partner to have sex, and so, they cannot put their efforts in progressive way of life.

### **Problem Statement**

Philip Larkin (1922-1985) transcends the barriers of morality resulting in an intense emotional stream talking about sex where he doesn't care about how people may judge him. His poems reflect sexual liberation, wistfulness and envy for sex exactly from the mind which has been deprived of sexual pleasures. The undercover and sometimes hidden themes in his poetry are traceable through Deconstruction which is a lens for analyzing his poems. The researcher aims at drawing meanings of his selected poems to highlight sexual liberation which he laments he could not have but new generations are enjoying.

### **Research Questions**

This study will discuss following questions:

1. What key aspects of sexual liberation can be perceived in "High Windows", "Annus Mirabilis" and "Wild Oats" using Derrida's Deconstruction?
2. How does the Deconstruction theory help to explore possible meanings in Larkin's

selected poems and challenge the fixed meaning?

### 3. How does Larkin's poems contain multiple and conflicting meanings?

#### Research Objectives

The objectives of the present study are:

- To highlight the sexual liberty in Larkin's selected poems "High Windows", "Annus Mirabilis" and "Wild Oats" with the methodology of Deconstruction.
- To analyze the standards of morality with the confrontation of sexual urges in Larkin's selected poems using Deconstruction as theoretical framework.
- To examine Larkin's inclination toward the fulfillment of sexual desires in male and female relationships through his selected poems.

#### Significance of Research

This research contributes in finding meanings of Larkin's (1922-1985) selected poems how his poems are enriched with the ideas of sexual liberation. It is to point out how his sexual liberation brought changes in the minds of people during sexual revolution which resultantly set new codes and ethics of sexual relationships. This research is fruitful for understanding the concepts of sexual liberation between old and new generations. It adds meaning with the help of deconstruction and produces further literature through a different mind.

#### Literature Review

Deconstruction and close reading tools are used in this article to materialize the textual meanings. *High Windows* and *Wild Oats* delineate deep understanding and concern of modern political, and socio-cultural issues. The sexual revolution had given a drastic attention in the poems of Larkin. He believed in love and sex but he didn't believe in marriage. Morality, love, sex and art appear in Larkin's later poems; here they seem to be treated with more maturity than his earlier works. The themes of self-deprecation, sexual defeat, and decay are prevalent throughout Larkin's work. He is the antithesis of romanticism and hyperbole. He is very honest, and this integrity shines through in a way that is quite lovely in his poems. Researcher has probed into the poems to find sexual liberation element and brought relevant meanings. (Nikhilesh, 2022)

In this article researcher highlights binary oppositions between free sexual relationship and the pre-marital relationship that are acceptable to the society of time in which Larkin wrote. In *High Windows*, the poet compares the sexual freedom of the present and past. He expresses marriage as a wrangle for a ring. In the past old days, marriage was essential for access of sexual relationship and sex outside marriage was a matter for remorse for lifelong. In those days sex was restricted and the people used to maintain the social ethics. But ultimately the rigidity takes the form of frequent sex making. Researcher points out that Larkin attracts the attention of the readers towards the sexual liberation in two of his poems named *Annus Mirabilis*, *Wild Oats* and *High Windows*. The sexual revolution took a wide space in his poetry of this volume. (Baishakhi Banerjee and P. K. Senapoti, 2018)

This article explores through Larkin's poetry with the help of textual analysis and deconstruction that Larkin has repeatedly been attacked by critics for the narrow thematic range of his poetry. These critics, however, fail to notice that his work deals with universally fundamental issues like choice, time, old age, death, which further divide into sub-issues like love, sex, marriage. In any case, it is a self-imposed thematic limitation which strengthens rather than weakens Larkin's poetry and makes it surprisingly very profound. (Mohammed Abbas Niazi, 1999)

Current dissertation delves into Larkin's letters to his mistress and comes out with the analysis that his dispatches have the same 'sexiness' as those to, say, Patsy Strang, with whom Larkin had

an affair in the 1950s. When Strang fell pregnant by Larkin, he informed her that he was feeling 'sorry & alarmed & guilty', but also found it all 'rather thrilling'. "I feel a little irritated that this particular sort of sexual intercourse should be attracting attention in the weeklies, for while I can't claim any personal stake in it exactly, and while it seems much too difficult technically, all things being equal it would please me to share it with you, as fit expression of a feeling you're well aware of, and I regret finding myself in the van of intellectual progress along with the boys. I can't imagine there is much in it for you, though. I imagined it was the custom in Catholic-ridden countries where it was the only way girls could keep their fiancés happy & the priests at the same time. I never supposed that what they wanted was this piercing, rather awful sensuality". (23 January 1962)

Sexual liberation and free sexing are richly described in this dissertation. Citing letters does convey a concern for women's sexuality, which Larkin had already shown in the 1943 Brunette Coleman works, the novel *A Girl in Winter*, and to which he would later return in poems like *High Windows*, with its critique of male-centered sexuality implied by the lines 'he's fucking her and she's / Taking pills or wearing a diaphragm'. And it was by writing about pink toilet paper, bunnies, and sexual failure, that Larkin constituted this identity. In the catalogue of possible 'Larkins', the performance of a particular version of lesbian femininity is a highly significant one under-explored within Larkin studies. (James Underwood, 2016)

Extending knowledge of sexual liberation and going beyond morality contrary to the idea that sexual liberation means a step ahead toward individual freedom, Larkin's poetry frequently present a negative view of the place and importance sexuality has acquired in twentieth-century culture. Researcher came up with the view that they lived in a time of more sexual freedom, public discourses still highly influenced and determined people's sexuality. Larkin's *Sunny Prestatyn* uses an objectified and over-sexualized representation of women's bodies in consumer culture to discuss sexual politics and gender relations. The poem is about an advertisement poster with a girl pictured on it, and the several depredations men made in the poster through time. Interestingly, in Larkin's poetry the portrayal of social impositions on men's sexuality show how men are expected to always say "yes" to sex. (Alita Fonseca Balbi, 2012)

This literary work questions the idea of a fixed and authoritative meaning that there was also an almost vicious outpouring of anger and disillusion at sex during this period, which created poems that were unseen until after his death. The poem *Letter to a Friend about Girls* had gone some way to expressing Larkin's frustration at what he saw as the easy sex-life of his friends, but Larkin's sexual jealousy was to have a far more brazen airing. The researcher revealed the instability and ambiguity of meaning to view Larkin as an example of the odd disparity compared to others, was his interest in sexual psychology and the writings of D. H. Lawrence. Like Auden before him, Larkin found Lawrence's writing immensely stirring, and the teachings of John Layard were similarly important to him. Also like Auden, Lawrence made no representative appearance in the poetry written after the poet had read him. Poems of Larkin's that deal with the harsher sides to the natural world, or sexual jealousy and desire, clearly owe a considered debt to the assimilation of Lawrence and Layard, even if there is no formal or stylistic debt obvious.

Poet's life events have huge impact on his poetry. In this article the researcher has used the tool exposing the supplement to reveal the added meaning and added assumption. Larkin was much older than most boys when he first encountered women – apart from his mother and sister. As he says in *Not the Place's Fault*: 'I had grown up to regard sexual recreation as a socially remote thing, like baccharat or clog-dancing, and nothing happened to alter this view.' There were women at Oxford, but they were neither friendly nor forthcoming. It was not until he arrived at his first

job in Wellington, Shropshire, that he met women on his own terms, and was not overshadowed by the competition of handsome, non-stammering smoothies such as Amis. Once he'd experienced 'the wonderful feel of girls', and made strong female attachments, they became more important to him than his male friends, who were mostly kept at a distance and corresponded with. Although proximity did not necessarily dispel his need to write letters. To Maeve, a woman he saw every day of his working life, he sent over 200 letters. (Jean Hartley, 2000)

This literary critic has challenged traditional notions of meaning, language and interpretations in his thesis. He conveyed that the wide gulf between generations and the choices brought in the post-war period for younger generation due to change in social set up is the most striking feature of Larkin's poetry. Poems like *Money*, *Vers De Société*, *This be Verse* and *Annus Mirabilis* are the expressions for the collusion of dreams. The result of this experience is in the form of frustration and disappointment. The younger generation is moving away from the ethics of the society leading an immoral life. Now the youth is much free and unrestricted to lead their ways through the joys of life which the poet cannot experience.

Much work has been done on Philip Larkin's poems to draw out multiple meanings in attempt to understand his poems from various angles. Every critic has gone far in providing explanations of his masterpieces. "High Windows", "Annus Mirabilis" and "Wild Oats" have been many times the centre of researchers' focus and every time they have come up with new flavors and shades in these poems yet more attempts are needed to reach further more in depth. Philip Larkin never married and his poems reflect certain themes of love and relationships which have a unique taste from a bachelor's point of view. His poems contain drastic ideas about sexual liberation and relations with often time usage of slang words in poetry. Deconstruction has been applied on his poems by many researchers and all of them have brought multiple meanings and themes from his poems. His poems have been handled with great attention and focus. Many researchers have pointed out themes and elements of sex and sex symbols. He has also been highlighted for his themes of solitude and death.

## **Research Methodology and Theoretical Framework**

### **Methodology**

The qualitative research method is applied to explore the poems *High Windows*, *Annus Mirabilis* and *Wild Oats* by Philip Larkin and this method cherishes to analyze the study of sexual liberation and unmasking the morality. Derrida's (Derrida, 1967) deconstruction method is used to probe the text. It has helped to emphasize ambiguity and uncertainty in the text. It has focused on the supplement to examine the additional meanings or assumptions that are added to a text. Close reading methods and textual analysis are applied. Deconstruction is a critical methodology that challenges traditional notions of meaning, language, and interpretation. (Derrida, 1967) It was developed by French philosopher Jacques Derrida in the 1960s. Qualitative methods of data collection are utilized to justify the research statement with close reference to the selected text. To this end, secondary sources of data collection including websites, journals, and articles are utilized to validate the thesis statement.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Deconstruction theory has investigated key ideas of sexual liberation in selected poems because Deconstruction theory with its sub aspects like emphasizing ambiguity and uncertainty, focusing on the supplement is appropriate for this research. Deconstruction is not about destroying meaning but about uncovering the complex web of meanings and power dynamics within texts. It leaves writer behind and investigates the text considering it the whole world itself. It is relevant

to the close textual reading and there is nothing outside the text. It uncovers something else inside the text. There is no fixed meaning of the text and it helps to generate different meanings at different readings. It tells the relationship among words and meanings, and how language is used to convey the meaning. Every text has different and contradictory meaning. There is no fixed meaning and it is all about new interpretations of the text. It finds flaws, inconsistencies, loopholes, uncertainty, gaps, cracks and ambiguity in the text. Text is divided and analyzed in different pieces to find out these elements. Deconstruction helps to liberate text from the authority of the author. Overall, the theoretical framework of this research provides a foundation for exploring sexual liberation by textual analysis and close reading in deconstruction. It has tried to find the objective truth of the text. The study has not wandered here and there out of the text. It has highlighted what actually is inside the text and which was hidden inside. It has subverted the text to show its meanings. It is like shaking and squeezing the text to see what it contains more. There are distinct aspects and features which have been brought to light. Every writer has some sensitive areas where he doesn't speak out loud and just gives hints. Deconstruction helps to scratch and find the meanings associated with hints. Text of the poems is reiterated by putting old text in new content which has produced new meanings and dimensions. Meanings have been destabilized because theory demands the reader to be prioritized rather than author. Text has been decentered to generate new aspects of the poems. This is the quality of Deconstruction that it has constantly shifted the concepts into novel ideas and meanings. The author of text is dead in this work so there is complete lack of his influence. Meanings of the words and verses are fluid and slippery which have made new shapes in this work. Just like water changes shape when it comes in new areas. Language is a collection of signs which has multiple interpretations and these signs confer meanings along with the reader. The selected text of the poems has been strained and shades of the meanings have been extracted from the text. Themes and meanings of sex and sexual liberation are contradictory in many ways. This is why text is viewed in many contradictory aspects. The beauty of this theory is that it has helped us understand that there are not facts. Nothing is fixed and set as rule in text. In its consequence, the chosen text has many interpretations and sides. This work has proved that no text is meaningless. Every word, every sentence, every verse, every bit has something to say. Text is judged on the basis of similes, metaphors, personifications, hyperbole, rhythm and music. Deconstruction theory is also used to construct new meanings by hitting the blind spots. Deconstruction actually raises what is not discussed in the text. For example, from black and white if there is black given then white is tried to discover.

Deconstruction has helped to bring out ambiguous and uncertain meanings in the text. It has led to create new assumptions which are purely from the text which entertain the hidden ideas and message of the poet. There is complex web of meanings in Larkin's poems. His poetry is full of hidden ideas and aspects which have been brought to light by the theory. There are many social and cultural contexts in his writings which have been discovered. His poems contain dilemma of self and identity. Close reading and textual analysis have searched his self and identity by breaking traditional codes of assumptions. They have broken the fixed meaning that is ever implied with Larkin. Thus, the theory has emphasized his elements of sex and sexual liberation. His mask of morality has been revealed by the endeavor of textual analysis. The theory has uncovered the unsaid in his poems. The text has been fragmented and broken into pieces for investigation. It has been examined and checked on different levels of interpretations and meanings. Philip Larkin is expert in using literary devices which are delved into for the sake of true meanings. This theory has helped in uncovering the themes, imagery and symbolism. An

attempt is made to identify patterns and relationships in his writings. Major product of this work is the production of underlying themes and messages in the text. Pre reading, initial reading and close reading are carried out in quest of analysis. Annotations and marking of vital features are made to understand true meanings. This theory has worked with the help of imagery analysis, symbolic analysis and intertextual analysis to examine vivid description and sensory details. Sexual Liberation is the hallmark of Larkin which remained undercover for decades and now with the help of deconstruction it has been brought to light.

Theoretical dealings have composed the issues of morality and sexual liberation in selected poems of Larkin. The theoretical framework for this research is Derrida's Deconstruction theory, a critical framework to subvert traditional notions of meaning. It has revealed how Larkin's poems have undermined traditional notions of meaning, truth, and authorial intent. His poems often have ambiguous meanings, leaving readers to question the poet's message. It has uncovered the unsaid because Deconstruction has helped identify what is left unsaid or suppressed in Larkin's poems such as his views on sexual liberation. The main objective of the Deconstruction theory is to analyze how Deconstruction theory has helped to explore possible meanings in Larkin's selected poems and challenges the fixed meaning. It has also helped to derive multiple and conflicting meanings on sexual liberation in his poems using textual analysis and close reading approaches.

### **Data Analysis**

Poems are decentered because the meaning is always not fixed. They ever possess something more in their meanings. Poetry has jarring and unconceivable effects because it does not always pursue rules and regulations. There is often lack of grammar and structure in Philip Larkin's (1922-1985) poetry. Deconstructive reading finds out that hidden forces in the text make it incompatible, multiplex and undecidable. *High Windows*, a poem by Larkin has difference and supplement. It has more often ambiguous meanings which make it more diversified. The starting verses are stunning and startling for using explicit and blunt words. Larkin says that he guesses seeing a couple of kids, must be fucking in the verse "When I see a couple of kids and guess he's fucking her and she's taking pills or wearing a diaphragm." (Larkin, 1974, lines. 1-3) He uses the word couple which points out his own shallow personality because he remained a bachelor all the time. He couldn't be better making relationships with women. Deconstruction of the verse states his condition of forlorn and dejected for want of girls of his choice. The author has not been able to make sex with girls as free as he sees people doing. The word "kids" highlights that the author is a middle aged or old man because he considers young couple as kids. There we find his misery that in spite of old age and experience in life he could not enjoy the pleasure of sexual life as the young ones of modern age are enjoying.

The word "guess" reveals that author is not sure about the couple having sex but he imagines they are together only for material love making. There could be other possibilities for the couple to go around and prattling. The text tells us that author's own obsession with sex has moved him to think about others that they are just meeting for sexual intercourse. The phrase "heis fucking her" (Larkin, 1974, line. 2) is very blunt and strong because author could have used the words other than fuck. Fuck is a slang word and it is used for a kind of hatred and abuse for the sex. There are more sophisticated and better words as love making, sweet love, having sexual intercourse, intimacy or foreplay. But fuck has intense meaning. It is an expression of annoyance or surprise. It also implies exclamation that indicates frustration. So, the author is annoyed and frustrated for their cosines, closeness and erotic meeting. It implies writer's own emptiness and inability to have sex with whom he wants to make it. That is why he is angry and frustrated.



The phrase “she is wearing a diaphragm” (Larkin, 1974, line. 3) highlights the concern of girl for using contraceptive to avoid pregnancy while male is not vigilant and responsible. This also spotlights that girls are more conscious for virginity than men. That social norm abandons and restricts women to make sex before marriage. Using the lens of Deconstruction with its aspect of providing supplement a pregnancy is the result of sexual intercourse which defames the honor of girl which she wants to save for obtaining her matrimonial bond. It also gives meaning that girls are ready and willing to make sexual intercourse without marriage just like boys do for the sake of pleasure. Being a virgin makes worth of a girl but when she has gone to bed without marriage she becomes worthless and the chances of getting a suitable match vanish. In consequence girls are more active to take contraceptive pills which hinder a pregnancy. They also use diaphragms to avoid getting pregnant. Men do not have pregnancy type issues, so when they have or have not done sexual intercourse it doesn't make any visible sign. That is why they are secure and happy go lucky in pursuit of girls and spend romantic nights.

Author calls it a paradise that they are free to make sex and they do not bother pregnancy because it is very unlikely. Diaphragm is a lovely invention of modern times. People in old times didn't have this facility. They were much concerned about sexual activities out of marriage. Girls were specially worried for getting pregnant and they in spite of having strong emotions, desires and longings to make sexual intercourse could not make it for being pregnant. Birth control medicines were nonexistent. That was a difficult age. Most of the couples could not make sex in fear. And those who could dare making sex must have not enjoyed it fully and completely because they must have been ejaculating out of vagina. Ejaculating out of vagina itself was not easy and in control because at the heights of pleasure not all could have ejaculated outside. And inside ejaculation was certain pregnancy. But today people have birth control medicines and various forms of devices which are used by both boys and girls. Medicines, plastic IUD (intrauterine device), shots, implants, patches, vaginal rings, copper IUD and condoms help doing sexual intercourse freely without any fear of getting pregnant. That is why author names it “I know it is paradise” (Larkin, 1974, line. 4) and he was living in hell because he couldn't have this paradise like facilities and luxury. Author seems lamenting that he sexual revolution came very late.

Here Deconstruction is decentering the text to reveal that he surprisingly approves this new sexual revolution where people are satiated with more and diversified sex than the older people who had to depend on one wife. This sexual revolution also has changed societal norms of sex. As sex was considered bad and a shameful act before marriage but the contraceptive inventions have made ways wide open for people to make sex freely because there are no more barriers and obstacles. So, the first stanza of the poem explicitly describes and delineated sexual liberty.

In second stanza of the poem *High Windows* Deconstruction has helped to highlight ambiguity and multiplicity of the text depicting that all old people missed such liberal sexual life. Here writer openly states his longing for sexual liberation. With it, he also illustrates that in old days people were deprived of sexual liberation. Technology and religion have parallel relationship. Approximately all religions banned sexual liberation. People had no luxury of birth control and liberty to sexual intercourse would lead to disorder in life. When every other woman is getting pregnant by every other man this could be amalgam and confusing state of humanity where nobody knows the parent of children. This could blast social and familial hierarchy. But the inventions of scientist opened the doors.

Now in almost all countries whether open or secret people are having sexual liberty especially before marriage. Even the norms are changing and many societies give emphasis to have sexual intercourse before marriage to get satisfaction of the partner that if he or she is compatible or not

to other. This liberty has widened the scope of living together. People have inclinations towards incest, electra complex and Oedipus complex. It is another debate that these are good or bad. But the fact is, people are doing these things and probably just like a girl is attracted to her father because she feels secure and comfortable with his masculinity. Now the concept of matrimony is changing its place. In many countries, people like living as couples without marriage. Deconstructing “Every one old has dreamed of all their lives---bonds and gestures pushed to one side” (Larkin, 1974, lines. 5-6) to derive that people no longer followed the rules of marrying and enjoying sexual pleasure. They are enjoying these pleasures outside matrimonial bonds now. There was a time when cuckold was a horrific title when associated to any person. It could result bloodshed, murder, divorce and hatred. Anyone committing sex or having sexual relations outside marriage was looked at with extreme hatred and anger. There were severe and harsh penalties both physical and emotional for committing this taboo. But now these sophisticated bonds of love and marriage are easily put aside. Inventions and technology bring ease, pleasure and comfort. Author uses the phrase “Like an outdated combine harvester” (Larkin, 1974, line. 7) for bond of matrimony. Anything outdated or not in practice is thrown away when there is a replacement with new latest machinery which produces better, sharper and rapid results. Just like there were cassettes for movies and music but new technology of internet, laptops and mobiles threw cassettes aside. Applying Deconstruction on “And everyone young going down the long slide” (Larkin, 1974, line. 8) gives meaning that every member of community, especially the youth is enjoying the long slide. Why? Because it is easy, convenient, pleasure seeking and smooth running. There is huge contrast between old and new generations that what was forbidden and horrific for old generation is more appealing and convenient for new generation. Millions of men and women could not enjoy sexual liberty. Their feelings and longings were suppressed but today every boy and every girl is enjoying sexual liberty. People no longer bother religious barriers or societal norms. They can and do enjoy sexual liberty even secretly because there are minimum chances of being caught. This is remarkable advancement to endless happiness and pleasures. Pointing his own self “I wonder if anyone looked at me, forty years back, and thought, That’ll be the life;” (Larkin, 1974, lines. 9-11) the verse explains to us frustration and complex of the writer that forty years back when he was young nobody could envy my life as writer is envying new generation. Because sexual revolution started in 1960s when author was an old man, being old he was unable to enjoy new invention of contraceptive devices. In old age, one’s sexual energy diminishes or weakens and he cannot enjoy sexual pleasures even when he is having chances. This is heartrending for the poet. Poet further remarks that people no longer fear God and they do not sweat in the dark. This highlights the fading importance of religion. Religion always scared people for doing wrong deeds, sexual liberty was one. Now people ignore God and the repentances in midnight for the wrong doings have also gone. When people are enjoying sexual liberty and every man is negotiating with every woman for sexual intercourse, they are living in paradise which makes them forget the concept of hell. Poet uses simile “Like free bloody birds” for priests who have also become addicted to free sex. Even clergy men are hunted by sexual pleasures. These are the people who are exemplary for societies. Sexual liberty in priests gives common people license to do sexual intercourses freely. In last stanza of the poem the words “Rather than words comes the thought of high windows:” (Larkin, 1974, line. 17) imply another supplement meaning. These words mean to say something about infinity and nothingness. This suggests that sexual liberty can leave horrific results in humans. They can be physical and emotional. Sexual liberty breaks familial settings and social hierarchy. It brings disorder, confusion and chaos. There is no sophistication in doing sexual

intercourse freely pre-marital and out of marriage. Intermingling and having sex with a lot of partners creates diseases as AIDS and STD (Sexually Transmitted Disease).

By “sun-comprehending glass” (Larkin, 1974, line. 18), we extract the meaning of nothingness. Sunlight passes from a glass and creates nothing. It just passes by. Sexual liberation is sun-comprehending glass. “And beyond it, the deep blue air, that shows nothing, and is nowhere, and is endless.” (Larkin, 1974, lines. 19-20) also implies the meaning of shallow and hollowness of human beings when entangled in sexual liberty. Looking through “high windows”, one finds only deep blue air and nothing else. Deconstruction of this stanza also generates meaning of closeness to God. Windows are high and so is the God. People usually look up to the sky when talking to God. So, the words also give meaning of closeness to God.

*Annus Mirabilis* is remarkable poem by Philip Larkin (1922-1985). Application of deconstruction in the poem has been fruitful in finding elements of sexual liberation. It has highlighted multiplicity of meaning along with additional meanings and assumptions related to it. The title *Annus Mirabilis* means a remarkable year. The phrase is borrowed from a John Dryden (1631-1700) poem of the same name that tells the story of 1666 that contains a British naval battle against the Dutch and the Great Fire of London. It locates the exact moment in time when sexual revolution of the 1960s became a reality. Poet indicates that sex itself began in 1963 between the time when *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1927) by D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930) was no longer banned and when the Beatles released their first music album in 1963.

Starting words of the poem “sexual intercourse began” (Larkin, 1974, line. 1) relate the impact of sex in the mind of the poet. They also signify that they have huge effect on rest of the poem. How is this possible to say that “Sexual intercourse began In nineteen sixty-three (which was rather late for me) -” (Larkin, 1974, lines. 1-3)? It suggests that people were not having sex before and consequently they were not producing children. That must have been the end of humanity or perhaps there were never human beings on earth because they didn’t perform sexual intercourse and they had no children. If there was no human being, there should not have been Larkin alive and writing the poem. So, the meaning is derived that people had had sexual intercourse from the beginning of mankind but that was restricted, confined and controlled. The starting of sexual intercourse confers the meaning of excessive sexual intercourse without hindrances. The revolution of science and technology gave people space, leisure and possibility to perform sexual intercourse without any fear. In the absence of condoms and diaphragms people were afraid of getting pregnancy in pre-marital sex, in marriage sex and having sex with partners other than spouse.

Resultantly advancement in science and technology gave people sexual freedom. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1927) was banned because of explicit pornography and sexual urges. It was full of erotic and romantic scenes with lust all around. This book was taken critically and was censored for people in fear of prevailing sexual astray. By the time, it was legal and open to public because the norms of society regarding pornography and sexual display of festivity changed. Today pornography is the most profitable profession for people. Millions of videos and pictures are being searched and watched on internet. After 1927 a time came when the most famous song *Please Please Me* was released by Beatles’ music album (1963). Between 1927 and 1963 came the sexual revolution which unluckily not suitable for the poet as he had grown old. Being old, he had no power or energy for sexual intercourse. This is the same sexual intercourse whose liberation was never in his hand because of societal norms. But today when sex is easy and accessible to everyone, he is unable to relinquish its benefits. Poet regrets for this unjust division of time. He longs for being born late when there will be ease for sexual liberation but he cannot do

anything as birth and death are associated to destiny.

Text further renders that there were a sort of pledges, promises, and deals among men and women for sexual intercourses in the words “Up to then there’d only been A sort of bargaining” (Larkin, 1974, lines. 6-7). Women were in particular afraid in involving sexual affairs because they would lose their worth in society if they get pregnant. Though, they had always strong and pressing urge for sexual relationships with men inside and outside marriage. Men had to coax them for sexual pleasures. They had to deal before performing sexual activity that men would ejaculate outside vagina so as to avoid pregnancy because there were no contraceptive medicines, condoms, diaphragms and abortions. Convincing a girl for sexual intercourse was harder and time taking. In most of the affairs the couples only remained doing foreplay. “A wrangle for the ring” (Larkin, 1974, line. 8) contributes a very important element regarding sexual intercourse. It supplies meaning that marriages were held for the sake of having sexual intercourses. As it was a very, very difficult to build sexual relationship men tended to marry women for satiating their sexual urges. This restriction was good in as sense that there was no sexual liberation.

The concept of shame was so intense that married people were never in habits to express sexual urges openly to each other. “A shame that started at sixteen And spread to everything” (Larkin, 1974, lines. 9-10) makes quite good sense that people in adolescence got the concept of shame. When boys get erection and they start hiding their private part with under wears. Girls start feeling emergence of boobs and they hide them with clothes. These activities and many other activities alongside keep taking place in the idea of shame and this shame rests for lifetime till death.

With the inventions of avoiding pregnancy “Then all at once the quarrel sank:” (Larkin, 1974, line. 11) This is a kind of unleashing sexual desires of girls and boys. When pregnancy is not an issue there is no fear and no time to say “no” to sexual intercourse. This liberated people for sexual pleasures. “Breaking of the bank” (Larkin, 1974, line. 14) passes on meanings with the help of underlying power dynamics of Deconstruction that the people who were confined and restricted for ages finally found vent to their desires. Fluids and secretes which were controlled and restricted suddenly broke the borders and a flood came. This chronicles how to the heights of sexual liberation did go at that time when sexual revolution was taking place. Text has the word “A quite unlosable game” (Larkin, 1974, line. 15) for sexual intercourse. Challenging the idea of fixed meaning, this word is used mostly for the things people do in leisure time and for purely pleasure seeking. It portrays that sex is no longer an activity only for the production of children but it has become a game. You can play this game anywhere, with anyone, anytime and with least difficulty. This word “unlosable” (Larkin, 1974, line. 15) is the best illustration of tracing sexual liberation in Larkin’s poetry. Winning is always everyone’s desire. Losing brings pain and suffering but winning brings joy and appeasement. Sexual intercourse in present times is a game in which both players win. In last stanza the poet has remorse on his own previous life which was stale and dull with absence of sex. Larkin points directly to him for the pangs and pains of not having been born late for the enjoyment of sexual liberty. Repetition of last two verses indicates the importance of time of sexual revolution that the poet misses.

*Wild Oats* is Larkin’s (1922-1985) stupendous poem that marks out elements of sexual liberation. Deconstruction theory along with Data Analysis and Close Reading has been applied to make fragments of the text for better understanding and deriving hidden meanings. First stanza gives way to the anecdote of twenty years ago when “Two girls came in where I worked-” (Larkin, 1974, line. 2). The indication of girls from a boy’s perspective marks out the tinges of sexual appeal. It is human nature that a boy always thinks of girl in perspective of having sexual pleasure

and a girl is attracted to boy in the same way. Man and woman are made for each other and they always have attraction. This attraction is instilled in all which leads to sexual union and finally they beget offspring which is the emblem of continuity of human kind. This attraction is such massive that man forgets everything and goes for the satisfaction putting all other chores aside.

Men always like “bosomy English rose” (Larkin, 1974, line. 3). “English” implies the meaning that she was from England. Bosomy word has meaning like a girl or woman who has beautiful bust of big breasts. Applying Deconstruction brings to us the ideas that Breasts are the fundamental thing of beauty in girls. Girls are always conscious of their breasts for enlarging them and beautifying them so as to attract men and get sexual satisfaction. Basically the thing which distinguishes man from woman in appearance is the breasts. Psychologically, men notice breasts of women in first appearance. Breasts contribute great while sexual intercourse. They are basis of orgasm in women. Out of two women author liked the one who had large breasts. This is the evidence of how breasts enhance beauty of women and men tend to like those women who have big breasts. “And her friend in specs I could talk to.” (Larkin, 1974, line. 4) suggests that poet did not like her physical beauty as she liked the first one. The second woman must have had small boobs which couldn’t gather the attention of poet. He talks about breasts of first woman and specs of second woman. He notices in each what is appealing in her overall appearance. Poet talked to the woman who was less beautiful. First woman is more beautiful which means she has more admirers that boost the competition. Poet could not carry himself equal to her because he must have undermined himself and was afraid to face rejection by the first woman. That vista could not last long in “the whole shooting-match off” (Larkin, 1974, line. 6). Poet’s gaze on her breasts implies his desire of sexual pleasure with the girl. His pain for not having that girl evident in “And I doubt If ever one had like hers:” (Larkin, 1974, lines. 6-7). Poet decided to chat with second woman, the friend of first woman.

He wrote “four hundred letters” (Larkin, 1974, line. 10) and “gave a ten-guinea ring” (Larkin, 1974, line. 11) show poet’s unrequited love. This love was intangible because he couldn’t have sexual appeasement with the girl. Even she returned the ring back to him. This conveys the end of relationship, a heartrending break-up after seven years of togetherness. The poet visited several churches to pray to God that He might return her back to him. The poet happened to meet that first woman two times later on. He gathers from her behavior and expressions that she was trying to hide her laugh over him. This is painful for a man who is truly in love with a lady; but that lady played games with him, sexually attracted him and married someone else. They had done five mock wedding rehearsals before parting. She broke the agreement but poet considers him at fault for breaking of the relationship. He blames himself for “too selfish” and “easily bored to love” (Larkin, 1974, lines. 19-20).

Text depicts that finally poet has learnt that the women are cheaters. They always deceive you. They are more prone to sexual liberation and cannot be confined in marital bond. He names “unlucky charms” (Larkin, 1974, line. 24) to the two photos he has still safely saved in his wallet. They are unlucky in two senses. One, they wasted time of the writer for seven years and didn’t involve in sexual intercourse with him. Second, their presence with the writer in shape of photos drove other girls away. He could neither enjoy sexual pleasure with these two *Wild Oats* nor with any other girls who came in his life.

Larkin’s (1922-1985) selected poems have evident sexual liberation when explored and pondered deeply. The uncovering of the text has showed his extremity of sexual advancement. Deconstruction of the text has greatly benefited the researcher to point out niche morality given in the text. Deconstruction theory has broken the text into tiny pieces and with its lens researcher

has looked at marginal voices of the poet. Societal norms, religion, culture and traditions had put chains on the sexual liberation of old generations and they had never thought of the glimpse of the sexual liberation which is now being cherished by new generations. Texts of the poem are enriched with longing, envy and thirst of previous people when they look at new generations. It is vivid and crystal clear that old generations stop new generations from sexual liberation only because they are jealous of modern advancement which has given ease to make sexual unions so easily that old generations could never dream of.

## Conclusion

It is disclosed through the analysis of Larkin's selected poems from the perspective of Derrida's Deconstruction that the poems rest on ambiguity, uncertainty and supplement of meanings which are discussed by close reading and textual analysis. Larkin doesn't give conformity of the meanings in the text, which is why the poems have multiple and conflicting meanings. The poems are deconstructed and decentered to challenge the fixed meaning. Selected poems; *High Windows*, *Annus Mirabilis* and *Wild Oats* visibly emphasize ideas of sexual liberation under the mask of morality. It is exposed that the text has elements of extreme urge of fulfilling sexual desires among male and female persona. This desire has been triggered with the help of scientific technology leading to liberty for sexual unions in society. Text has explored the envy, remorse and inability of poet to obtain sexual liberation with the help of scientific advancement and the consequent reason is his old age. Deconstruction and its key aspects have served powerful tools to uncover the complex web of meaning and power dynamics within texts.

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