

# The Ambiguity in the Novel Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens

Ahmed Samer Mohammed<sup>1</sup>, Hani Oudah Neamah<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Banaras Hindu University, Faculty of Arts, English Department, M.A. in English

<sup>2</sup>Banaras Hindu University, Faculty of Arts, English Department, PhD Scholar

## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to reveal the ambiguity in the novel *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens (2019). In conducting the study, the writers delimit only in analyzing the conflict of the main character Kya Clark in the novel. The design of this study is qualitative method because all of the data are in the form of words and quotations rather than numbers and the approach used Reader-Response, It focuses on the process of the types of ambiguity of the main character that produces the result. The study find that many forms of ambiguity, actions, intentions, abandoned, The implication of this study is to enrich the knowledge of the writers and the readers about the main character's ambiguous that reflected in Owens' *Where the Crawdads Sing*. Moreover, it can be a reference for the students of English Department who are attracted to observe the similar research. Therefore, this research can conclude the novel, *Where the Crawdads Sing*, to show the ambiguity of the main characters.

**Keywords:** mystery, Owen, marshes, Kya Clark, ambiguity.

## Introduction

Literature always reflects about the social and cultural phenomenon happened in society. Whether it is personal or social phenomenon literature always presents it in an interesting way Life is beautiful, this sentence is usually said by young people as they hardly find problems in their life. However, we know that life is not only full of beautiful things and happy moments but also difficulties. People as human beings cannot avoid them. There are so many problems that exist in our life and we need to struggle to overcome our problems so that we can survive. We cannot avoid our destiny. However once we have problems in life, we still must continue our path. Such a condition can also be found in a work of literature such as novel.

## The Marsh Mysteries: Unveiling Ambiguity in *Where the Crawdads Sing*

Delia Owens' captivating novel, *Where the Crawdads Sing*, transcends the boundaries of a coming-of-age story. Set against the backdrop of the North Carolina marsh, it weaves a tale of Kya Clark, a young woman abandoned by her family and forced to navigate a harsh world on her own. The narrative unfolds with a captivating ambiguity, leaving readers to grapple with questions that linger long after the final page. This proposal delves into the key areas of ambiguity in the novel, exploring their impact on thematic depth and reader engagement.

### **1. The Mystery of Chase Andrews' Death**

The central mystery that drives the plot revolves around the death of Chase Andrews, a wealthy local who becomes entangled with Kya. The narrative presents two contrasting perspectives: the townspeople who suspect Kya and Kya's own recollection of events. Owens masterfully crafts a situation where both sides offer seemingly plausible explanations. We see Chase as arrogant and potentially predatory through Kya's eyes, while the townspeople perceive Kya as an outsider with a motive – a potential inheritance. This ambiguity compels readers to become detectives. We analyze every interaction, every detail, searching for clues that point towards guilt or innocence. The lack of a definitive answer forces us to confront our own biases and grapple with the complexities of human nature. Did Chase fall victim to Kya's rage, or was his demise a tragic accident? This question remains unanswered, leaving a sense of unease and prompting us to contemplate the murkiness of truth, especially in a society quick to judge.

### **2. Kya's Unreliable Narration**

Kya's narration is the cornerstone of the story. However, Owens strategically injects elements of doubt, making it unclear whether Kya is a wholly reliable narrator. Her isolation and dependence on nature shape her perspective. The marsh becomes a sanctuary, but it also fosters a certain naivety about the human world. We see Chase through the lens of her limited social experience, potentially misinterpreting his intentions. Furthermore, the trauma of abandonment undoubtedly colors her memories. Did she truly push her younger brother away, or is her recollection clouded by pain? This ambiguity forces us to question everything we learn through Kya's eyes. We become active participants, piecing together the narrative and attempting to discern truth from Kya's subjective viewpoint. This unreliable narration adds a layer of psychological intrigue, prompting us to consider the influence of experience and personal bias on perception.

### **3. The Blurred Lines between Nature and Humanity**

Owens masterfully portrays the North Carolina marsh as a vibrant, complex ecosystem. Kya's deep connection with nature becomes a defining aspect of her character. The marsh is both a source of sustenance and solace, yet it also harbors dangers. The ambiguity lies in how we interpret the relationship between nature and humanity. Is the marsh a neutral force, simply existing alongside Kya, or does it actively influence her actions?

Some readers might perceive the marsh as a reflection of Kya's inner turmoil, mirroring the wildness and resilience they see within her. Others might view it as a potentially destructive force, contributing to her isolation and fueling potential violence. This ambiguity creates a space for contemplation. It allows us to explore the intricate relationship between humans and the natural world, prompting us to question the extent to which our environment shapes our actions and emotions.

### **4. The Ambiguous Ending**

The ending of *Where the Crawdads Sing* is perhaps the most debated aspect of the novel. Kya's fate remains a mystery, with Owens leaving clues that point towards both her survival and demise. The lack of a definitive conclusion fuels speculation and allows readers to craft their own interpretations. Did Kya finally escape the confines of the marsh and her troubled past/ Or did she succumb to the unforgiving wilderness, becoming one with the natural world she cherished, This ambiguity fosters a sense of closure yet keeps the story alive in our minds. It allows readers to connect with the characters on a deeper level,

projecting their hopes and fears onto the narrative's open-ended conclusion. It also encourages us to contemplate the themes of resilience and the enduring power of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

### **5. The Power of Ambiguity**

Delia Owens' deliberate use of ambiguity in *Where the Crawdads Sing* elevates the novel beyond a simple mystery or coming-of-age story. It compels readers to become active participants, detectives, and psychologists, piecing together the narrative and grappling with complex questions about human nature, truth, and the relationship between humanity and the natural world. This ambiguity fosters a deeper understanding of the characters and the themes explored, ensuring that the story lingers long after the final page is turned.

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