

摘 要

《荆棘鸟》是澳大利亚作家考琳·麦卡洛 1978 年创作的一部传奇式家世小说。这本小说出版后，成为整个 20 世纪 80 年代最佳畅销书之一，被翻译成各国多种语言出版于世界各地并且备受世界各地读者推崇和喜爱。本文基于需求层次理论，对小说中女主人公梅吉的自我实现进行分析，主要包括：引言、主要内容和结语三个部分。引言部分介绍《荆棘鸟》的作者及这部作品；主要内容部分首先分别介绍需求层次理论中各个需求层次的含义，然后分别从生理需求、安全需求、爱和归属需求、尊重需求、自我实现需求探究女主人公梅吉各个需求层次的满足状况及其不同时期的心理诉求和行为动机，再对梅吉自我实现的原因进行深层剖析，了解其自我需求和自我实现的关系；最后结语部分通过对梅吉自我实现的分析让人们了解到自我需求对指导自身行为的重要意义。

关键词：需求层次理论；梅吉；自我实现

ABSTRACT

The Thorn Birds is a legendary family novel written by Australian writer Colleen McCullough in 1978. After its publication, the novel became one of the best-selling novels throughout the 80s of the 20th centuries, was translated into many languages, published all over the world, and was highly respected and loved by readers around the world. Based on the hierarchy of needs theory, this thesis analyzes the self-realization of the heroine Meggie in the novel. It mainly includes three parts: introduction, main content and conclusion. The introduction introduces the author of *The Thorn Birds* and the work. The main content section first introduces the meaning of each level of demand in the hierarchy of needs theory. Second, from physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs, and self-realization needs, the satisfaction of the heroine Meggie's various levels of needs and her psychological demands and behavioral motivations in different periods are explored, and then the reasons for Meggie's self-realization are deeply analyzed to understand the relationship between her self-needs and self-realization. Finally, the conclusion part makes people understand the importance of self-needs to guide their own behavior through the analysis of Meggie's self-realization.

Key words: Hierarchy of Needs Theory; Meggie; self-realization

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Chapter One Introduction

Colleen McCullough was born on June 1, 1937 in Wellington, New South Wales, Australia, as an ordinary priest Family. Colleen McCullough is a unique writer in the history of Australian literature, covered in countless halos, in addition to her achievements in neuropathology and literary creation, Colleen McCullough is also a striking public intellectual, she is enthusiastic, cheerful, concerned about social issues, and directly to society Cons, enthusiastic participation in various social activities and entertainment programs. She has been included in Australia's 100 Luminaries list along with renowned medical scientist Sir Rodden Cutler. In 1984, a portrait of Colleen McCullough, painted by Viseli Walters, also won the Archibald Prize, highlighting Colleen McCullough's unusual social influence.

As for Colleen McCullough's creative path, although she loved to read and create from an early age and showed a unique creative talent, her real creative career started relatively late, and during her neuropathological research in the United States (1963-1976) she used her free time to create *Tim* and *The Thorn Birds*. Although Colleen McCullough didn't expect to be a best-selling author when she wrote, *Tim* and *The Thorn Birds* were very successful. In 1974, the publication of her debut novel, *Tim*, caused quite a stir, earned a considerable income, and greatly influenced her. The second novel, *The Thorn Birds*, made her famous, and the media tirelessly covered her popularity. After the financial pressure was lifted, she began to work exactly according to her own wishes, and began to experiment with a variety of different themes.

It can be said that *The Thorn Birds* published in 1977 is Colleen McCullough's masterpiece. With its rigorous structure, complex plot, bright and delicate language, and profound subject matter, the novel has attracted the attention of readers and scholars. Written in Australia from the early to the mid-twentieth century, this legendary family novel focuses on the touching love between the heroine Meggie and the Catholic priest Ralph, and describes the ups and downs and emotional experiences of three generations of the Cleary family of ranch employees, alluding to the development of Australian society. In this novel, the author shows us the vast landscapes and customs of Australia, and also successfully shapes the image of the heroine Meggie, she is kind, strong, because of the struggle for love and happiness, she embarks on a path full of thorns, despite the disappointment and pain, she is still strong and brave to face life. The novel is set at the height of the second wave of the women's movement, under the influence of which women's self-awareness continues to increase, and the pursuit of self-realization and its development runs through the novel.

Chapter Two An Overview of the Hierarchy of Needs Theory

The hierarchy of needs theory is one of the theories of humanistic science, proposed by the famous American psychologist Abraham Maslow in his 1943 article *The Theory of Human Motivation*. In the book, people's needs are divided into five types from low to high like a ladder, namely: physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs and self-realization needs, and the five needs are like ladders, from low to high, rising step by step. The hierarchy of needs theory has two main starting points, one is that everyone has needs, generally speaking, when a certain level of needs are relatively satisfied, it will develop to a higher level, and the pursuit of higher levels of needs will become the driving force of behavior. Maslow believed that only those who truly satisfied low-level needs would truly embark on the path of self-realization.

The following will introduce the concept of each level of demand separately to familiarize yourself with this theory.

2.1 Physiological Needs

Physiological needs are the most basic and minimum needs to maintain human existence. For example, to meet all kinds of hunger, cold, sleep and other needs of food, clothing, housing and transportation. Without minimal satisfaction of these needs, humanity cannot survive and reproduce. Therefore, physiological needs are a person's first need and the most powerful driving force of human activities. For a person who is extremely hungry, food is his most urgent and unique need, and the desire to enjoy music and buy a car is forgotten or taken a back seat. Characteristics of unmet physiological needs: wanting nothing, just wanting to live, the ability to think, morality has become clearly fragile. For example, if a person desperately needs food, he will not do anything to grab it.

2.2 Safety Needs

The need for safety is the need for people to ensure their own safety, protection from the risk of commercial and property damage, protection against the invasion of occupational diseases, exposure to strict supervision and so on. Maslow believed that the whole organism is a mechanism for pursuing safety, that human receptors, effector organs, intelligence, and other energies are primarily tools for seeking safety, and that even science and outlook on life can be considered part of meeting the need for safety. Of course, if this need is relatively met, it is no longer a motivating factor. Characteristics of unmet security needs: feeling threatened by the things around you and feeling that the world is

unfair or dangerous. Thinking that everything is dangerous, he becomes nervous, anxious, hesitant, and thinks that everything is evil.

2.3 Love and Belonging Needs

The need to love and belong refers to a person's need to emotionally connect with others, as well as the need to belong and enjoy status in a group. The need at this level is twofold. The first is the need for fraternity, that is, everyone must have good relations between partners and colleagues or maintain friendship and loyalty; Everyone wants to be loved, to love others and to receive the love of others. The second is the need to belong, that is, people have a sense of belonging to a group, hoping to become a member of the group and take care of each other. This need belongs to a higher level of need. Characteristics of lack of love and the need to belong: Thinking that you are not worthy of living in this world because you do not feel the care of those around you. For example, a teenager who is not cared for by his parents, thinks that he has no value in the family, so he makes friends at school, ignoring morality and rationality and actively looking for friends or the like. For example, in order to integrate into the social circle, teenagers help others make cows and horses, and even smoke, pranks and so on.

2.4 Esteem Needs

Esteem needs is one of the higher-level needs, and the need for respect includes both a sense of personal accomplishment or self-worth, as well as the appreciation and respect of others for themselves. By earning people's respect, they actually feel confident in their worth. Failure to meet these needs can frustrate them. Maslow pointed out: "It is the natural need of the individual to expect society to respect itself." Characteristics that do not satisfy the need for esteem: becoming very face-loving or using positive actions to gain the approval of others, and also being easily attracted to vanity. For example: using violence to prove their toughness; Strive to study and become a doctor and lawyer to prove your existence and value in this society; Rich people earn money for their fame and happiness or donate money and so on.

2.5 Self-realization

The need for self-realization is the highest level of need, which means that people need to maximize their potential, constantly improve themselves, complete everything that is compatible with their abilities, and realize their ideals. But this does not mean that people can only be considered self-actualized after becoming great, but that they can do what they think is meaningful and valuable, and

can use their talents and abilities. Therefore, the path to meeting the need for self-realization varies from person to person, and its manifestations vary depending on factors such as age. Lack of self-actualization needs: Feeling that your life is guided by a feeling of emptiness and uselessness to do what you should do as a "human being" in this world.

Chapter Three The Performance of Meggie's Self-realization under the Hierarchy of Needs Theory

In recent years, many scholars have begun to use Maslow's hierarchy of needs to interpret the development of women's consciousness and self-realization in English and American literature. The development of women's self-realization is not innate, the development of self-realization is inseparable from the satisfaction of their own needs, and with the continuous satisfaction of self-needs, self-realization is slowly completed. The completion of Meggie's self-realization in the novel is gradually formed in the struggle against patriarchy and theocracy. Colleen McCullough's "Meggie" dares to resist, pursues self and true love, and like a thorn bird, spends her life looking for the longest and sharpest thorns, just to let go of her singing voice among the wild branches.

The following will be based on the hierarchy of needs theory to deeply analyze the heroine Meggie in *The Thorn Birds*, so as to explore her journey from losing herself to pursuing herself, and finally completing self-realization. Exploring the psychological demands and behavioral motivations of the protagonists at different times is helpful to deeply understand the connection between women's self-needs and self-realization development in the novel, and clarify the importance of self-needs in guiding their own behavior.

3.1 Physiological Needs and Safety Needs

Maslow described it this way in his article *Motivation and Personality*: "If a person is very hungry, then except he wouldn't be interested in anything other than food."^{[1]42} He believed that the most primitive, simplest, and powerful of people's needs was the need for survival, that is, the physiological need, which was also the basis of other higher-level needs. According to the hierarchy of needs theory, after satisfying the basic physiological needs, people begin to pursue the satisfaction of the next level of needs, that is, the satisfaction of safety needs is becoming more and more intense.

3.1.1 Gaining Material Satisfaction from Food, Clothing, Housing and Transportation

First, through our understanding of the hierarchy of needs, we can know that it is the satisfaction of physiological needs. For Meggie, meeting her physiological needs is relatively easy. Colleen McCullough described it this way in her novel *The Thorn Birds*: "The table at the Clearies was always full of food, all the plates were large, and they were literally full of food: lamb stew, boiled potatoes and lentils picked from the garden that day, each with plenty of portions."^{[2]14} For Meggie, although

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