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***Intergenerational Adultery: Psychosexual Transgressions, Psychic******Vulnerability, and Erotic Alienation in Love's Not, Time's Fool and Call Me***

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"Desire is the very essence of our being." Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*.

This study explores the convoluted and thought-provoking interactions in relationships between people of different ages in two modern novels. This study investigates how various narratives such as - *Love's Not Time's Fool* by Vikas Sharma, and *Call Me by Your Name* by André Aciman—reflect and contest prevailing literary and historical notions of adultery and desire throughout periods. Age differences and forbidden love have long been topics in literature, from the scandalous trysts in classic works like Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to the complex psychological dynamics in Nabokov's *Lolita*. This chapter expands on these earlier works by examining how *Call Me by Your Name*, and *Love's Not Time's Fool* provide a modern interpretation of intergenerational relationships. It reveals the psychosexual conflicts and expectations that underpin these labyrinthine interactions by drawing on psychoanalytic theories, most notably Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. A key component of this research is the concept of "intergenerational adultery," which the study redefines to include deeper psychological and emotional breaches that take place in such relationships in addition to physical infidelity. The term encompasses the complex betrayal of not only a romantic relationship but also of one's own personal growth and existential phases. The study highlights the conflicts between societal conventions and personal fulfillment by looking at the erotic alienation that characters who cross these generational boundaries go through. A comprehension of the intimate and frequently tense mechanisms of these relationships is aided by literary allusions such as Henry James's investigation of psychological depth in *The Golden Bowl* and James Baldwin's contemplations on forbidden passion in *Giovanni's Room*. The study also addresses how these books mirror larger themes of identity, agency, and power by interacting with feminist and queer theories.

This study attempts to illuminate the deep and frequently frightening ways in which these narratives deal with the themes of alienation, betrayal, and desire through a thorough examination of psychosexual violations and the ensuing psychic fragility. By analyzing these topics, *Call Me by Your Name*, and *Love's Not Time's Fool* provides fresh and authentic perspectives on the everlasting difficulties of intergenerational relationships and the emotional boundaries they cross.

### **Understanding Intergenerational Adultery:**

Extramarital affairs, or adultery, has been a subject of moral, legal, and social debate for many years. Adultery has affected social institutions, legal systems, and cultural norms in addition to intimate relationships. The term "intergenerational adultery" describes the prevalence or transfer of adulterous behavior throughout generations in families or communities. Depending on the period, culture, and accepted social mores, adultery has historically been perceived through many prisms. A thorough understanding of the historical development of adultery demonstrates its persistent influence on the relationships between gender, power, and morality. The concept of intergenerational adultery arouses both unease and interest, especially when it comes to literary representations of the topic, which frequently handle the topic with a richness of emotional nuance mixed with moral ambiguity. A key subject in works like *Love's Not, Time's Fool*, and *Call Me by Your Name* is the exploration of greater issues related to psychosexual development, identity formation, and emotional vulnerability via the lens of erotic relationships that transcend considerable age limits. By portraying these relationships as both transgressive and a means of comprehending deeper, frequently suppressed facets of the human mind, these works subvert standard notions about love, desire, and fidelity. Intergenerational interactions are complicated by issues of consent and autonomy, power dynamics, and psychic fragility.

In Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), moral faults from one generation affect the next, offering one of the most moving examinations of adultery across generations. Hardy suggests

that moral failings such as adultery can have long-lasting effects on future generations, frequently influencing children's lives in unexpected ways. Henchard's actions have a profound impact on the lives of the younger characters. Even while it isn't adultery, Henchard's personal affair sets off a chain of unfortunate events that impact not only his daughter but the entire neighborhood.

In *The Awakening* (1899) by Kate Chopin, the protagonist Edna Pontellier's examination of her desires and the affair that follows reflects the suppressed hopes of earlier female generations. A persistent dynamic that cuts across generations, Chopin's depiction of Edna's infidelity functions as a critique of society's suppression of female autonomy. Through her decision to use her affair as a means of resistance, Edna connects her acts to a continuous cycle of generational oppression and revolt, challenging not only the immediate limits of her society but also the battles of innumerable women who came before her. The Buendía family's intergenerational adultery is shown in Gabriel García Márquez's 1967 novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as a component of a greater framework of familial instability. With the men of the Buendía family routinely having extramarital affairs, Márquez's story illustrates how patterns of infidelity are passed down. Unresolved moral and emotional difficulties are passed down from one generation to the next, as suggested by these extramarital affairs, which add to the family's cyclical demise. The notion that some sins, like adultery, become ingrained in the family psyche is reinforced by Márquez's use of magical realism to illustrate the nearly inevitable recurrence of these adulterous relationships.

Another depiction of intergenerational adultery can be found in James Baldwin's 1962 novel *Another Country*, where the characters' adulteries are a reflection of larger racial and cultural problems. Baldwin's investigation of infidelity goes beyond the person to look at how the unspoken tensions and unsolved issues of the past affect the relationships of their offspring. One of the main characters, Rufus, has a turbulent relationship that is reminiscent of his parents' issues with race, identity, and

faithfulness. Baldwin's book emphasizes how unresolved deeper intergenerational traumas can manifest as infidelity.

Another illustration may be seen in *The Great Gatsby* (1925) by F. Scott Fitzgerald, where the story of Tom Buchanan's affair with Myrtle Wilson is integrated into a broader one concerning the moral decline of the upper class. Tom's actions reflect the moral lapses of earlier generations, illustrating the cyclical nature of infidelity as a society ill as well as a human failing. Fitzgerald suggests that infidelity becomes a part of the heritage of privilege by criticizing the continuation of adultery within a system that prioritizes wealth and status over moral integrity through Tom's actions. Jhumpa Lahiri's (2013) novel *The Lowland* explores the concept of intergenerational adultery by examining the effects of extramarital relationships on successive generations. Lahiri shows how the agony of an affair may affect not just the people who are directly engaged but also their offspring, who must deal with the emotional consequences. The protagonist's parents' affair starts a series of events that profoundly affect their children's lives, demonstrating how infidelity may sever family ties and change the path of subsequent generations. Analyzing these works reveals that infidelity is frequently ingrained in larger, intergenerational contexts rather than being a single, isolated act. These literary investigations imply that adultery rarely has just psychological, ethical, and social repercussions that affect the adulterers alone; instead, they often have an impact on spouses, kids, and even entire communities. When intergenerational adultery is portrayed in literature, it serves as a vehicle for examining how moral flaws that reoccur affect personal and familial legacies and impact subsequent generations.

### **Intergenerational Adultery and Power Dynamics:**

The themes of intergenerational adultery in *Call Me by Your Name* and *Love's Not, Time's Fool* take on intricate complexities that go beyond simple age differences. Richa and Abhilash's relationship in *Love's Not, Time's Fool* exposes a glaring power disparity in which class and financial standing are also significant factors. Richa, a well-to-do married lady, has an affair with poor, young student



Abhilash. She offers to pay for Abhilash's books as a first gesture of kindness, but it soon turns into an amorous endeavor. The relationship is complicated by the age difference, her riches, and Abhilash's lack of financial stability. Richa uses her position to control Abhilash both sexually and financially, giving him a job and a place to live in her house. This relationship is similar to the way that Foucault (The History of Sexuality) discussed the power dynamics in sexual relationships and how controlling the subordinate partner is necessary to satiate desire. It is difficult to distinguish between mutual affection and exploitation given Abhilash's increasing reliance on Richa. Due to his financial necessity, Richa can control their relationship and put him at her mercy. In this way, the affair appears to be more of a representation of power dynamics, where class defines erotic exchanges rather than a rebellious act of desire.

*Call Me by Your Name*, on the other hand, depicts a distinct but equally complex connection between Elio, a bright young man, and Oliver, an older scholar. The power relations in this situation are more emotional than tangible. Elio is young and vulnerable, while Oliver has emotional distance due to his age and experience. Elio's intense feelings and yearning for Oliver demonstrate how disparities in age can lead to unequal emotional commitments. In both couples, Oliver and Richa, the elder spouse, control the emotions and body, while the younger partner finds it difficult to claim their own space. The framework offered by Judith Butler's concepts of emotional reliance and psychic subordination helps comprehend these processes. Butler explores in *The Psychic Life of Power* how desire, especially when it transcends age and power barriers, frequently leaves the younger partner in a precarious emotionally dependent situation (Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power*). The younger partners in both novels—Elio and Abhilash—manage their emotions while staying within the bounds of their more powerful lovers' expectations and wishes.

### **Psychosexual Transgressions:**

Psychosexual Transgressions are defined as sexual activities and relationships that deviate from norms and violate moral standards and societal expectations. These offenses frequently entail intricate emotional and psychological dynamics that expose hidden tensions, fears, and wants. Within the framework of intergenerational relationships, these breaches shed light on how people negotiate power dynamics, the construction of identities, and the pursuit of closeness. Crossing social, emotional, and personal limits, the psychosexual violations of the romantic relationships in *Love's Not*, *Time's Fool*, and *Call Me by Your Name* establish their identity. In *Love's Not*, *Time's Fool*, Richa's stubborn reaction to her sexual frustration and discontent with her marriage is her affair with Abhilash. She searches out sexual and emotional fulfillment with a much younger man because of her husband's impotence and physical absence from her. However, Richa's power over the relationship—both materially and emotionally—is fundamental to it.

(RASHTRAKAVI MAITHILI SHARAN GUPT)

A Freudian Oedipus complex is likely at play in Abhilash's remark comparing his situation to that of a child nursing at his mother's breast (Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*). The overlapping responsibilities of caregiver and lover in this relationship—where sensual desire is confused with maternal imagery—give rise to psychosexual conflict. In addition to being a show of strength, Richa uses Abhilash to satisfy her sexual cravings and make up for the emotional void in her life. According to Lacanian psychoanalysis, these kinds of relationships are an attempt to fill in the "lack" in a person's psyche by looking to the other for wholeness (Lacan, *Écrits*). Richa uses Abhilash to fill the vacuum left by her in a way that is highlighted by their lusty relationship.

The psychosexual transgression in *Call Me by Your Name* is related to Elio's realization of his sexual identity as a result of his friendship with Oliver. The affair—which is characterized by passion and secrecy—becomes Elio's journey toward emotional and sexual development. Elio's sexual awakening is, like Abhilash's, rife with internal struggle as he struggles to balance his growing impulses with societal norms. Sedgwick's examination of homoeroticism in literature clarifies how these kinds of

relationships—particularly when they violate age and normative sexuality—cause emotions of estrangement and humiliation (Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*). Elio's intense affections for Oliver drive him to the periphery of his family and social circle in a way that is both liberated and alienating.

### **Psychic Vulnerability:**

When examining intergenerational relationships, psychic vulnerability is an important issue to focus on since it highlights the emotional intricacies and difficulties that people navigate in these connections. Characters face their fears and mental frailties in *Call Me by Your Name* and *Love's Not, Time's Fool*, shedding light on how relationships may both ease and worsen psychological traumas.

Richa's dependence on Abhilash exposes her psychic frailty in *Love's Not, Time's Fool*. She is seeking love since she feels so inadequate, which is made worse by her unhappy marriage to Malya. This reminds us of the writings of psychoanalyst Karen Horney, who asserts (Horney, *Our Inner Conflicts*) that people who feel inadequate may turn to partnerships for affirmation, which frequently results in unhealthy attachments. A desperate need for identity and self-worth is reflected in Richa's demand for validation from a younger partner, demonstrating how emotional deprivation can encourage a dependency on others for approval. Furthermore, Richa's relationship with Abhilash might be examined via the prism of John Bowlby's psychological attachment theory. According to his hypothesis, a person's ability to develop stable attachments as an adult is greatly influenced by the relationships they have throughout their early years (Bowlby, *Attachment and Loss*). Due to her damaged mental state—which is exacerbated by her relationship with Lee in the past and her current distance from Malya—Richa turns to Abhilash for solace. Abhilash's youth both alludes to the possibility of new love and serves as a reminder of her unrealized potential.

Elio's psychic susceptibility is similarly complex in *Call Me by Your Name*. His deep affection for Oliver sends him into a turbulent emotional maelstrom of want, longing, and loss of apprehension. According to Judith Butler's theoretical discoveries, relational dynamics shape our identities rather than their being fixed (Butler, *Bodies That Matter*). Elio is forced to face the ambiguity of his desires and the agonizing possibility of rejection because of his relationship with Oliver. This tension between vulnerability and desire serves as an example of how intergenerational love may lead to both emotional upheaval and self-discovery. Furthermore, Sigmund Freud's work "Mourning and Melancholia," which explores the idea of melancholia, sheds light on Elio's feelings after Oliver left. As per Freud's argument in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works*, melancholia can result from a profound sense of loss and give rise to an intense internal struggle that has a lasting impact on an individual's identity and emotional well-being. Elio's psychic struggle, in which he is grieving for a love he no longer has, highlights the significant influence of generational ties on identity formation and emotional well-being. Richa and Elio's vulnerability serves as a metaphor for the wider ramifications of entering into partnerships that defy social standards. In navigating the intricacies of desire, identity, and emotional reliance, both characters demonstrate how mental vulnerability may be a double-edged sword in a romantic relationship. Even though it puts people in danger of suffering and isolation, it also provides opportunities for development and self-awareness.

**Erotic Alienation:**

One major effect of the intergenerational relationships shown in both novels is erotic alienation. In *Love's Not, Time's Fool*, Richa becomes estranged from the outside world as a result of her compulsive search for sexual fulfillment via Abhilash. She becomes profoundly estranged from her husband and kid as a result of her obsession with gratifying her bodily cravings, which makes her unaware of the emotional loneliness she experiences. According to Jean-Paul Sartre's existentialist theory (Sartre, *Being, and Nothingness*), pursuing such activities without a deeper emotional



connection leads to alienation from both others and oneself. Richa eventually loses her sense of self and purpose as a result of her affair turning into a pointless activity. Abhilash too feels alienated in a different way. He is first lured to Richa by her wealth and the lifestyle she provides, but he quickly feels trapped in their relationship. His subsequent relationship with Nikki is an attempt to recover some measure of independence, but their exchanges are shallow. His relationship with Richa is transactional, which keeps him apart from true emotional bonds and reduces his experiences to meaningless physical interactions. Elio's erotic alienation takes on a more psychological form in *Call Me by Your Name*. He puts up an emotional wall between himself and his family because of his deep affection for Oliver. As he becomes consumed by his obsession with Oliver, he alienates himself from the people around him. Along with sorrow, their breakup causes him to deeply disintegrate as a person. Elio's identity crisis, which is made worse by family and society conventions, is reminiscent of the notion that self-estrangement might result from love (Sartre, Being and Nothingness). His story highlights the complex relationship that may develop between identity and desire, which frequently results in isolation when one's desires are not fully satisfied.

**Conclusion:**

*Call Me by Your Name* and *Love's Not, Time's Fool* both explore the complex dynamics of intergenerational adultery, highlighting the erotic alienation, psychic vulnerabilities, and psychosexual behaviors that result from such relationships. Both books shed light on the emotional consequences of abusive love by examining power dynamics, emotional reliance, and the pursuit of desire. The protagonists in these stories defy social expectations, but they also have to deal with the emotional fallout and estrangement that result from their acts.

**The Normalization of Intergenerational Relationships:**

The acceptance or normalization of intergenerational partnerships is frequently a reflection of changes in how society views human liberty, love, and desire. The concept of free will is central to modern discourse. According to philosopher Michel Foucault, the conversation about sexuality has changed, enabling people to redefine the boundaries of their relationships in ways that defy conventional expectations (Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*). This freedom from social pressures encourages a critical analysis of what makes for a healthy relationship, which in turn promotes a wider acceptance of varied partnerships, including ones in which there are notable age gaps. Writers such as Bell Hooks highlight that love, in all its manifestations, must not be restricted by conventional norms, but rather honored as an individual decision grounded in shared consent and fondness. Hooks contends that "love is a combination of care, commitment, knowledge, responsibility, respect, and trust" in her book *All About Love* (hooks, *All About Love*). With consent and respect, intergenerational relationships can be understood as legitimate manifestations of love.

### **Autonomy and Desire:**

The subject of autonomy is typically central to the investigation of desire in intergenerational partnerships. *Call Me by Your Name* and *Love's Not, Time's Fool* both show how the people negotiating their wishes do so with the agency, refuting the idea that these kinds of relationships are by nature exploitative. According to philosopher R.D. Laing's observation in *The Divided Self*, the search for love can lead to both freedom and imprisonment because the human experience is frequently wrought with internal conflicts (Laing, *The Divided Self*). This complexity is embodied by the protagonists in these books, who struggle with social expectations while making their needs and wants known. In addition, modern philosophers such as Judith Butler support the idea that people have the freedom to define their relationships according to their principles rather than those prescribed by society, acknowledging the fluidity of identity and desire (Butler, *Gender Trouble*). This

framework enables a more nuanced view of these links by framing intergenerational love as an expression of autonomy rather than as a departure from the norm.

### **The Ethics of Desire:**

It is also important to take into account the ethical aspects of intergenerational interactions, especially when talking about free choice. Philosophers like John Stuart Mill, who claim in *On Liberty* that "over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign," support the idea that every person has the autonomy to select their mate (Mill, *On Liberty*). This concept backs up the premise that having a consensual relationship is a question of human freedom and choice, regardless of age differences. Furthermore, literary scholars like Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick draw attention to how the lived experiences of those involved in these relationships can question social preconceptions regarding age and desire. Sedgwick highlights the significance of viewing sexual desire as a spectrum that cannot be limited to strict categories in her groundbreaking book *The Epistemology of the Closet*. This knowledge enables a wider acceptance of various relational dynamics (Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*).

### **Respecting Individual Choices in Relationships: E- ISSN:**

It is critical to promote respect for personal choice in conversations on intergenerational relationships. Love should be embraced in all of its manifestations rather than questioned, especially in partnerships that are consensual and do no harm to others. The richness of the human experience is found in our capacity to create profound, meaningful connections that are a reflection of our unique needs and circumstances, as philosopher Martha Nussbaum contends in *The Fragility of Goodness* (Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*). These relationships improve our quality of life and provide richness to the cultural fabric. Respecting the choices of others in their relationships fosters an environment of acceptance and understanding. Cultural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss posits that love is a fundamental force that binds individuals and communities, creating social cohesion rather than

fragmentation (Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*). Rather than corrupting culture, love has the potential to invigorate it, inspiring creativity, empathy, and understanding across generations. Moreover, discourses on relationship ethics in the modern days stress that love does not intrinsically undermine cultural values, even in cases where age inequalities exist. Conversely, it may spark more in-depth conversations on the definitions of love and partnership in a multicultural culture. Love, as bell hooks observes, forces us to accept openness and vulnerability, deepening our understanding of the human condition as a whole (hooks, *All About Love*). Therefore, rather than decrying intergenerational partnerships, we ought to honor them as manifestations of love that bolster cultural vitality and confirm that the ability to love is a universal human quality that cuts across age and social conventions.

All things considered, the entire research provides insightful reflections on the nuances of human connection, love, and desire, highlighting how relationships that defy social norms can both form and shatter identities. Even though Richa and Elio both pursue fulfillment in their relationships with either younger or older partners, their respective paths highlight the complex interactions between power, desire, and emotional connection as well as the depths of human desire and the frequently tragic results of pursuing love in its most extreme forms.

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