

# TYPES OF HEDONISM ON THE MAIN CHARACTER SIR WALTER ELLIOT IN THE NOVEL PERSUASION BY JANE AUSTEN

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## Abstract

*Hedonism is a view of life in philosophy that seeks to avoid pain and make pleasure as the main goal in life. People who embrace hedonism tend to over-pursue pleasure. The hedonism lifestyle is mostly carried out by 18th century people especially the nobles who live in high culture. They are as close to hedonism as they are in the Persuasion novel by Jane Austen. Sir Walter Elliot the main character is a nobleman who did a lot of hedonism. Hedonism which is seen as too glorifying personal pleasure to ignore others. The purpose of this study was to find out the types of hedonism done by Sir Walter Elliot in Persuasion. This research uses descriptive qualitative method because all data are in the form of sentences. The researcher uses a philosophical approach and analyzes data using Weijers' theory as the main theory. The results of this study found that Sir Walter Elliot performed two types of hedonism, namely aesthetic hedonism and selfish hedonism.*

**Keywords:** *Aesthetic, hedonism, selfish*

## INTRODUCTION

Until now, literature is still living victoriously in the era of globalization among all technology that encompasses us. Literature is still alive through writings on the internet and also in more modern forms such as films, and in the most classical forms such as written books. As long as the human occurrence is still there on earth, it is also valid that literature will always accompany and behold the steps of human evolution on earth all the time.

Speaking of literature, novels are one of the most widespread forms of literary work. The novel usually comprises the life story of a character and other figures that exist around him. Through novels, we can

grasp a glimpse of life in a different world from the world we breathe in now. Novels accommodate us to dive into that life. Of the many brilliant romance novel researchers of all time, such as Emily Bronte, Ernest Hemmingway, Stephanie Meyer, Nicholas Sparks, Danielle Steel, Virginia Woolf, and others. Jane Austen is one of the most famous researchers of romantic novels for women in history. Although initially, Jane Austen wrote under a pseudonym during her life, towards the end of her life many people already recognized her as a remarkable novel researcher as well as a noblewoman. Until now there are still countless fans of Austen's works throughout the world. They even created a special club for fans of Austen's

works and cherish them with several occasions they held. One of Jane Austen's fan clubs in North America arises with a website with the address [jasna.org](http://jasna.org) abbreviation for Jane Austen Society of North America. One lifestyle that is described in Jane Austen's novels is the lifestyle of hedonism which was close and sticks to noble class society and middle class during her time who liked to live in enormous mansions had a wide amount of lands and hold extravagant parties.

Hedonism is a lifestyle that places personal pleasure above all else. A hedonist makes all his life a place for the pursuit of pleasure. This personal pleasure is usually achieved with luxury and leaves aside important things that do not bring pleasure to him. This lifestyle cannot be belittled since it can lead people to the abyss of life and leaves people chasing tails. Some hedonism impacts which are quite familiar nowadays are online debt and corruption. Only to fulfill fancy satisfaction in life people are chased by online debt debt-collector and some are in jail due to corruption. Although hedonism aims to have the greatest pleasure in life, ironically Steve Taylor claims hedonism does not bring people happiness in his article published in [psychologytoday.com](http://psychologytoday.com). This fact is quite interesting to be learned more.

Although each of her novels has its own unique story that exists to entertain and color the literary world. Jane Austen's last novel published a year after her death, *Persuasion*, is best used to explain the

lifestyle of hedonism. *Persuasion* itself is number twenty in the list of 100 best British novels according to a BBC article published in 2015 by Jane Ciabattari. The novel was aired on television as the first telenovela in 1960 on the BBC miniseries and starred by Daphne Slater as Anne Elliot and Paul Daneman as Captain Wentworth. In 1971,

*Persuasion* was remade again for ITV miniseries played by Ann Firbank as Anne and Bryan Marshall as Captain Wentworth. Sony Pictures had also adapted *Persuasion* into a film made for television which was also released in theaters in the United States in 1995. It was played by Amanda Root as Anne and Ciaran Hinds as Captain Wentworth. In 2007, *Persuasion* returned to the cinema and screened in Bath in September 2006 for ITV1 with Sally Hawkins as Anne and Rupert Penry-Jones as Captain Wentworth.

Not only on television, but *Persuasion* is also adapted to the theater stage. In 2010, *Persuasion* first played by the Chicago Opera continued in 2011, in 2013 through 2015. In 2011 the Luscombe team produced and adapted the play of *Persuasion* by the Salisbury Playhouse (Repertory Theater). In 2019 this play went back on stage by the Genesis Theater. Again, Jon Jory replayed this adaptation on stage for his theater in the world-premiere at the onstage playhouse in Chula Vista, California. Jeff James was a director for another adaptation with James Yeatman and held at the Royal

Exchange Theatre in Manchester in May and June 2017. The last, the Jane Austen Society of North America's New York Metropolitan Region with assistance from the HB Playwright Foundation made an adaptation of *Persuasion* for theater.

*Persuasion* tells the story of unapproved love between Anne Elliot and Frederick Wentworth. Of all the characters, Anne's father, Sir Walter Elliot was the most powerful reflection of the attitude of a hedonist. This novel also described how the lifestyle of hedonism adopted by Sir Walter Elliot the main character as a nobleman. This hedonism lifestyle of Sir Walter Elliot blinded him and made it to the point of persuading his daughter Anne to cancel her engagement to a man he considered unworthy of their aristocratic family, namely Frederick Wentworth. The hedonism lifestyle of Sir Walter Elliot also made his family go bankrupt. Even though he already went bankrupt and had fallen into the abyss of debt Sir Walter Elliot remains reluctant to leave his hedonism lifestyle. It was the people around him who had to work hard to help Sir Walter Elliot's family's finances so that all his assets would not be lost in debt. They were finally forced to mortgage his large mansion to the brother-in-law of Frederick Wentworth, Admiral Croft.

The first previous research is taken from a research called '*An Analysis of Hedonism in Oscar Wilde's the Picture of Dorian Gray*' conducted by Lilis Karlia

(2018) from University of North Sumatra. The aims of this research is to discover what types of hedonism found in the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde through the main character Dorian Gray and what the impacts. In conducting the research, the researcher focused on the hedonism portrayed by Dorian Gray as the main character of the novel by using Weijers' theory. The methods used in this research were qualitative descriptive and psychology of literature. From this research, the researcher found three types of hedonism were captured in the novel including ethical, aesthetic and egoistical hedonism. The bad impact of the main character hedonism made him being lack of empathy, selfish and self-destruction person.

The second previous research is conducted by Dian Apriyanti (2014) entitled '*Hedonism Reflected in The Beautiful and Damned Novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald*' from Brawijaya University. The purpose of this research was to analyze the hedonism lifestyle in novel *The Beautiful and Damned* and also the impact. The researcher focused on finding out the hedonistic lifestyle done by Anthony Patch and Gloria Gilbert as the main characters of the novel. This research used hedonism theory as the main theory to scrutinize the problem and sociological approach. This research showed how hedonism caused the formation of two groups in society which are the insider and outsider. The results were seen hedonistic lifestyle

stick to the main character tightly and how hedonism broke down relationship, self-esteem and psychology of the main characters.

The last previous research is from an article written by Putu Dyah Permata Korry and Ni Wayan Suartini in 2019 with a title “*Hedonism and culture toward impact of shopping behavior: Case study in small medium enterprises in Bali*”. The research is aimed at finding out how the influence of hedonism behavior on Balinese culture and buying interest through Balinese culture. The data used in this study are primary data by distributing questionnaires to 100 MSME consumers in Bali. The data analysis technique used is path analysis (path analysis) with SmartPLS software version 3.0.m3. The results of the t-test in this study indicate that the hedonism behavior variable has a significant effect on Balinese cultural culture with t-statistic of  $0.809 > t\text{-table } 1.97$  and the value of p-values is  $0.000 > 0.05$ . The effect of hedonism behavior on buying interest is positive and significant with t statistic value of 1.037 t-value of table 1.97 and p-value of values of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . While the influence of Balinese cultural variables on buying interest is not significant it is so that true Balinese cultural variables as full mediating variables. The adjusted R-Square value for Balinese cultural variables only explained 74.2% of the hedonism behavior variable. The construct of buying interest is only explained at 69.7% of the Balinese cultural construct. The calculation results Q Square can be seen that the value of

0.798 is higher than 0 which means that the model has a good predictive value of relevance.

This research contains some differences and similarities with the previous research; Lilis Karlia (2018). The first similarities are the topic which is hedonism, the method used that is qualitative descriptive method and the theory used; it uses hedonism theory and the last is the object of the research; both use novels. The difference with the previous research is the data source of the research; it uses *The Picture of Dorian Gray* while this research is using *Persuasion* novel.

The second differences and similarities are from second previous research is conducted by Dian Apriliani (2014). The similarities are first is the topic; both discuss about hedonism, the second is method used; it is qualitative method, and the object; it is novel. The differences are first, the theory used; the previous research used hedonism theory and sociological approach, while this research is only using hedonism theory, and the second is the data source of the research; the previous research used *The Beautiful and Damned* novel yet this research uses *Persuasion* novel.

This research has a similarity with the third research which is about hedonism. Whereas, the differences found in both of the researches are first, the focus of the research: this research focus on finding out the types of hedonism on Sir Walter Elliot on the novel *Persuasion*, while the third previous research

focused on finding out how the influence of hedonism behavior on Balinese culture and buying interest through Balinese culture. The second difference is on the technique of collecting data. The previous research collected the data by distributing questionnaires, while this research uses documentation as a technique of collecting data. Adding to that, the scope of the previous research is to analyze the shopping behavior on 100 MSME consumers in Bali, while this research focus on analyzing the types of hedonism on Sir Walter Elliot on the novel *Persuasion* based on Weijers' theory.

The problem of this research is: what are the traits of hedonism reflected on Sir Walter Elliot as the main character of the novel *Persuasion*?. Thus, to answer the problem, this research aims to discover the hedonism lifestyle traits done by Sir Walter Elliot. The scope of this research is the researcher focuses on finding out the aesthetic hedonism and selfish hedonism done by Sir Walter Elliot in the novel *Persuasion* by referring to the hedonism theory according to Weijers. The researcher conducted this research so that it could give better understanding and knowledge to the students and the society about hedonism philosophy that becomes trend and taken by so many people as their way of life. People nowadays seems to be enjoying their life and are happy by being hedonists since they can push aside everything which can bring any pain to them. In this research, the readers can

see some attitudes and behaviors reflecting hedonism done by Sir Walter Elliot as the main character of the novel *Persuasion* which the readers might unconsciously have done in their life. In the future, this research hopefully would be able to be a reference for the students who want to conduct a research with the same topic that is hedonism or using the same data source, the novel *Persuasion*.

## METHODS

According to Creswell (2009:3) research design is a set of plans and procedures of study to specify methods of collecting data and analysis. Research design usually explains about what kind of certain way used to treat the data to attain the final result in form of conclusion of this result. This research uses qualitative research method to uncover the data since all the data collected in the form of words. Qualitative method is more proper for based on naturalism philosophy research such as literature research like this one. The researcher applies this method to gather all data found to investigate hedonism traits done by Sir Walter Elliot in the novel *Persuasion* by Jane Austen.

All the data to support this research primarily come from novel *Persuasion* by Jane Austen as the source of the data. *Persuasion* novel is written by Jane Austen, a British author. It was released in 1818 in London by John Murray Publisher.

The researcher uses documentation

as a technique of collecting data. According to Sugiyono (2008: 240) documentation is a way of collecting data by writing down and picturing to get certain information needed. The researcher writes down all data in form of words and sentences that show hedonism. The steps of analyzing the data are: 1). Classifying; the researcher classifies traits of aesthetic and selfish hedonism that can be found from the data source, which is the novel *Persuasion* that done by Sir Walter Elliot. 2). Analyzing; the researcher analyzes the data using Matthen's theory of aesthetic hedonism and Weijers' theory of selfish hedonism. 3). Drawing conclusion.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Aesthetic Hedonism

According to Matthen (2018), aesthetic hedonism is when we achieve happiness in life by the help of focusing on looking beautiful physically. Aesthetic hedonism is defined as a way to obtain happiness through beauty. People who embrace aesthetic hedonism will get happiness when she looks beautiful. Being beautiful is the main goal that will be achieved in any way. People who embrace aesthetic hedonism are usually less able to appreciate people who are not beautiful.

They consider people who are not beautiful cannot bring happiness when in fact beauty is very subjective. That is why adherents of aesthetic hedonism always make their appearance very important. They get

satisfaction from the compliment of their stunning physical appearance. When they get satisfaction from praise about the physical this is called aesthetic hedonism. Physical beauty to self-esteem is a hallmark of aesthetic hedonism as happened to Sir Walter Elliot. Sir Walter Elliot was too proud of his physique and looked down on those around him who were not as handsome as he was as in the following data:

*Vanity was the beginning and the end of Sir Walter Elliot's character; vanity of person and of situation. He had been remarkably handsome in his youth; and, at fifty-four, was still a very fine man. Few women could think more of their personal appearance than he did, nor could the valet of any new made lord be more delighted with the place he held in society. He considered the blessing of beauty as inferior only to the blessing of a baronetcy; and the Sir Walter Elliot, who united these gifts, was the constant object of his warmest respect and devotion. (Austen, 1818 p.4)*

In this first quote it is explained that Mr. Walter Elliot was a very handsome man when he was young. Even at the age of 54, he still looked handsome. Besides being handsome Sir Walter Elliot is also very concerned about his appearance. His concern for appearance even exceeds the concern of women. Even so Sir Walter Elliot considers his handsome gift to be lower than his gift as a nobleman.

A few years before, Anne Elliot had been a very pretty girl, but her bloom had vanished early; and as even in *its height, her father had found little to admire in her, (so totally different were her delicate features and mild dark eyes from his own), there could be nothing in them, now that she was faded and thin, to excite his esteem. He had never indulged much hope, he had now none, of ever reading her name in any other page of his favourite work.* (Austen, 1818 p.6)

Sir Walter Elliot has three daughters namely Elizabeth, Anne, and Mary. Of the three, Elizabeth is the prettiest daughter of Sir Walter Elliot. That is why Sir Walter Elliot is very fond of Elizabeth and tends to be selective with his other daughters. One of the victims was Anne. Sir Walter Elliot thought Anne was not beautiful, inversely proportional to himself and beautiful Elizabeth. That is why Sir Walter Elliot tends to ignore the existence of his second daughter, Anne Elliot. Even seeing Anne's name in the Baronetage book, he was reluctant.

*It was so with Elizabeth, still the same handsome Miss Elliot that she had begun to be thirteen years ago, and Sir Walter might be excused, therefore, in forgetting her age, or, at least, be deemed only half a fool, for thinking himself and Elizabeth as blooming as ever, amidst the wreck of the good looks of everybody else; for he could plainly see how old all the rest of his family and acquaintance were growing.* (Austen, 1818 p.7)

Sir Walter Elliot is very proud of the beauty of his daughter Elizabeth who is in harmony with her good looks. When people around them age and begin to show signs of aging. But Sir Walter Elliot lowered the people around him who were getting older without realizing he too was aging. His good looks face not like it used to be, as well as the beauty of Elizabeth's face that fades as she ages. Sir Walter Elliot's arrogance made him unknowingly forget Elizabeth's age that was old enough to get married. But Sir Walter Elliot still seems ignorant and is still proud of their beauty.

*'Then I take it for granted,' observed Sir Walter, 'that his face is about as orange as the cuffs and capes of my livery.'* (Austen, 1818 p.26)

In this quote, Sir Walter Elliot is seen insulting the face of another person who is a naval officer. Sir Walter Elliot said the man's face 'as orange as the cuffs and capes of my livery' to show how unflattering he was. This is a form of aesthetic hedonism in which a person is infatuated with beauty and tends not to be reluctant to insult others physically which is considered not aesthetic.

*Sir Walter, without hesitation, declared the Admiral to be the best-looking sailor he had ever met with, and went so far as to say, that if his own man might have had the arranging of his hair, he should not be ashamed of being seen with him anywhere; and the Admiral, with sympathetic cordiality,*

*observed to his wife as they drove back through the park, 'I thought we should soon come to a deal, my dear, in spite of what they told us at Taunton. The Baronet will never set the Thames on fire, but there seems to be no harm in him.' reciprocal compliments, which would have been esteemed about equal. (Austen, 1818 p.37-38)*

In the above quote, Sir Walter Elliot praised Admiral Croft as the most handsome sailor he had met when Admiral Croft visited Kellynch Hall to see Sir Walter Elliot's house that Croft wanted to rent. Instead of assessing the attitudes and actions of Admiral Croft, the first thing that Sir Walter Elliot realized was precisely the grace of Admiral Croft himself. Here it is very clear that Sir Walter Elliot judged someone physically.

From the quotations above it is clearly seen how Sir Walter Elliot is infatuated with the physical beauty that is characteristic of someone who possesses the philosophy of aesthetic hedonism. He devoted himself to physical beauty to demeaning others who were not born with physical beauty like himself. Even including her own children like Mary and Anne.

### **Selfish Hedonism**

According to Weijers (2012) hedonistic egoism is selfish hedonism. People who embrace hedonistic egoism tend to do anything to achieve satisfaction in life.

Achieved satisfaction can be either material or spiritual. People who embrace hedonistic egoism tend to ignore ethics just for the sake of pursuing what can make them happy. Although it is not clear the satisfaction value limit is pursued. People who embrace hedonistic egoism also tend not to care if the way they pursue satisfaction must sacrifice other innocent people around them. For example, a Hedonistic Egoist who did not feel saddened by theft would be morally required to steal, even from needy orphans (if he thought he could get away with it). Would-be defenders of Hedonistic Egoism often points out that performing acts of theft, murder, treachery and the like would not make them happier overall because of the guilt, the fear of being caught, and the chance of being caught and punished. The data bellows are some of the hedonistic egoism done by Sir Walter Elliot in Persuasion:

*Sir Walter Elliot, of Kellynch Hall, in Somersetshire, was a man who, for his own amusement, never took up any book but the Baronetage; there he found occupation for an idle hour, and consolation in a distressed one; there his faculties were roused into admiration and respect, by contemplating the limited remnant of the earliest patents; there any unwelcome sensations, arising from domestic affairs changed naturally into pity and contempt as he turned over the almost endless creations of the last century; and there, if every*



*other leaf were powerless, he could read his own history with an interest which never failed. This was the page at which the favourite volume always opened: (Austen, 1818 p.3)*

In the above quote, the story in the novel is opened by the scene of Sir Walter Elliot which is being opened by Baronetage. Sir Walter Elliot introduces as a nobleman who lives at Kellynch Hall in Somersetshire. In the quote above it also appears that Sir Walter Elliot is very proud of his peerage. Whenever he was bored, he would open a Baronetage and admire his own peerage. His favorite chapter on Barentage is of course the page that lists his own exit information, The Elliots. However, over time, more and more nobles are married to lower and middle class people. This person from the lower and middle classes finally joined the Baronetage. According to Sir walter, this phenomenon tarnished his peerage so it did not feel as special as before.

*Thirteen winters' revolving frosts had seen her opening every ball of credit which a scanty neighbourhood afforded, and thirteen springs shewn their blossoms, as she travelled up to London with her father, for a few weeks' annual enjoyment of the great world. (Austen, 1818 p.8)*

The quotation above shows one of the forms of hedonistic egoism carried out by Sir Walter elliot, namely traveling to London

with his daughter Elizabeth every winter. This winter traveling is one of the fancy things that Sir Walter Elliot does to get pleasure. But Elizabeth was only invited to travel because Sir Walter Elliot did not like to show off Anne who was not beautiful and began to age. Not only did she not invite Anne, Sir Walter Elliot even just bought a cheap winter gift for Anne each time she traveled.

*She had, while a very young girl, as soon as she had known him to be, in the event of her having no brother, the future baronet, meant to marry him, and her father had always meant that she should. He had not been known to them as a boy; but soon after Lady Elliot's death, Sir Walter had sought the acquaintance, and though his overtures had not been met with any warmth, he had persevered in seeking it, making allowance for the modest drawing-back of youth; and, in one of their spring excursions to London, when Elizabeth was in her first bloom, Mr Elliot had been forced into the introduction. (Austen, 1818 p.8-9)*

In the above quotation explained after the death of the late Lady Elliot, Sir Walter Elliot was increasingly unable to control himself. He was making allowance for the modest drawing-back of youth; and went for their spring excursions to London. In London Sir Walter Elliot forced Elizabeth to get acquainted with her cousin, William Elliot. At that time Elizabeth was just

blooming and very beautiful. That was solely so that Elizabeth could marry her own cousin who was a fellow nobleman. So that the wealth of the Elliot family inherited from Sir Walter Elliot can be passed back to Elizabeth and William Elliot. This also in order to avoid the pain of having to give the legacy of Sir Walter Elliot to others.

*Sir Walter has resented it. As the head of the house, he felt that he ought to have been consulted, especially after taking the young man so publicly by the hand; 'For they must have been seen together,' he observed, 'once at Tattersall's, and twice in the lobby of the House of Commons.'*

*His disapprobation was expressed, but apparently very little regarded. Mr Elliot had attempted no apology, and shewn himself as unsolicitous of being longer noticed by the family, as Sir Walter considered him unworthy of it: all acquaintance between them had ceased. (Austen, 1818 p.9)*

In this quote it is explained that William Elliot refused an arranged marriage to Elizabeth and chose to marry someone else. That made Sir Walter, who had hoped to marry Elizabeth with William, become angry. Sir Walter Elliot did not care then ignored William's presence in Elliot's extended family because his wishes were not fulfilled and Sir Walter Elliot did not get satisfaction.

*But now, another occupation and solicitude of mind was beginning to be added to these. Her father was growing distressed for money. She knew, that when he now took up the Baronetage, it was to drive the heavy bills of his tradespeople, and the unwelcome hints of Mr Shepherd, his agent, from his thoughts. The Kellynch property was good, but not equal to Sir Walter's apprehension of the state required in its possessor. While Lady Elliot lived, there had been method, moderation, and economy, which had just kept him within his income; but with her had died all such right indedness, and from that period he had been constantly exceeding it. It had not been possible for him to spend less; he had done nothing but what Sir Walter Elliot was imperiously called on to do; but blameless as he was, he was not only growing dreadfully in debt, but was hearing of it so often, that it became vain to attempt concealing it longer, even partially, from his daughter. He had given her some hints of it the last spring in town; he had gone so far even as to say, 'Can we retrench? Does it occur to you that there is any one article in which we can retrench?' and Elizabeth, to do her justice, had, in the first ardour of female alarm, set seriously to think what could be done, and had finally proposed these two branches of economy, to cut off some unnecessary charities, and to refrain from new furnishing the drawing-room; to which expedients*

*she afterwards added the happy thought of their taking no present down to Anne, as had been the usual yearly custom. But these measures, however good in themselves, were insufficient for the real extent of the evil, the whole of which Sir Walter found himself obliged to confess to her soon afterwards. Elizabeth had nothing to propose of deeper efficacy. She felt herself ill-used and unfortunate, as did her father; and they were neither of them able to devise any means of lessening their expenses without compromising their dignity, or relinquishing their comforts in a way not to be borne. (Austen, 1818 p.10-11)*

In the quote above mentioned the economic situation of Sir Walter Elliot. In the midst of stress about the financial crisis Sir Walter Elliot always chose to reopen Baronetage. Mr. Sheperd, his agent, has repeatedly warned Sir Walter Elliot about his financial situation. But Sir Walter Elliot still does not care. He continues to live a lavish lifestyle no matter if the pleasure he can sacrifice is something else. It was other people who actually worked hard while trying to maintain the economy of Sir Walter Elliot so as not to go bankrupt. While Sir Walter Elliot does not want to stop his luxurious lifestyle. He was afraid to look as luxurious as a wealthy nobleman. This makes Mr. Sheperd, Lady Russell and Anne were overwhelmed. Because Sir Walter Elliot is not actively working. On the other hand he

diligently spends money to buy luxury goods and travel out of town. Sir Walter Elliot was reluctant to stop the hedonistic egoism lifestyle that he did. Because it reduces his self-esteem, status and inner satisfaction.

*There was only a small part of his estate that Sir Walter could dispose of; but had every acre been alienable, it would have made no difference. He had condescended to mortgage as far as he had the power, but he would never condescend to sell. No; he would never disgrace his name so far. The Kellynch estate should be transmitted whole and entire, as he had received it. (Austen, 1818 p.12)*

In the above quotation, it is explained how Sir Walter Elliot leased his house to cover debts. Initially he was hesitant to rent out his house on the idea of Mr. Shepherd. But until whenever he would never sell his house. Because it is tarnished by his good name. Sir Walter Elliot is determined for the sake of pride he will again pass down what has been passed down to him.

*Their two confidential friends, Mr Shepherd, who lived in the neighbouring market town, and Lady Russell, were called to advise them; and both father and daughter seemed to expect that something should be struck out by one or the other to remove their embarrassments and reduce their expenditure, without involving the loss of any indulgence of taste or pride. (Austen, 1818 p.12)*

In the above quotation, at the end, it is clearly stated that Mr. Walter Elliot and his daughter Elizabeth have understood they are almost bankrupt. This is because their expenses are greater than their money, but they cannot do much. Sir Walter never expected anyone else, namely Lady Russell and Mr. Shepherd to overcome their financial problems. Sir Walter Elliot hopes that his financial problems are resolved without having to lose pleasure or pride. The egoism of the hedonistic nature made Sir Walter Elliot still want to look luxurious no matter the financial condition. Being frugal makes Sir Walter Elliot not get the satisfaction he gets from his luxurious lifestyle.

*'In acknowledging his judgment to be fully on that side. It didn't seem to him that Sir Walter could materially change his lifestyle in a house that had the character of old-fashioned hospitality and dignity to be supported. In any other place Sir Walter might judge for himself; and will be respected, such as regulating the way of life in whatever way he chooses to be his household model. (Austen, 1818 p.16)*

In the above quotation, how Mr. Walter Elliot attaches great importance to his lifestyle in a home. Not only having a modest house, but the house that is able to show high self-esteem. Mr. Walter considers that wherever they are people will judge it from the house he has.

*Two material benefits from Bath over London have of course been given all the weight: a more comfortable distance from Kellynch, only fifty miles, and Lady Russell spends part of every winter there; and to the great satisfaction of Lady Russell, whose first view of the projected change was for Bath, Sir Walter and Elizabeth were encouraged to believe that they could not lose the consequences or the pleasure of settling there. (Austen, 1818 p.16)*

From the quote above it is said that finally Sir Walter Elliot chose to rent his house to someone else. Instead, Sir Walter Elliot moved to Bath over London. The reason Bath was chosen as a destination city was because Bath was close to Kellynch. In addition, more important is Sir Walter Elliot believes he will not lose satisfaction in life by moving to Bath.

*It was too much to wish Sir Walter to go down to a small house in his own neighborhood. Anne herself would find more torture than she had predicted, and according to Sir Walter's feelings, it must be terrible. (Austen, 1818 p.17)*

In the quote above it is mentioned that Sir Walter Elliot will feel very tortured if he has to rent a big and luxurious house and then move to a smaller house. Although it was done in order to save finances that are almost bankrupt. It was terrible because it was not in accordance with the philosophy of

life of Sir Walter Elliot who got satisfaction from the luxury of his life.

*Sir Walter could not have degraded because he was known to be planning to let his house. Shepherd once mentioned the word 'advertise', but never dared to approach him again. Sir Walter rejected the idea in any way; get rid of the slightest hint that he has such intentions; and only on the assumption that he was spontaneously requested by some of the most unacceptable applicants, on his own terms, and as a big help, he would leave it at all. (Austen, 1818 p.18)*

In that quote Mr. Shepherd financial advisor of Sir Walter Elliot tried to offer a solution to the financial problems of Sir Walter Elliot by renting his house. For the sake of renting out the house they should advertise the announcement of the house of Sir Elliot for rent, but of course Sir Walter Elliot refused because it was tantamount to lowering his pride.

*Sir Walter only nodded. But soon afterwards, rising and pacing the room, he observed sarcastically— 'There are few among the gentlemen of the navy, I imagine, who would not be surprised to find themselves in a house of this description.' (Austen, 1818 p.21)*

In the quote above, Sir Walter Elliot said how surprised Navy would be to rent his mansion when he saw how luxurious the mansion was. Implicitly, he also admired his

luxurious tastes reflected in his home. His house along with luxury furniture is one of the things that bring satisfaction to fulfill the hedonistic egoism of Sir Walter Elliot.

*The house and grounds, and furniture, were approved, the Crofts were approved, terms, time, everything, and everybody was right; and Mr Shepherd's clerks were set to work, without there having been a single preliminary difference to modify of all that 'This indenture sheweth.' (Austen, 1818 p.37)*

The quote above shows one form of Sir Walter Elliot's hedonism, which is luxury items that he bought with debt. For the sake of having luxury furniture that is able to meet self-satisfaction, Sir Walter Elliot is willing to be in debt to buy luxury furniture. So before renting out his house to Admiral Croft, Sir Walter Elliot made sure that his furniture would be fine while he moved while out of town.

From all the data obtained from the excerpts of the *Persuasion* novel, it is clear that Mr. Walter Elliot is getting satisfaction from his noble lavish life. No matter this satisfaction contradicts others and harms others. When he goes bankrupt, he still has his pride and ego to not be looked down by the others. Even to the end, he still maintains to look luxurious in order to avoid pain without luxury.

## CONCLUSION

Throughout the novel there are two types of hedonism performed by Sir Walter

Elliot namely: 1) egoistic hedonism, such as being proud of his peerage, doing fancy things to get pleasure, buying luxury items even though it puts him in debt, wanting to look luxurious no matter how his financial situation is and 2) aesthetic hedonism, such as assessing the physical beauty first instead of attitudes and actions, insulting others physically which is considered not aesthetic, putting high concern on the appearance.

It shows that Sir Walter Elliot is infatuated about his good looks and the beauty of his daughter, Elizabeth. This made her look down on her other daughters, Anne and Mary, who were considered not beautiful. It also can be seen that Sir Walter Elliot who admires his own peerage. He also felt sorry for himself because more and more nobles were married to commoners and were seen as tarnishing the lineage of the nobles. That is why when Anne was engaged to Frederick Wentworth who was not from nobility or the rich. Sir Walter Elliot who is not pleased with this engagement does not want to show his dislike directly. Instead, he appointed Lady Russell, a friend of his late wife, to persuade Anne to cancel his engagement. Anne finally complied. But then Frederick returned as rich Wentworth captain. Sophia Croft, Frederick Wentworth's older sister hired the Sir Walter Elliot family mansion that was rented because she fell into debt. When Anne finally returned with Frederick, Sir Walter Elliot did not refuse again because Frederick was

already rich. This shows that Sir Walter Elliot attach great importance to the status of nobility, luxurious lifestyle and beauty until he looks down on others around him.

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