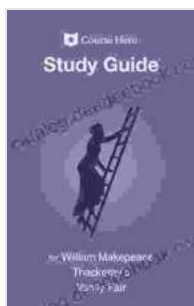


# Study Guide for William Makepeace Thackeray's Vanity Fair: An In-Depth Analysis

William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* is a sprawling epic that satirizes English society in the early 19th century. The novel follows the lives of two young women, Becky Sharp and Amelia Sedley, as they navigate the treacherous waters of society and marriage. Along the way, they encounter a cast of unforgettable characters who embody the novel's themes of hypocrisy, greed, and social climbing.

This comprehensive study guide provides an in-depth analysis of *Vanity Fair*, including:



## Study Guide for William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (Course Hero Study Guides) by Course Hero

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English

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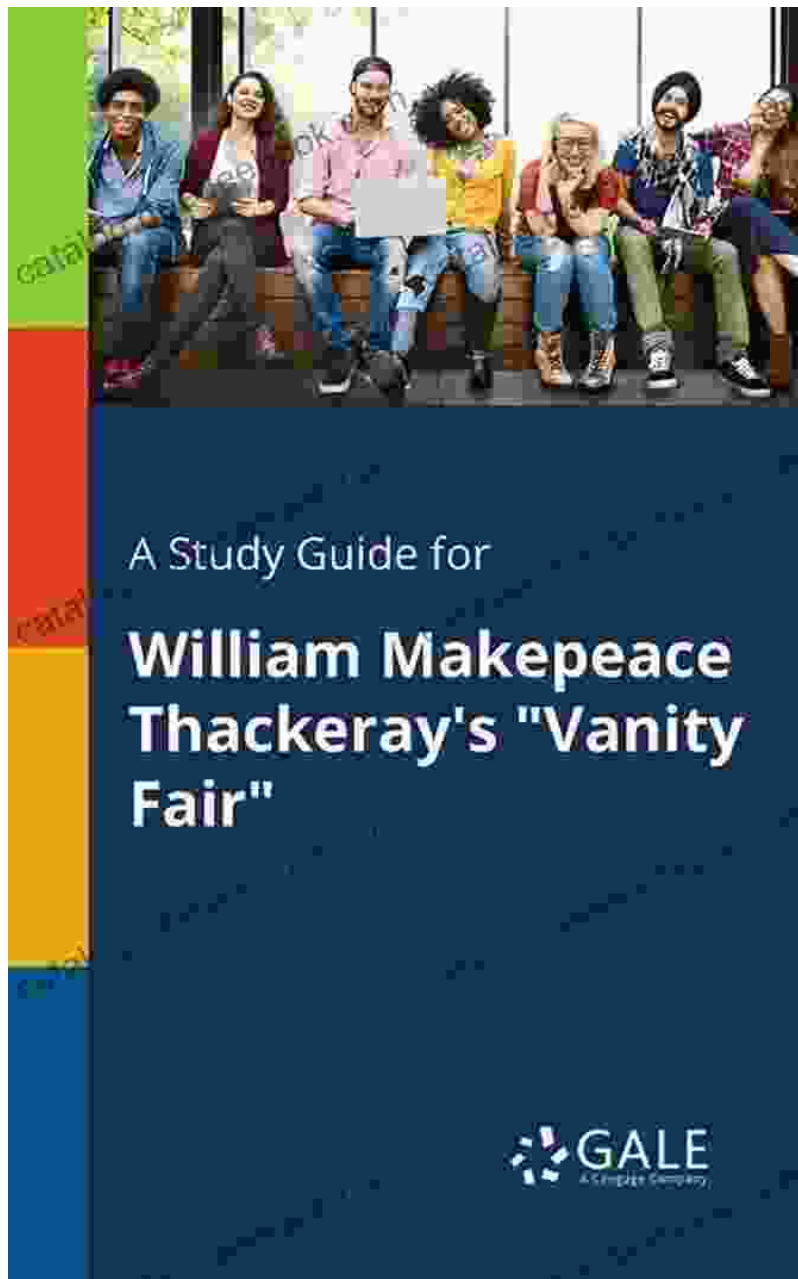


- Detailed summaries of each chapter
- In-depth character profiles
- Analysis of the novel's themes and literary devices
- Expert insights and commentary

Whether you're a student studying *Vanity Fair* for the first time or a seasoned reader looking to enhance your understanding of the novel, this study guide is an essential resource.

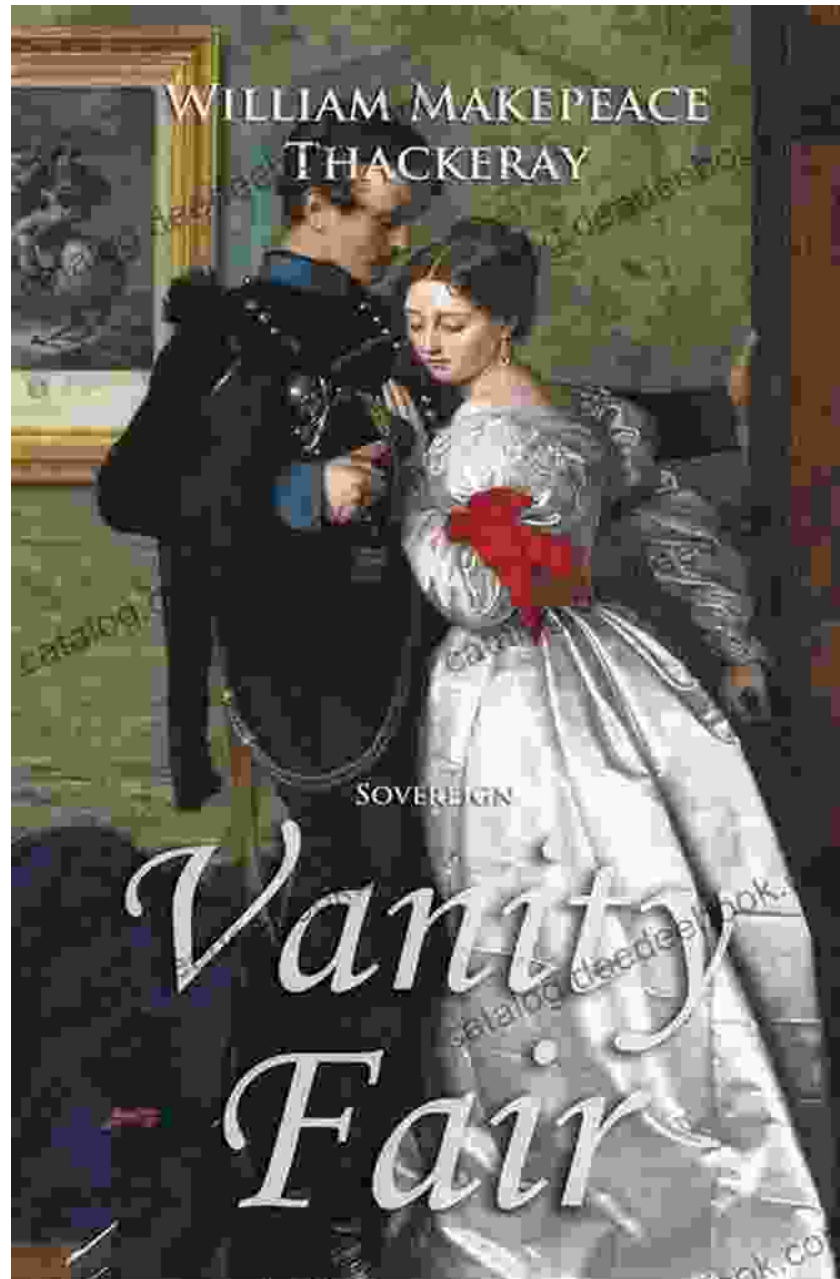
## **Characters**

*Vanity Fair* features a cast of unforgettable characters who represent a wide range of social types. From the ambitious and ruthless Becky Sharp to the naive and innocent Amelia Sedley, each character plays a vital role in the novel's exploration of human nature.



## Rebecca Sharp

Becky Sharp is a young woman of humble origins who is determined to rise to the top of society. She is intelligent, cunning, and ambitious, but she is also ruthless and manipulative. Becky is a master of disguise and deception, and she uses her charms to get what she wants from men.



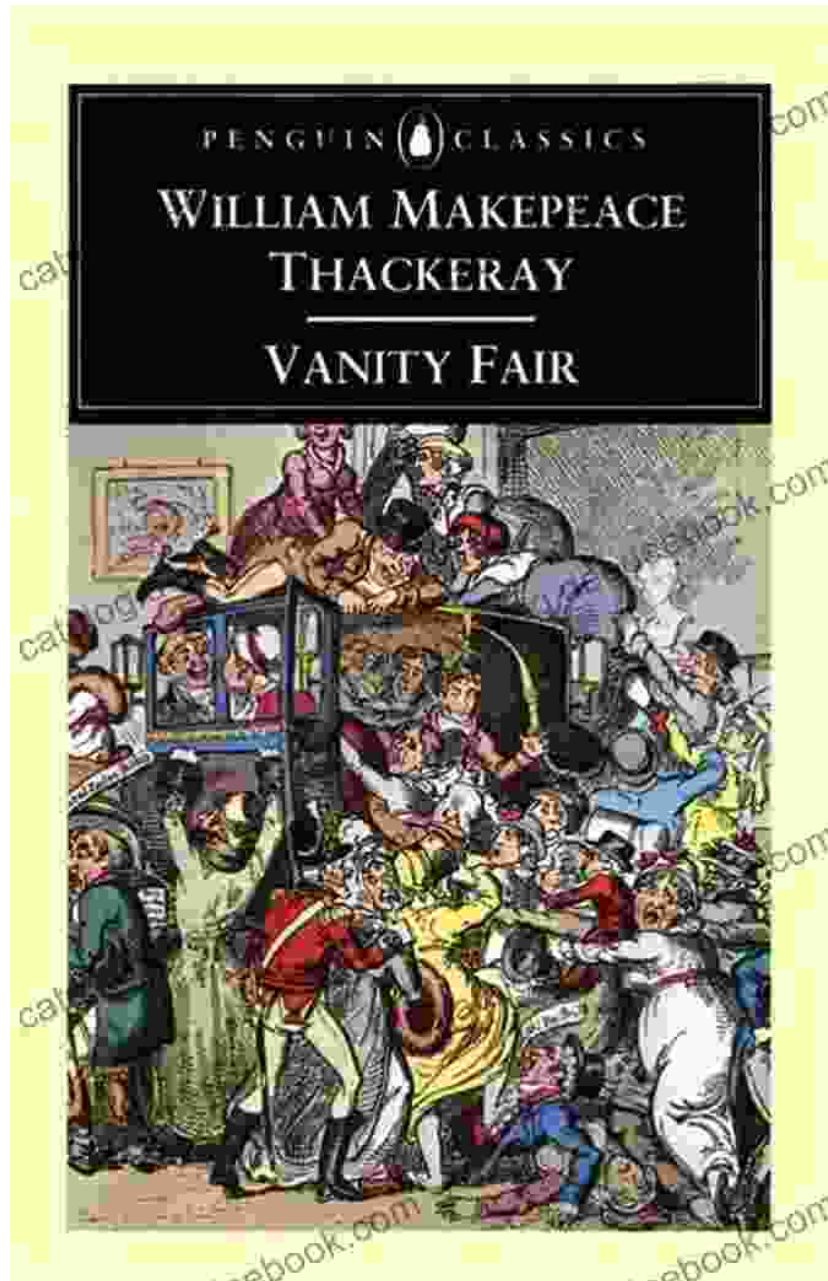
## **Amelia Sedley**

Amelia Sedley is a young woman of good family who is kind, gentle, and naive. She is the antithesis of Becky Sharp, and she represents the traditional values of Victorian society. Amelia is hopelessly in love with George Osborne, but he is not worthy of her affection. She eventually marries William Dobbin, a kind and loyal man.



## **George Osborne**

George Osborne is a young man of good family who is handsome, charming, and selfish. He is engaged to Amelia Sedley, but he is not faithful to her. He eventually dies in battle, leaving Amelia heartbroken.



## **William Dobbin**

William Dobbin is a kind, loyal, and honorable man. He is in love with Amelia Sedley, but he knows that she does not love him. He eventually marries Jane Osborne, George Osborne's sister.

## **Themes**

Vanity Fair explores a wide range of themes, including:

- The dangers of social climbing
- The hypocrisy of society
- The importance of love and family
- The destructive power of greed

Thackeray uses satire to expose the flaws of English society in the early 19th century. He shows how people are willing to sacrifice their morals and values in order to climb the social ladder. He also shows how hypocrisy is rampant in society, and how people are often quick to judge others while ignoring their own shortcomings.

Despite the novel's satirical tone, Thackeray also shows the importance of love and family. Amelia Sedley is a character who embodies the traditional values of Victorian society. She is kind, gentle, and loving, and she is always there for her friends and family. Thackeray shows that even in the most corrupt society, there is still room for love and compassion.

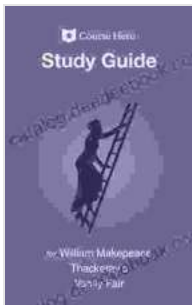
## **Literary Devices**

Thackeray uses a variety of literary devices in Vanity Fair, including:

- Irony
- Symbolism
- Foreshadowing
- Satire

Thackeray uses irony to create humor and to highlight the hypocrisy of society. For example, the novel is set in a society that values wealth and social status, but the main characters are all either poor or of humble origins. Thackeray also uses symbolism to represent the novel's themes. For example, the title of the novel refers to the Vanity Fair in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which is a symbol of the temptations of the world.

Thackeray also uses foreshadowing to hint at future events. For example, the novel begins with a description of Becky Sharp's funeral, which foreshadows her death at the end of the novel. Thackeray also uses satire to expose the flaws of English society in the early 19th century. He shows how people are willing to sacrifice



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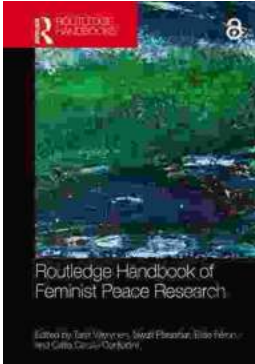
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