

Arrowsmith Study Guide

Arrowsmith by Sinclair Lewis

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Plot Summary

Arrowsmith by Sinclair Lewis is the story of Martin Arrowsmith, a young Midwestern boy who dreams of being a medical researcher. Martin's life and career are tested by affronts to his authenticity and view of perfect medicine. Martin's isolationist tendencies allow him few friends and very one-sided romantic attachments. Throughout his career Martin finds success but cannot allow himself to cross over from pure research to commercial medicine and ultimately gives up his job, wife and son in favor of research in a cabin in Vermont.

Martin Arrowsmith, born and raised in Elk Mills, Winnemac, discovers a love for medicine and research early in life while spending time in the office of the town's doctor, Doc Vickerson. Martin attends college and medical school at the University of Winnemac where he meets his mentor and life-long inspiration, Professor Max Gottlieb. During this time Martin also becomes a suitor to two young women, Madeline Fox and Leora Tozer. Martin marries Leora who is not quite as educated or sophisticated as Madeline but who loves Martin unconditionally and promises to support Martin's life goals.

Martin does his medical internship at a hospital in Zenith where he has his first encounters with the human side of medicine. From there, Martin and Leora move to Wheatsylvania, North Dakota, Leora's hometown, where Martin establishes a small medical practice. Unable to tolerate the small town life, the couple then moves to Nautilus, Iowa, where Martin takes a job as Assistant Director of Health for the city. Martin is tested by his boss, Dr. Almus Pickerbaugh, who is more of a carnival barker than a medical man.

Eventually Martin jumps at the chance to accept a position at the prestigious Rouncefield Clinic in Chicago and he and Leora make another move. One of Martin's colleagues, Angus Duer, is a surgeon at the clinic and tries to acclimate Martin to the lifestyle of an upwardly mobile physician but Martin's heart still lies with research, not with the financial gain which drives his colleagues at the clinic. Martin contacts Dr. Gottlieb who offers Martin a research position at the renowned McGurk Institute and Martin and Leora move to New York City.

Martin's work produces a huge breakthrough in isolating a bacteriophage that will kill the plague and pneumonia. Martin, along with Leora and a new colleague, Gustaf Sondelius, travel to the island of St. Hubert's in the Caribbean to test Martin's new phage. While on the island, Leora dies from the plague and Martin meets a wealthy widower, Joyce Lanyon, whom he marries after his return to New York. Martin and Joyce have a son they name John and Martin continues his scientific research in New York although he spends time with Terry Wickett, a former colleague from the McGurk Institute, who has set up a laboratory in the woods of Vermont.

Martin cannot adapt to Joyce's wealthy lifestyle and demands on Martin's time, so Martin leaves Joyce and John to move to Vermont where he will do his coveted research without the pressures from any other outside sources.



Chapters 1, 2 and 3

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 Summary

Arrowsmith by Sinclair Lewis is the story of Martin Arrowsmith, a young Midwestern boy who dreams of being a medical researcher. Martin's life and career are tested by affronts to his authenticity and view of perfect medicine. Martin's isolationist tendencies allow him few friends and very one-sided romantic attachments. Throughout his career Martin finds success but cannot allow himself to cross over from pure research to commercial medicine and ultimately gives up his job, wife and son in favor of research in a cabin in Vermont.

The story begins with a very short passage about a young woman driving a wagon through the Ohio wilderness. Having just buried her mother and caring for her sick father, the girl will not stop on her way west to find a better life. This girl is identified as Martin Arrowsmith's great grandmother.

In 1897 Martin Arrowsmith is a studious fourteen-year-old boy in Elk Mills, Winnemac, pouring over Gray's Anatomy in the office of the town doctor, Doc Vickerson. Martin spends most of his free time in Doc Vickerson's office and even helps with some of the minor medical work. Even though Doc Vickerson's office is cluttered and dirty, Martin dotes on the old man and discovers that he wants to be a doctor when he grows up. Before Martin leaves for college, Doc Vickerson gives Martin a gift of a prized magnifying glass

By the time Martin is a junior at the University of Winnemac in the city of Mohalis in 1904, he has forgotten Doc Vickerson and his boyhood in Elk Mills. Martin prepares for medical school and during a get-together at the home of a favorite professor, hears about a man who will become his new idol and mentor, Professor Max Gottlieb. Gottlieb is a German Jew known for his scientific research in the field of immunology and for being a recluse on campus.

As soon as Martin enters medical school he seeks out Professor Gottlieb to get permission to take Gottlieb's bacteriology class, but Gottlieb tells Martin that Martin is too young yet and to try another time. Martin wonders if Gottlieb can be as smart as everyone says because Gottlieb does not recognize Martin's brilliance

Martin joins the Digamma Pi medical fraternity and lives in their boarding house with other medical students including the Reverend Ira Hinkley, Angus Duer, Clif Clawson, Fatty Pfaff and Irving Watters. Ira Hinkley is the oldest of the group and determined to become a doctor to serve as a doctor and missionary in foreign countries. Angus Duer is a driven, smug young man destined to be a surgeon one day while Fatty Pfaff is the exact opposite, who would not pass exams without the extreme measures of his fraternity pals. Clif Clawson is one of Martin's roommates and becomes Martin's best



friend through medical school. Irving Watters also rooms with Martin and Martin finds him amiably dull.

The young men attend classes together and spend most of their free time in discussions about their plans for their careers. Martin is at cross purposes with most of them whose goals are to make as much money as possible while Martin hopes to enter medicine with the purest intent of research discoveries not financial gain.

Martin's tight circle of friends is disrupted when he meets a young woman named Madeleine Fox who is taking doctoral classes in literature at the university. Martin finds Madeleine to be high-spirited, intelligent and athletic, and although Madeleine comes from a wealthy background, Martin slowly pursues Madeleine and falls in love with her.

After final exams Martin takes a summer job installing telephone wire in Montana and thoroughly enjoys the work because it is honest, he can be outside in nature, and his co-workers are authentic men with absolutely no pretenses.

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 Analysis

The author uses the opening imagery about Martin's great grandmother to indicate the persistent, driven characteristics that have extended to Martin himself. This theme of persistence will be a major force in Martin's life and by showing just a glimpse of his heritage it is easy to see that Martin gets this quality quite honestly.

The reader also gets an introduction into Lewis' figurative writing style in this section. For example, when Lewis writes about Fatty Pfaff's intensive study sessions, "He was so filled with facts that the slightest jostling would have spilled them," Chapter 3, p. 27. Obviously a person cannot emit facts from his body but the author wants the reader to understand the extent to which Fatty has been crammed full with medical terms to pass his exams. Another example is when the fraternity brothers send Fatty off to take his exams. "They watched him go: a balloon on legs, a sausage in corduroy trousers," Chapter 3, p. 28. This is a more figurative description of Fatty's size than merely saying Fatty is overweight.

Lewis also provides symbolism in the gift of Doc Vickerson's magnifying glass to Martin. The doctor wants Martin to not just live his life as a physician but to really examine his work and the impact it will have on the lives of others, traits which Martin will fully embody.



Chapters 4, 5 and 6

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 Summary

Professor Gottlieb finds Martin to be the only student of any real medical research talent in his class as the new year begins. Most of the students are just as skeptical of Gottlieb too and feel that the professor is unimaginative while Martin secretly dreams of being just like Professor Gottlieb.

Martin revels in his bacteriology studies and even begins to work late in the lab just like Professor Gottlieb who acknowledges Martin's aptitude for scientific work. Martin joins Professor Gottlieb in his lab one night at midnight and Martin is enthralled by Gottlieb's stories of working and living in Europe. Professor Gottlieb also tells Martin that Martin will be a better scientist than doctor and Martin leaves this nocturnal meeting energized for his future.

Martin eschews his classmates in favor of working in the lab and becomes a nuisance in classes when taking on a personality and tone similar to Professor Gottlieb's. Even Martin's best friend, Clif, is weary of Martin's newfound attitude so Martin turns to Madeline for comfort. Martin's romantic overtures are thwarted by Madeline's mother who seems to always be present whenever Martin calls on Madeline. Before long, in spite of Clif's objections to the match, Martin feels that he wants to marry Madeleine because she is bright and high-spirited and would be the perfect spouse for a future doctor.

Madeline accepts Martin's marriage proposal and even garners the approval of Madeline's mother. Martin's attempts to satisfy the demanding Madeleine as well as keep up his studies have Martin in a constant state of anxiety. Madeleine is not at all pleased with Martin's plans to work as a waiter at a Canadian hotel with Clif during summer break. Martin and Madeline break up twice and he leaves for Canada without seeing Madeline. Martin's only real glimmer of hope is his appointment as undergraduate assistant by Professor Gottlieb for the next school year.

Madeline and Martin become engaged again in letters during the summer and enthusiastically reunite at summer's end although Madeline quickly resumes her nagging ways.

Martin's junior year is filled with intensive research and the coveted guidance of Professor Gottlieb. One day Professor Gottlieb sends Martin to a hospital in Zenith to obtain a meningococcus strain for testing in the lab and Martin meets a feisty nursing student named Leora Tozer from Wheatsylvania, North Dakota. Martin and Leora begin dating immediately and Martin is taken with Leora's lack of pretense, completely the opposite of Madeline's arranged life and interactions. Within a couple weeks Martin proposes marriage to Leora and finds himself engaged to two girls at the same time.



In order to solve his dilemma, Martin invites both Madeline and Leora to lunch under the pretense of meeting whom each girl believes to be an old male friend of Martin's. Lunch proceeds cautiously but when Martin announces that he is engaged to both girls, Madeline storms out of the restaurant leaving Leora who declares her undying commitment to Martin.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 Analysis

This section establishes Martin's personality as closely aligned with Professor Gottlieb's as a scientist and theorist unskilled in human interactions. Martin's inability to manage his romantic life validates his inexperience and immaturity with almost any dynamic outside the laboratory. The conflict with Madeline, who wants all the trappings of what she perceives a doctor's life to be, is the first Martin will encounter in his lifelong struggle of science versus commercialism. Martin is also conflicted by his physical urges and how they must be kept in check appropriately, especially in Madeline's company, and these serve as another symbol of Martin's inability to manage life outside the sterile environment of the laboratory.



Chapters 7, 8 and 9

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 Summary

Martin takes Leora to a dance given by Digamma Pi and at first is angered that none of his friends ask to dance with Leora but after Fatty Pfaff dances with her, Leora dances the night away with several boys which also angers the jealous Martin. Leora is able to calm Martin by declaring her undying love for him as they dance.

The next day Angus Duer invites Martin to a play and asks that Martin bring Leora and a friend of Leora's, Nelly Byers. Leora and Nelly must return to their dorm at the hospital by eleven o'clock, a fact which does not faze Leora who decides to remain outside with Martin and Angus while Nelly obediently returns to her room. Angus flirts overtly with Leora who rebuffs his overtures and eventually Martin and Angus lift Leora up so that she may crawl through a window of the dormitory and evade the night watchman.

Martin impulsively follows Leora into the building the same way despite the chances of getting caught. Leora acknowledges that Martin is jealous of Angus' flirting with Leora and Leora once more reassures Martin of her affections for him. Martin jumps out of the dorm window, spots Angus sleeping on the ground and the two young men run back to the fraternity house barely escaping an altercation with the hospital night watchman.

Martin's work for Professor Gottlieb continues but Martin also develops a friendly relationship with Professor Silva, the dean of the medical faculty. Professor Silva reminds Martin of old Doc Vickerson for his sympathetic healing and approachable manner. In contrast, Martin detests Dr. Roscoe Geake, professor of otolaryngology, who fortunately for Martin, is leaving the university to take a position with the New Idea Medical Instrument Furnishing Company. As a final insult to Martin's sensibilities as a budding scientist, Geake delivers a final address entitled, "The Art and Science of Furnishing the Doctor's Office."

Martin suffers academically and emotionally when Leora returns to Wheatsylvania to care for her ill mother. During Christmas vacation Martin spends his time working in the lab and drinking with Clif who has also remained on campus during the holidays.

In January the college celebrates Founder's Day, an annual event marked by banquets, speeches and a noticeable lack of alcohol. When the school's guest of honor, Dr. Benoni Carr, arrives drunk, the banquet ends early. It is later discovered that Clif had met Dr. Carr one day in Zenith and had misrepresented Dr. Carr's accomplishments to Dean Silva. Clif leaves medical school before an official expulsion which leaves Martin alone without his best friend or his girlfriend.

By February Clif has secured a job as a car salesman and picks up Martin one day for a ride into Zenith where Clif buys lunch for them at a notable hotel, the Grand. Martin cannot help but notice Clif's overt salesman-like personality and his happier demeanor.



Martin's life becomes even gloomier when he receives a letter from Leora telling him that she cannot return to Zenith. Martin's anger and loneliness exhibits itself in more drinking and he even behaves inappropriately toward Professor Gottlieb in class one day. Dean Silva urges Martin to apologize but Martin will not relent and is suspended from medical school until Martin can come to his senses.

Martin borrows one hundred dollars from Clif in order to travel for awhile to take a much-needed break. Martin takes part-time jobs and ultimately decides that he must return to medical school. On the return trip, Martin stops in Wheatsylvania to see Leora and the two elope, much to the disappointment of Leora's family. Leora's father declares that Leora must remain at home until Martin has finished medical school and Martin returns to the university without his bride.

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 Analysis

In this section, Lewis continues to point out the lure of transitioning from science to commercialism. Dr. Roscoe Geake is leaving the academic world to take a job with a company which makes furniture and accessories for physician offices. In his farewell speech, Dr. Geake makes parting comments about the art and science of furnishing a doctor's office. Martin is outraged by Dr. Geake's choices and his apparent shallow view on what a physician's practice should be based. Martin is also disillusioned when Clif leaves school after inappropriate behavior and secures a job selling cars and immediately adapts to the income and the characteristics normally associated with a sales mentality.



Chapters 10, 11 and 12

Chapters 10, 11 and 12 Summary

When Martin returns to school he apologizes to Dean Silva and Martin finds a new appreciation for the man who reminds him of old Doc Vickerson. Martin weeps when Dean Silva proclaims that the school is glad see Martin's return and that Dean Silva will help Martin secure his internship in Zenith so that Leora may join Martin there.

Leora is dropped from the nursing school in Zenith because of her extended absence so she buys a book on stenography in order to study another career during her time in Wheatsylvania. Martin can no longer bear being apart from Leora and he saves money to make the trip to Wheatsylvania to get her. Martin declares that he is taking Leora back to Zenith with him and also demands that Leora's father continue to support Leora until Martin graduates medical school. Martin threatens to quit medical school in order to support Leora if Leora's father does not comply but eventually Leora's father agrees because it will be to everyone's benefit if Martin is allowed to finish school and become a doctor.

Leora studies stenography at the Zenith University of Business Administration and Finance and lives in a room in Zenith while Martin makes the short trip from Mohalis to see her as often as possible. On the weekends Martin and Leora go to the movies, go out to dinner, take walks and spend time with Clif Clawson before Clif moves to New York where he will work at another car dealership.

Finally senior year arrives and Martin and his friends worry about the course of their careers; whether to be general practitioners or specialists, and which practice would be the most lucrative. Angus Duer is one of the lucky ones to already have secured a position as surgeon at the Rouncefield Clinic in Chicago. Fatty Pfaff decides on obstetrics while Martin's decision does not come as easily. Finally with subtle guidance from Dean Silva and not-so-subtle advice from Leora's father, Martin decides to become a country doctor after his two-year internship at Zenith General Hospital. Leora's family is more than pleased to know that Martin will be practicing in Wheatsylvania so that Leora will once again be at home.

Martin graduates seventh in his medical school class and secures a room for Leora and him in Zenith so that he can begin his internship at Zenith General Hospital. Martin buries his thoughts of Professor Gottlieb and the satisfying hours spent in the laboratory and launches into his job tending to victims of fires, women delivering babies and other hospital duties both routine and unusual.

Martin allows himself to think about Professor Gottlieb only in the context that Professor Gottlieb lives his life in a dull, lifeless laboratory while Martin spends his days rescuing people in desperate situations, the real stuff of life.



One night during the second year of Martin's internship, Dean Silva treats Martin and Leora to dinner and a musical and Martin is convinced that general medicine is the correct course for his life. A few nights before Martin and Leora leave for Wheatsylvania, Martin and Leora pass Professor Gottlieb on the street and Professor Gottlieb asks Martin why he had never come back to the laboratory. Leora is quite taken by Professor Gottlieb's presence and Martin is moved almost to tears to see the old man looking so pathetic but does not pursue any further communication as he is about to leave for his new life and medical practice in Wheatsylvania.

The author transitions the plot from Martin to a detailed revelation of Max Gottlieb's life showing the reader what had happened to Professor Gottlieb while Martin's loyalties transitioned to Dean Silva and his internship at Zenith General. At the time Martin and Leora had encountered Professor Gottlieb on the street that night, Professor Gottlieb is a ruined man.

Professor Gottlieb is a German Jew who leaves Germany to come to America because of emerging anti-Semitic feelings in Europe in the late 19th century. Professor Gottlieb had worked with renowned scientists such as Pasteur and Koch and is a brilliant scientist in his own right. Professor Gottlieb secures a position at the University of Winnemac and establishes his reputation for being a pure scientist. Professor Gottlieb works tirelessly to eliminate human infections but secretly wonders if this is not a disservice to mankind which will one day be unable to fight off epidemics because of compromised immune systems.

Professor Gottlieb's genius allows him little time or patience for his slow-moving wife and three children and he lives in a scientific world in his mind as well as in the laboratory. At the university, Professor Gottlieb is pleased to discover Martin's aptitude for science and encourages Martin in his scientific pursuits almost as if Martin is the son Professor Gottlieb wishes he had.

Unfortunately Professor Gottlieb's work reaches an unrealistic zealot status and he determines that Dean Silva should abdicate his position at the university so that Professor Gottlieb can establish a new kind of medical school driven by science to cure people so that ordinary doctors will not be necessary. Naturally Dean Silva refuses to leave and Professor Gottlieb is eventually relieved of his position on the grounds of egotism and disloyalty. Professor Gottlieb cannot find another job and is even forced to call on Dean Silva when Mrs. Gottlieb is diagnosed with cancer.

Chapters 10, 11 and 12 Analysis

In this section Lewis points out the struggle for authentic science as evidenced by Professor Gottlieb's difficult life and ongoing challenges. Gottlieb would have an easier life if he were willing to practice medicine instead of resisting human interaction and remaining in the laboratory. Unbeknownst to Martin, Gottlieb suffers for his science while Martin and the other students perceive the old man as odd and eccentric. The author also uses the literary technique of foreshadowing when describing Gottlieb's fear

of plagues and epidemics due to compromised human immune systems, an event which will rise to importance later in the book.



Chapters 13, 14 and 15

Chapters 13, 14 and 15 Summary

Despite his disdain for commercial medicine, Max Gottlieb acquires a job at a large pharmaceutical company called Dawson T. Hunziker & Co., Inc. of Pittsburgh. Gottlieb finds amazing laboratory environments and equipment beyond his wildest expectations with expert assistants available for all his needs. After working at Hunziker for a while, Gottlieb is distressed to find that in addition to working on antitoxins and anti-cancer medications, the company also develops and sells frivolous lotions and creams at an exorbitant profit.

Before long, Gottlieb makes an important antitoxin discovery and Dawson Hunziker wants to patent the product and market it immediately. Gottlieb balks, declaring the need for more testing before mass production and tries to stall Hunziker's requests. Feeling that he will be terminated for his stance, Gottlieb tightens his household budget and moves his family to a smaller house.

To add to his professional troubles, Gottlieb suffers emotional strain when his wife dies, one of his daughters runs off with a man, and his son acts rebelliously. It is Gottlieb's youngest child, Miriam, who comes to her father's emotional aid and the two become closer than before.

Just at the time that Hunziker makes his final demand on Gottlieb, Gottlieb gets a job offer from Dr. A. DeWitt Tubbs, the director of the McGurk Institute of Biology in New York City. Gottlieb accepts the position of Chief of the Department of Bacteriology and Immunology and agrees to work on his discovery there since Gottlieb does not have any contract with Hunziker.

The plot now transitions to Martin and Leora's move to Wheatsylvania where Martin will set up practice as a family doctor. Martin soon regrets the decision to live with Leora's parents as a cost-savings measure because Leora's family is very judgmental and interfering. Martin has accepted financial help to set up his medical practice too but reaches his limit when Leora's family think Martin could use their abandoned barn as an office. Leora threatens to leave Wheatsylvania if her father does not give Martin one thousand dollars to start his medical practice wherever he chooses and Leora's father relents.

One day Martin is approached by a man named Wise the Polack who rents an old shack to Martin for fifteen dollars a month. This decision infuriates Leora's parents who had been talking to other people in town about prospective office space for Martin and now the parents look foolish in the eyes of the townspeople.

Ironically, one of Martin's first items of business is to order some furniture and equipment from the New Idea Instrument and Furniture Company from Dr. Roscoe



Geake, the professor whose crass commercialism Martin could not tolerate in medical school. Martin and Leora are thrilled to set up the new office and expect a rush of patients but it is ten days before the first person comes to see Martin—a man with a fish hook stuck in his thumb. Martin is underwhelmed by his reception in the town and his ability to prove himself as a new doctor.

Martin and Leor buy a used car which enables Martin to travel to patients' homes and eventually Martin gains the trust of the people in the area. Martin's first real sense of failure comes soon after when he is unable to save a baby thought to have the croup. Martin is called to the family's home in the middle of the night and knowing that the local pharmacist will not have what he needs, drives to another town to secure the necessary diphtheria antitoxin. The child dies soon after, not due to Martin's lack of skill but because the family had not notified the doctor that the child had been sick for awhile.

Martin takes the child's death very hard and seeks the counsel of Dr. Adam Winter in nearby Leopolis who tells Martin that in hopeless cases like these, it is a good idea to call in a second doctor so that it will seem as if Martin had exhausted every method and also so Martin will not have to shoulder the blame himself. Dr. Winter also knows the value of a good relationship with the local press and gets a glowing story about Martin printed in the newspaper.

Chapters 13, 14 and 15 Analysis

In different cities in different parts of the country, Martin and Max Gottlieb both struggle with their entrees into the world of commercial medicine. Martin has been convinced that practicing medicine is the better course for him than working in a laboratory so he establishes a small town practice in rural America. Gottlieb now works at the epitome of commercialism, a major pharmaceutical company in the largest city in the world. Even though the geography is different for each man, they each struggle against the binds of making a living versus their authentic wishes to do pure scientific research.



Chapters 16, 17 and 18

Chapters 16, 17 and 18 Summary

By the time Martin has practiced medicine in Wheatsylvania for a year he has a good reputation and he and Leora have settled into a comfortable domestic routine. Some of the people in town believe that Martin drinks too much but he redeems himself one day when he saves a choking baby. On his way to go fishing, Martin sees a woman running from her house and screaming that her baby is choking on a thimble. Using only a knife at the woman's home, Martin performs emergency surgery and saves the child's life.

News of Martin's success with the choking child spreads for miles around and Martin becomes a heroic figure in the area. Martin and Leora are now able to move out of Leora's parents' home into a cottage of their own. Martin joins several notable organizations in the town but really enjoys playing poker and drinking with the newspaper editor, the town barber and the man who runs the town service station. Martin's attempts to befriend a doctor in the area, Dr. Hesselink, are to no avail because Dr. Hesselink does not share Martin's enthusiasm for discovery and change.

During this time Martin learns that the famous and eccentric Swedish scientist, Gustaf Sondelius is visiting America after traveling the world on anti-disease missions. Gustaf believes that all diseases can be eradicated and that public health agencies should take precedence over military and business ventures. Martin longs to join ranks with someone like Gustaf but resigns himself, at least temporarily, to his quiet life on the prairie.

Before long Leora is pregnant but suffers a miscarriage and the couple learn that they can never have another child.

Leora's father tells Martin that some of the area doctors have been talking about Martin's drinking problem but Martin cannot be bothered with more gossip because he is faced with the challenge of a cattle epidemic. Martin utilizes vaccine from the Dawson Hunziker Company but when that vaccine fails, Martin develops his own vaccine which succeeds in stopping the outbreak. Instead of appreciation, Martin receives derision and derogatory comments from the townspeople declaring that a physician should not be treating cattle.

Martin indulges his research tendencies and makes the trip to Minneapolis to listen to a lecture given by Gustaf Sondelius. Martin is so moved by Gustaf's passionate speech that Martin invites Gustaf for drinks afterward. The two men are joined by a friend of Gustaf's and they drink until four in the morning and Martin's scientific allegiance is now transferred from Professor Gottlieb to Gustaf Sondelius.

Martin's acquaintance with Gustaf motivates Martin to seek outlets for his zeal for science and research and Martin offers his services to Dr. Woestijne, the county's



Superintendent of Health. Martin diligently ferrets out the source of a typhoid outbreak as an old maid seamstress who is isolated despite the insults to her dignity and reputation. However, Martin is not so lucky with his next epidemic pursuit, a smallpox outbreak in a nearby town, and suffers ridicule from the townspeople.

Martin reaches the end of his patience with small town life and enlists Gustaf's help in securing a position as Assistant Director of Public Health in the town of Nautilus. Bidding goodbye to Wheatsylvania is surprisingly difficult for Martin but his mood lifts as the train moves closer to Nautilus.

Chapters 16, 17 and 18 Analysis

Lewis' language is ornate and descriptive and he utilizes many literary techniques such as this metaphor. "Down the central aisle, ineffectively attended by a small fussy person, thundered a man with a smile, a broad brow, and a strawpile of curly flaxen hair—a Newfoundland dog of a man," Chapter 17, p. 180. Obviously, the man being described does not emit thunder nor is he a Newfoundland dog but Lewis wants the reader to understand the bulking energy emitted by the character. Another example is when Lewis explains how Martin's loyalties are usurped by his new friendship with Gustaf Sondelius. "And the great god Sondelius had slain Dean Silva, as Silva had slain Gottlieb, Gottlieb had slain 'Encore' Edwards the playful chemist, Edwards had slain Doc Vickerson, and Vickerson had slain the minister's son who had a real trapeze in his barn," Chapter 17, p. 184. These men obviously did not slay their predecessors but Lewis wants to share Martin's emotional transitions as his loyalties and allegiances change throughout different stages in his life.

Chapters 19, 20 and 21

Chapters 19, 20 and 21 Summary

Nautilus, Iowa, springs up from miles and miles of cornfields and it is smaller than Zenith but just as energetic. Martin leaves Leora at a hotel and goes to his office to meet his boss, Dr. Almus Pickerbaugh, the Director of Public Health. Almost immediately, Martin's senses are offended by the ostentatious and overbearing Dr. Pickerbaugh who creates poems and verses for the health issues addressed by the health office.

Martin finds himself doing administrative tasks instead of laboratory-related work and he questions whether he has made a wise decision in moving to Nautilus. This mindset is further validated when Martin and Leora attend dinner at the home of the Pickerbaughs who regale Martin and Leora with poems, songs and theatrics for hours. The only saving grace of the evening for Martin is his tentative flirtations with the oldest Pickerbaugh daughter, Orchid, who is also smitten with Martin.

One day Martin gets a phone call from a former Winnemac classmate, Irving Watters who is a physician practicing in Nautilus. Irving invites Martin and Leora to dinner and Martin reluctantly accepts the invitation as he remembers Irving as being one of the more boring young men at medical school. At dinner, Irving tries to set Martin straight on city politics and its upwardly mobile residents while Mrs. Watters initiates Leora into the world of Nautilus social life.

Soon Martin is asked to join many of the professional organizations in town and even gives speeches at the Star of Hope Universalist Church, a fact which surprises both he and Leora because Martin is not inclined toward public interactions. The more he gives lectures, though, the more Martin finds that he enjoys it and Leora serves as the voice of reason to tell Martin that he is better in the laboratory than he is at a lecturer.

Martin and Leora are invited on another Pickerbaugh outing, this time a snow picnic at the Pickerbaugh cabin in an oak grove. Martin finds himself drawn to Orchid once again and the two engage in some overtly flirtatious play in the snow. Leora does not confront Martin directly but remains coolly reserved for a few days following the event.

Dr. Pickerbaugh adopts the new trend of assigning "weeks" to a number of community improvement-related causes: "Glad-hand Week," "Old Home Week," "Go to Church Week" and "We Want Your Factory in Nautilus" Week among others. Martin finds that these distractions combined with the administrative tasks in the office keep him away from the laboratory work that he craves. Even when Martin does find time to work in the lab, he is invariably interrupted by one or more of the Pickerbaugh children who have free roam of the office.



Two weeks before the beginning of World War I, Leora returns to Wheatsylvania for a two-week reunion with her family. During this time Martin seeks out Orchid on several occasions and even goes to the Pickerbaugh home and interrupts one of Orchid's suitors so that Martin can spend the evening with the girl. Martin kisses Orchid and almost immediately regrets it and longs for Leora's return.

Chapters 19, 20 and 21 Analysis

Lewis introduces the literary technique of irony into this section with Martin's dalliance into public life. Martin despises Pickerbaugh's blatant commercialism in the name of public health and cannot abide Irving Watters' drive for financial gain through his practice but Martin is drawn into this world and realizes that he likes it. When asked to deliver lectures, Martin hesitates because of his dislike for public displays of medicine but after Martin gains some favorable publicity and notoriety, he finds that delving into the world of public medicine may not be so bad after all. Martin even loses his emotional restraint in his flirtations with Orchid which is completely counter to his personality. Martin's entire code of conduct is built on eschewing commercialism in any forum and it is Leora who must draw Martin back to his senses and his true focus.



Chapters 22, 23 and 24

Chapters 22, 23 and 24 Summary

Dr. Pickerbaugh goes on a tour of three states to promote his health initiatives and becomes so well known that he is asked to be the Republican nominee for Congress. Martin takes over Dr. Pickerbaugh's position during the political campaign and is denounced for his radical and tyrannical ways. Martin's most unpopular move is to shut down a local dairy because of the discovery of strep infection in some of the cows.

One of Martin's duties is to inspect local factories and he meets a man named Clay Tredgold who is president of the Steel Windmill Company. Clay befriends Martin and Leora and invites them into his circle of influential people who live in an area of Nautilus called Ashford Grove. Martin is conflicted by his wishes that Leora could be more sophisticated like the Ashford Grove women but Martin also loves Leora's authenticity and honesty.

As part of his Congressional campaign, Dr. Pickerbaugh sets up a Health Fair with booths and exhibits educating people and warning of health dangers. Martin participates by giving demonstrations in a fake lab with no running water or permit to use fire for a Bunsen burner. Several mishaps erupt among some of the participants and Dr. Pickerbaugh intervenes emerging as a hero and most surely the next Republican Congressman for the state.

Dr. Pickerbaugh does win the election and Martin is appointed the Acting Director of Public Health for Nautilus due to the intervention of Clay Tredgold. Dr. Pickerbaugh takes his family to Washington, D.C., ending Martin's flirtation with Orchid.

Martin is as unpopular in his new role as he was in his last due to some of the changes he initiates. Martin hires a young doctor, Dr. Rufus Ockford, to become his assistant and Dr. Ockford's passion for thoroughness matches Martin's. Martin further raises ire among the town's doctors with the expansion of the free clinic which takes patients away from their practices. Martin realizes that he has more free time, however, and is able to spend enjoyable hours in the lab where he discovers important findings related to hemolysin and streptococcus in animals.

Aware that he should not spend so much time working on animal-related problems, Martin cannot put the research aside and even involves Dr. Ockford and Leora in his late night sessions. Martin also reads about Dr. Gottlieb's recent discovery of synthesizing antibodies in vitro and Martin is temporarily transported to the world of scientific research.

Martin's popularity in the town plunges further during an incident where Martin wants to destroy some filthy tenement houses which are breeding grounds for tuberculosis. The



action is contested in court and Martin, feeling that he will not win the case, enlists Dr. Ockford to help him burn down the tenements.

Martin begins to lose favor with the influential people in town too when he refuses to join Clay Tredgold in some alcoholic drinks when Clay arrives unexpectedly at Martin's office one afternoon. Martin writes to Congressman Pickerbaugh in Washington to intervene on Martin's behalf but Pickerbaugh demurs from any action for Martin.

Martin feels that he is once more a failure and, in the process of deciding which course of action to take, travels to Chicago to present his paper on infectious diseases. While in Chicago, Martin visits his old classmate, Angus Duer, who offers Martin a job as a pathologist at the Rouncefield Clinic where Angus is a surgeon. Realizing that he is not cut out for research work, Martin claims his failure in Nautilus and he and Leora move to Chicago.

Chapters 22, 23 and 24 Analysis

Lewis has created Martin's character to be in constant internal struggle with his true desires and his need to fit into his outside world. While Martin would prefer the world of laboratory research, he finds himself in situations that challenge his values such, as making friends with influential people who can advance his career and financial situation. There are always strings attached to these professional favors however, and Martin cannot allow himself to sell out his personal convictions. Martin repeatedly does the correct thing for the health of the people of the town but is always chastised and denigrated for his actions, forcing Martin to think that he is a failure instead of the real public hero that he is.

Chapters 25, 26 and 27

Chapters 25, 26 and 27 Summary

After a year at the Rouncefield Clinic, Martin feels like an automaton just going through the motions of his job every day and finds pleasure only in the time he and Leora spend exploring Chicago. Martin's attempts at exploratory research are thwarted by Angus who advises Martin to focus on practical research for the sake of the clinic and Martin feels that he is finished as an original thinker. In the meantime, Martin had sent his published paper on hemolysin and streptococcus to Dr. Gottlieb who responds with a laboratory job offer for Martin. Martin accepts the job without hesitation and he and Leora are soon on their way to New York City to join Dr. Gottlieb at the McGurk Institute.

Martin falls in love with New York and is amazed by his pristine laboratory a few doors down from Dr. Gottlieb's. Martin is saddened by how feeble Dr. Gottlieb now appears but is glad to be in his company once again. Martin meets Dr. Rippleton Holabird, the head of the Department of Physiology, who acclimates Martin to the company with a guided tour. Dr. Holabird introduces Martin to the Director of the McGurk Institute, Dr. A. DeWitt Tubbs, who encourages Martin to take his time delving into the research Martin considers important with little or no interference from Tubbs or the others. Martin also meets a fellow colleague, a chemist named Terry Wickett, whose brusque and odd manner are unnerving to Martin.

Martin thoroughly enjoys his work and is afraid that he will be asked to leave because the directors have changed their minds. Martin works tirelessly on the production of a new antitoxin and emerges only when necessary. One of the necessities that Martin finds particularly distasteful is the socializing Martin and Leora must endure with the Holabirds and now Capitola McGurk, the wife of the founder of the institute, Ross McGurk. Capitola is very conscious of social status while her husband is more unassuming and has even formed a congenial relationship with the typically distant Dr. Gottlieb.

Martin has limited interactions with most of the others at the institute and stays close to Dr. Gottlieb and Terry Wickett who has offered to tutor Martin in chemistry, math and physics to further Martin's prowess in the lab. Dr. Tubbs gets caught up in the frenzy of the World War, volunteers the institute for making sera for the War Department and demands that the institute's employees wear military uniforms at all times. Terry Wickett serves time in Europe and Dr. Gottlieb's German heritage makes him suspicious in the eyes of some in New York. The directors of the institute take their role very seriously and Martin is chastised for not wearing his uniform when spotted out by Holabird one night.



Chapters 25, 26 and 27 Analysis

Martin attempts to become a commercial practitioner at Rouncefield but mercifully the author extricates him from the most despised position yet and lets him land at a prestigious pharmaceutical firm to work alongside his beloved mentor, Dr. Gottlieb. Martin's self confidence has been dented by the experiences with Dr. Pickerbaugh and at the Rouncefield Clinic and he expects that he will be found to be lacking and asked to leave. Eventually, though, Martin settles in and realizes that with some science and math tutoring, he will be worthy to work at the institute and possibly become as great as or greater than his idol, Dr. Gottlieb.



Chapters 28, 29 and 30

Chapters 28, 29 and 30 Summary

Martin has worked at the McGurk Institute for a year and just when he feels that he is a failure again makes an important discovery related to killing staphylococcus bacteria. Martin realizes that a sample of pus left in a test tube of a certain solution has not only stopped the bacteria from growing but also killed the bacteria altogether. Martin names his discovery the X Principle and hopes that it will apply to bacteria other than staphylococcus.

Gottlieb is happy for Martin and guides his protégé through the stages of more testing but is mad when Martin allows a physician to test the X Principle on live patients before the proper lab tests are completed.

Martin is overwrought from work and reaches the point of a nervous breakdown complete with delusions and fear-based visions prompting a short trip to Vermont where Martin regains a semblance of rational behavior.

After six weeks Dr. Tubbs approaches Martin on Martin's discovery and chastises Martin for keeping the work secret when the X Principle has the potential to help many people. Dr. Tubbs launches plans to make Martin head of a new pathology department complete with assistants and any laboratory equipment Martin would require. Holabird attempts to ingratiate himself with Martin because Martin is a rising star and Martin is disgusted by the whole process.

Martin tries to resist Dr. Tubbs' demands that Martin publish his findings because Martin feels the information is still in infancy stages and Gottlieb is unable to help Martin fight the establishment at the institute. Martin is raised up as the new hope of the institute until Gottlieb reads of a French scientist who has already discovered and published the same thing that Martin has discovered. When Dr. Tubbs learns that the institute will have no exclusivity on the discovery he deflates all plans to elevate Martin's status in the institute. As a true scientist, Martin continues with the work already begun although he is disappointed with Tubbs' reactions.

Martin finds that he can cure rabbits of pleuro-pneumonia utilizing the X Principle and expects some positive reactions from Dr. Tubbs which do not come. Dr. Tubbs is often gone from the institute engaged in discussions with a millionaire friend to create a League of Cultural Agencies to expose the American people to all types of intellectual and cultural learning. Dr. Tubbs resigns his position and Gottlieb is named the new director of the institute. Before the month is over the McGurk Institute is in a shambles because Gottlieb has neither the inclination nor the skills for administration and politics.

Gustaf Sondelius returns from Africa where he had been conducting a study on sleeping sickness and noisily takes up residence in one of the institute's laboratories and assists



Martin in studies and tests of the X Principle on the bubonic plague. At first Martin is unnerved by Sondelius' constant presence but eventually the two men become inseparable in their pursuit of a cure for the plague.

Chapters 28, 29 and 30 Analysis

The author uses the literary techniques of both irony and foreshadowing in this section with Martin's X Principle discovery. Ironically Martin does not garner external praise for his discovery because of the publication of the same discovery by a French scientist. Dr. Tubbs had wanted Martin to publish and gain fame for Martin and the institute but Martin will not comply, an action which ultimately has negative consequences for Martin. There is also foreshadowing in the work done by Martin and Sondelius on a cure for the plague which will become important very soon in the novel.



Chapters 31, 32 and 33

Chapters 31, 32 and 33 Summary

The island of St. Hubert in the West Indies is infested with rats which arrive on board an visiting ship. The plague breaks out on the small island because the island's governor, Sir Robert Fairlamb, has fired the rat killer on bad advice from local assemblyman Kellet the Red Leg. An opposing assemblyman, George William Vertigan claims that the rats breed disease but he is overruled by the island's Surgeon General, Inchcape Jones.

The plague breaks out and runs rampant, killing many people including George William Vertigan. A local parish medical officer, Dr. Stokes, warns Inchcape of the dangers of the rat infestation but his warnings go unheeded. Dr. Stokes ultimately contacts Dr. Gottlieb at the McGurk Institute asking for help before the island is consumed by death.

Gottlieb does not respond to Dr. Stokes' request, preferring to stay in his clinical world and not get involved in situations where humans are in jeopardy. Ultimately Ross McGurk intervenes and directs Gottlieb to send assistance not only for the good of the island victims but also for the institute which would benefit from the popular media attention.

Gottlieb dispatches Martin to the island to test Martin's phage with the caveat that Martin uses the experience as a test for publication. Martin is to use the real antitoxin on half the people and a placebo on the other half and then record his findings. Gustaf Sondelius is to accompany Martin to the islands although the two men are in conflict because Sondelius believes that all the people should receive the phage, not just half for the sake of a study. As a matter of principle, Sondelius refuses to be injected with the phage until all possibly affected people can receive the serum.

In spite of the protests of Inchcape Jones, Martin, Sondelius and Leora depart for St. Hubert armed with phage and apprehension for what they are about to encounter. Martin is also armed with Gottlieb's advice to not let his emotions override the importance of his tests on the island. Martin is seasick for much of the trip and Leora secretly feels that her presence will keep Martin healthy and alert, both critical factors in his spreading wellness and avoiding contracting the disease himself.

By the time the ship reaches the island, St. Hubert's has been quarantined and only one other passenger, a mysterious, silent woman dressed in black debarks at the island. Sondelius is fueled by the challenge before them and makes his rounds talking to the island leaders and aggressively launching initiatives to kill rats. Martin is surprised to find his old Winnemac classmate, Ira Hinkley, doing work on the island but Martin is repulsed by Ira's judgmental attitude and self-righteousness.



Martin, Leora and Sondelius take up residence in a rat-free home called Penrith Lodge. Martin also meets a young Negro doctor who is able to intelligently discuss the plague and Martin's phage, opening up Martin's eyes to his own personal prejudices.

Chapters 31, 32 and 33 Analysis

Lewis uses more figurative language in this section of the book when he writes, "... and through the island galloped the Panic, which is more murderous than its brother, the Plague," Chapter 31, p. 346. Lewis assigns human characteristics to two inanimate elements, panic and plague, to show the close relationship between the fright-inducing specters. There is also symbolism in the presence of the silent, frail woman dressed in black who debarks to the island with Martin, Leora and Sondelius. The woman represents death in stark contrast to the hope represented by Martin and his team.



Chapters 34, 35 and 36

Chapters 34, 35 and 36 Summary

Because Martin cannot convince the island leaders, and even Sondelius, to agree to let only half the island residents to be injected with the phage, Martin must take the issue to a special Board. Unfortunately for Martin, Ira Hinkley reveals some of Martin's and Gottlieb's past mistakes to the Board members but Sondelius ardently supports his colleagues and the Board decides to deliberate the matter. Sondelius, however, still refuses to be injected with the phage because Martin will not give the phage to all of the island residents.

Martin is approached by a man named Cecil Twyford who convinces Martin to come to his parish, St. Swithin, to see what Martin can accomplish there without the interference of those who are objecting to Martin's plan. Four days later Martin learns that Ira Hinkley has died from the plague.

Martin relents and gives the phage to every resident in a village called Carib because the plague is running rampant there. Martin and Sondelius worry about the infected squirrels so they relocate the residents and burn the village to eradicate any future plague threat. Sondelius soon dies from the plague but not before imploring Martin to give the phage to everyone on the island. Martin prides himself on being a scientist and not a sentimentalist and refuses to relinquish his experiment.

The islanders come to hate Martin for withholding the phage, their only hope for survival so Martin goes to St. Swithin where he is allowed to conduct his experiment with Cecil Twyford's help. As an act of protection, Martin will not allow Leora to accompany him and she stays behind in the lodge with a few house servants. Martin stays with Twyford at Twyford's home, Frangipani Court, where Martin meets a charming American widower named Joyce Lanyon. Joyce had been visiting the island and is now restricted from leaving due to the quarantine.

Martin begins to realize success with his experiment at the same time that he is becoming infatuated with Joyce. Joyce helps Martin during the day and in the evenings the pair spends leisurely time together with Martin coming dangerously close to betraying Leora. Martin vows to himself, though, to call for Leora just as soon as it is safe for her to come to St. Swithin.

Leora is consumed with loneliness and meanders around Martin's office at the lodge one day and takes a drag from one of Martin's unfinished cigarettes. Unbeknownst to Leora, one of the maids had upset one of the bacteria-filled test tubes and the plague serum had spilled onto the cigarette. By the next morning, Leora is extremely ill, the servants desert her and Leora dies alone from the plague within hours.



When Martin arrives at the lodge soon after he finds Leora's lifeless body and, wracked with grief, buries Leora in the garden at Penrith Lodge. Martin abandons the formal experiment to Dr. Stokes and Twyford and privately gives the phage to anyone who asks for it. Martin begins to drink alcohol heavily and wallows in his grief, even hating Joyce because she distracted him when Leora had needed him the most.

Joyce and Martin part company when the quarantine is lifted and Joyce sails for New York and Martin promises to visit Joyce when he returns to New York. Martin gains a position of nobility on the island for being a savior and documents his notes about his experiment. Martin receives a letter from Holabird congratulating Martin for his brilliant efforts in saving the people of St. Hubert's and also notifying Martin that Gottlieb has resigned and that Holabird is now the director of the institute.

Martin leaves the island six months after his arrival on the same ship that had brought Martin, Leora and Sondelius. Martin is greeted as a hero in America and Holabird immediately makes Martin head of Microbiology and begins to pressure Martin to publish his notes about the plague. Martin closes the apartment he had shared with Leora, takes a room in an ordinary hotel and buries himself in his work.

Holabird publishes Martin's plague findings without Martin's permission and Martin's rage is calmed only by Terry's pact that one day he and Martin will be able to work together unfettered by people like Holabird. Terry and Martin become inseparable and work onward without their colleague, Dr. Gottlieb, who has grown senile.

Chapters 34, 35 and 36 Analysis

Martin's authenticity as a true scientist is tested during his time on St. Hubert's when faced with a staggering number of deaths which Martin could probably prevent. Martin does not let emotion rule him in his experiment until Leora dies and then Martin gives the phage to anyone who asks for it. Martin does not completely destroy the integrity of the study, however, because he gives it to Dr. Stokes and Cecil Twyford to carry on. Although Martin does not allow emotionalism to enter into his scientific world, ironically it is Martin's attraction to Joyce that probably destroys the only authentic thing Martin has ever known, his relationship with Leora.



Chapters 37, 38, 39 and 40

Chapters 37, 38, 39 and 40 Summary

Martin spends time with Joyce at her mansion in New York and finds himself falling in love with her and in contention for her affections with a man named Latham Ireland. Martin feels out of place with most of Joyce's wealthy friends and feels more comfortable visiting Terry Wickett at Terry's rustic cabin in Vermont. Nevertheless, Martin proposes to Joyce and they marry, catapulting Martin into a society and class for which he is not prepared.

Martin now socializes with people like Holabird and Angus Duer and is driven to work at the institute in limousines. Holabird is jealous of Martin's newfound wealthy lifestyle but reminds Martin that Holabird is still director of the institute and capable of impacting Martin's career. Holabird tells Martin to halt studies on his phage project and concentrate on influenza and Martin proceeds halfheartedly. Martin devises a plan to reinstate his phage work by telling Holabird that the Rockefeller Institute has already conquered influenza.

Martin follows his heart by assisting Terry in his studies of quinine derivatives even though Terry is an assistant and Martin is head of the department. When the pair determines that they need monkeys for their studies, Holabird declines and Terry resigns from his position. Martin wants nothing more than to follow in Terry's footsteps and join his colleague in Vermont but cannot because Joyce would not approve of such a move.

Martin returns to his studies of phage but is unfocused due to social obligations and the loss of enthusiasm after Terry's departure. One day Martin is surprised by a visit from Clif Clawson who proposes that he and Martin sell phage tablets as a scam for cures at a New York sanitarium. Martin is appalled but nevertheless invites Clif to dinner where Clif's offensive behavior toward Joyce and Martin ends the friendship between the two medical school friends.

Martin and Joyce have a baby boy whom they name John after both of their paternal grandfathers. The relationship between Martin and Joyce cools soon after because Joyce resents all the time that Martin spends in his laboratory. In an attempt to engage Martin, Joyce builds a magnificent lab for Martin at their home and Joyce sometimes takes dinner party guests to see Martin when he works late. Weary of being on display, Martin contacts Terry and makes plans to visit and work with his old colleague.

Holabird invites Martin and Joyce to dinner one night and offers Martin the Assistant Director position at the McGurk Institute but Martin does not accept—much to the dismay of Joyce who wishes Martin would see the importance of position and wealth. Joyce is further outraged when Martin resigns and goes to Vermont to work with Terry leaving her and John alone.



Martin revels in life in Vermont. Joyce attempts to rekindle her marriage to Martin but Martin can no longer be swayed to move back to New York and a life that is not true to his real nature.

Chapters 37, 38, 39 and 40 Analysis

Finally Martin is living an authentic life that is consistent with his internal code of ethics and conduct. All through the novel Martin has struggled with the lures of both commercial medicine and true scientific study and has tried to manage in both worlds. Martin would like the comforts that coincide with a career in commercial medicine but cannot allow himself to sell his true nature for the crass behavior of those interested only in making money. When Martin delves into his true scientific work he sacrifices his personal life which creates another kind of stress for himself. In the final irony, Martin leaves his wife and child in order to go to the woods of Vermont to work on scientific discoveries which will someday hopefully benefit thousands of people completely unknown to Martin Arrowsmith.



Characters

Martin

The protagonist of the novel, Martin Arrowsmith, is a driven young man whose main personality trait, curiosity, is the foundation for every decision and action in his life. It is curiosity that makes Martin an excellent scientist but his explorations and desires to see many aspects of life also set him up for both disappointments and successes. Martin has a lifelong battle with the lure of commercial medicine versus his authentic love of research. In an attempt to provide for Leora, Martin sets up a medical practice but fails in his eyes because he cannot devote any time to research. Martin's career is a back-and-forth pattern of attempts to establish himself in commercial medicine and then in research capacities. Even when Martin feels that he has found his scientific nirvana at the McGurk Institute, he learns that the element of commercialism is pervasive there as well. Martin's combination of humanity and science takes him to a Caribbean Island infested with plague where Martin maintains his scientific focus to test his new phage discovery even in the midst of widespread death. It is only after the death of Leora that Martin loses heart and gives the serum to anyone who asks for it. Martin has a chance to combine commercialism and science when he marries wealthy widower, Joyce Lanyon, while maintaining his work at the McGurk Institute. Ultimately Martin learns that he cannot live encumbered by the trappings of wealth and leaves his second wife and son to live and work in the woods of Vermont where he must answer to no one but himself for his work and his measure of success.

Professor Max Gottlieb

Professor Max Gottlieb is Martin's instructor in medical school and becomes Martin's mentor and lifelong inspiration. Dr. Gottlieb symbolizes authentic scientific research for Martin who measures every decision and experience by what Dr. Gottlieb might do or say. Dr. Gottlieb is a German Jew whose dark, quiet demeanor sets him apart from others at the university where he is ultimately fired for radical thinking. Dr. Gottlieb is also ostracized at this point in time because of the ramping-up period before World War I when anyone of German descent is set up for scrutiny and suspicion in America. Despite his challenges, both personal and professional, Dr. Gottlieb remains true to his code and his devotion to pure science, a dedication which fascinates Martin Arrowsmith. Gottlieb's clinical nature does not allow for the human condition and his unforgiving manner alienates those who surround him. Although a brilliant scientist, Gottlieb fails miserably when appointed as Director of the McGurk Institute, proving that his lack of administrative skills and diplomacy, traits that he considers unimportant, can have as devastating effect on organizations as those medical conditions for which he searches for cures.



Leora Tozer Arrowsmith

Martin first meets Leora when he is in medical school and she is a nursing student at a hospital in Zenith. Martin is engaged to Madeline at the time but knows upon first meeting Leora that he loves her. Leora is spirited but has no real ambitions for her own life preferring instead to support Martin's goals. Leora's love for Martin is so deep that she even defies her own parents to marry him and follow him wherever his career leads them, even taking them away from Martin's medical practice in Leora's hometown of Wheatsylvania, North Dakota. Leora's love for Martin is tested a couple times by Martin's flirtations with women who find the young doctor irresistible. Leora's sense of self is strong enough that she can address Martin's inappropriate behavior without fear and Martin always repents for his behavior and the hurt he has caused. Leora selflessly follows Martin to several different cities and adapts beautifully although Martin sometimes wishes Leora could be as sophisticated as some of the women in the social circles in which they travel. Fortunately for Martin, Leora is a down-to-earth, loving woman who supports and guides him as a more ambitious, sophisticated woman may not be capable or willing to do. Martin does not want to risk Leora's health by taking her to the plague-infested St. Hubert's island but Leora demands to go in support of Martin. Leora's death on the island all too painfully illuminates Martin's dependence on Leora and he has a difficult time finding his way without Leora as his compass.

Doc Vickerson

Doc Vickerson provides Martin Arrowsmith with a place to spend time and learn the basics of a medical practice. Doc Vickerson is unpolished and unprofessional in many ways, the direct opposite of Martin, but Martin is indebted to him for his early influence.

Madeline Fox

Madeline Fox is a sophisticated and elegant graduate student at the University of Winnemac at the same time that Martin attends medical school at the same school. Martin falls in love with Madeline and proposes marriage to her but marries another girl because Madeline is judgmental and controlling.

Dean Silva

Dean Silva is the dean of the medical school at the University of Winnemac. He befriends Martin who comes to respect Silva for his appreciation for academics and the real-world practice of medicine.



Gustaf Sondelius

Gustaf is a worldwide crusader against epidemic diseases and partners with Martin on St. Hubert's island to test Martin's new phage against the disease.

Dr. Almus Pickerbaugh

Dr. Almus Pickerbaugh is the Director of Public Health in Nautilus, Iowa, and later a U.S. Congressman. Even though he is Martin's boss, Martin has great disdain for Pickerbaugh's salesman-like attitude toward medicine and his position in the city.

Clay Tredgold

Clay Tredgold is the president of the Steel Windmill Company in Nautilus and introduces Martin and Leora into the influential society members in the Ashford Grove area of the city.

Dr. A. DeWitt Tubbs

Dr. A. DeWitt Tubbs is the Director of the McGurk Institute in New York City who initially encourages Martin's career there but later finds fault with Martin's unwillingness to cooperate in activities that will advance the institute's position.

Dr. Rippleton Holabird

Dr. Rippleton Holabird is a department head at the McGurk Institute who tries to befriend Martin but finds him unwilling to buy into Holabird's cunning political behavior. Holabird is a duplicate of Dr. Tubbs whose motives are for advancing the institute in spite of true scientific practices.

Terry Wickett

Terry Wickett is one of Martin's colleagues at the McGurk Institute and becomes Martin's best friend. At the end of the novel, Martin moves to Vermont to work with Terry at Terry's private lab in the woods.

Joyce Lanyon

Joyce Lanyon is a wealthy widower whom Martin meets on St. Hubert's island. Martin marries Joyce after Leora's death but leaves the marriage in favor of a more authentic life



Objects/Places

Elk Mills, Winnemac

Elk Mills, Martin Arrowsmith's hometown, is located in the state of Winnemac which is bordered by Ohio, Michigan, Illinois and Indiana.

The University of Winnemac

Martin attends the University of Winnemac in Mohalis for both his undergraduate and medical school studies.

Zenith

Zenith is the metropolitan area adjacent to the University of Winnemac in Mohalis.

Wheatsylvania, North Dakota

Wheatsylvania, North Dakota, is Leora Tozer's hometown and the site where Martin opens his first practice as a country doctor.

The Grand Hotel

The Grand Hotel is the finest hotel in Zenith where Martin reveals his engagement to both Madeline and Leora and where Clif treats Martin to lunch.

Zenith University of Business Administration and Finance

Leora studies stenography at the Zenith University of Business Administration and Finance while Martin finishes medical school in Mohalis.

Dawson T. Hunziker & Co., Inc.

Max Gottlieb secures a job at the Dawson T. Hunziker & Co., Inc., a pharmaceutical company in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, after being fired from the University of Winnemac in Mohalis.



Martin's first office

In order to establish his practice in Wheatsylvania, Martin rents a small shack for fifteen dollars a month and furnishes it with a combination of used chairs, bookcases and tables and new equipment.

Nautilus

Martin and Leora move to Nautilus, Iowa, where Martin serves as the Assistant Director of Public Health.

The McGurk Institute

Martin accepts a job at the McGurk Institute in New York City where he will work closely with Dr. Max Gottlieb.

Penrith Lodge

Martin, Leora and Sondelius take up residence in a rat-free home called Penrith Lodge on the island of St. Hubert's where they are working to eradicate the plague from the island.

St. Hubert

St. Hubert is the Caribbean Island where Martin, Leora and Sondelius go to help eradicate an outbreak of the plague.



Themes

Commercial vs. Scientific Medicine

The most important theme in the book is the conflict between commercial and scientific medicine. Until the end of the novel Martin struggles with the lure of the financial and social benefits surrounding a commercial medical practice with the personally gratifying authenticity of a career in true science and discovery. Each time Martin is drawn into the commercial side of medicine, such as his prairie practice or the famous clinic in Chicago, he is always aware of the laboratory work that he could or should be doing instead of tending to patients where he always feels like a failure. Martin's real competence is in the laboratory and even when he has secured employment in the best scientific institute in America, Martin is met with directors who place commercial success and publicity over the integrity of discovery. Martin finds only two colleagues throughout his career, Dr. Gottlieb and Terry Wickett, who share Martin's passion for pure scientific discovery and ultimately these two men are driven from the prestigious institute for their inability and/or unwillingness to understand and practice the commercialism that is necessary to keep even pure science alive.

Perseverance and Success

The quest for success is a pervading theme throughout the novel. The brief passage at the beginning of the book sets up this theme when Martin's great-grandmother, as a young girl, drives a wagon of sick family members through the Ohio wilderness on the way to a new, and hopefully better, life out west. "We're going on jus' long as we can. Going West! They's a whole lot of new things I aim to be seeing!" Chapter 1, p. 1. Martin is orphaned as a boy and is befriended by the town doctor in whose office Martin first encounters his passion for medicine. His life will be driven by science from that point forward. From his first day at medical school, Martin is driven to be the best medical professional he knows, even harassing Professor Gottlieb to let him into a class for which Martin is not yet prepared. Martin is always striving for the next best thing, either to advance his financial situation or his medical knowledge. Several times in the book people tell Martin their ideas on how he can achieve success, whether as a public physician or a private researcher but Martin is satisfied only with his own methodologies and timing. Many times, too, Martin confides in his wife, Leora, that he feels like a failure and he hopes that the next move will prove to be more successful than the last. Martin suffers what most intelligent young people do in that there are always teachers and mentors all too willing to provide advice on career paths and life success without any real investigation into the student's core values and deep interests. Martin's life path and quest for success is not unlike most people who try different jobs, cities and romantic partners to find the correct fit for an authentic life. By the end of the novel, Martin appears to have found success by going to work with Terry in the woods of Vermont and the reader hopes that Martin has at last found his true calling and the place that will

make him happy and feel as if his life is finally on the course to what Martin will consider success.

Love

Although he is a brilliant scientist and physician, Martin struggles with the emotional side of his life and finds it hard to project love. It is not clear whether Martin's stunted emotional growth is due to his being orphaned at a young age or whether Martin just has a clinical demeanor which does not allow for anything frivolous or unnecessary. In his early quests for love, Martin finds himself unable to make hard decisions and places both Madeline Fox and Leora Tozer in the unforgivable position of encountering each other at a lunch where Martin announces that he is engaged to both. It is at this point that Leora's character is defined as the major yet silent support for Martin's life. Martin would probably not count as a great romantic or wonderful husband because he is so self-centered, but Leora is the type of person who is willing to stand back and provide the backdrop on which Martin's life is played out. Martin is fortunate to have his acquiescent wife, Leora, as well as Professor Gottlieb and Gustaf Sondelius, all who have similar core values as Martin and who can guide and support him in his life journey.

As much as he is capable, Martin loves Leora and stays committed to making a living while married to her. Ironically, after Martin marries the wealthy Joyce and could have every physical comfort, he is able to choose to leave the marriage and pursue his true love, research. Ultimately, though, Martin finds his true love, research, by the end of the novel and hopefully he can find satisfaction with the choices that are true to his code and character.

Style

Point of View

The novel is written in the third person omniscient point of view. This means that the unnamed narrator provides not only the plot sequence but also the thoughts and feelings of some of the characters, primarily Martin Arrowsmith. As a third person omniscient storyteller, the narrator can transition from different characters and inform the reader of thoughts and feelings of characters that would not normally be available to just one person with a limited perspective. An example of this type of point of view occurs in this passage early in the novel: "There was prairie freshness in the autumn day but Martin did not heed. He hurried into the slate-colored hall of the Main Medical, up the wide stairs to the office of Max Gottlieb. He did not look at passing students, and when he bumped into them he grunted in confused apology. It was a portentous hour. He was going to specialize in bacteriology; he was going to discover enchanting new germs; Professor Gottlieb was going to recognize him as a genius, make him an assistant, predict for him—He halted in Gottlieb's private laboratory, a small, tidy apartment with racks of cotton-corked test-tubes on the bench, a place unimpressive and unmagical save for the constant-temperature bath with its tricky thermometer and electric bulbs. He waited till another student, a stuttering gawk of a student, had finished talking to Gottlieb, dark, lean, impassive at his desk in a cubbyhole of an office, then he plunged," Chapter 1, p. 10. In this paragraph Lewis provides the physical descriptions of a prairie morning, Gottlieb's laboratory and Gottlieb's office as well as Martin's hopes and dreams and his actual movements as he strides into his new life.

Setting

The story takes place in the early twentieth century from the early 1990s through World War I. There are several locations of importance in this book, primarily in the United States. With the exception of a six-month period during which Martin is on St. Hubert's, an island in the Caribbean, Martin lives in the Midwest and on the East coast. Martin is born and raised in Elk Mills in the state of Winnemac which is close to Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Michigan. Martin attends college at the University of Winnemac in Mohalis and does his medical internship at a hospital in Zenith. Martin opens his first medical practice in Wheatsylvania, North Dakota, Leora's hometown. From there, Martin and Leora move to Nautilus, Iowa, and then on to Chicago, Illinois. Martin's big career break comes with employment at the McGurk Institute in New York City and Martin and Leora travel to St. Hubert's island to help with an outbreak of plague. Martin returns to New York City where he lives with his wealthy second wife before leaving her and his son to live and work in Vermont with Terry Wickett, a former McGurk Institute colleague.



Language and Meaning

Lewis is the master of satire and writes with conviction about the less than glorious side of the medical profession in America in the early twentieth century. Satire is a style of writing which exposes some facet of the human condition by utilizing humor, ridicule and sarcasm. One example that showcases Lewis' satire in this novel is the character of Dr. Pickerbaugh, who is an almost comic character in his over-the-top behavior in the name of medicine. "Well, if you want the straight dope, he hollers a good deal, but he's one awful brainy man. He certainly can sling the Queen's English, and jever hear one of his poems? They're darn' bright. I'll tell you: There's some people say Pickerbaugh pulls the song and dance too much, but way I figure it, course maybe for you and me, Doctor, it'd be all right if he just looked after the milk and the garbage and the kids' teeth. But there's a lot of careless, ignorant, foreign slobs that need to be jollied into using their kinks about these health biznai, so's they won't go getting sick with a lot of these infectious diseases and pass 'em on to the rest of us, and believe me, old doc Pickerbaugh is the boy that gets the idea into their noodles!" Chapter 19, p. 208.

Structure

The book is written in 40 chapters and is the retelling of Martin Arrowsmith's young to middle adulthood. Lewis also creates sections within each chapter which allow him to transition from different locations and character activities. This technique allows Lewis to provide information on various plot elements occurring at the same time or in close sequence so that the reader has a fuller understanding of the unfolding of the narrative. The plot is a seemingly unending string of events as Martin transitions from several different jobs in his pursuit of his authentic career either in commercial or true scientific medicine. Martin's harrowing pursuit of self-discovery is agonizing for the reader as well as for Martin, whose path to authenticity is a painful one attributable to Lewis' brilliant unrelenting quest for fulfillment. Even though Martin's decision to leave his wife and child in favor of scientific work in the woods of Vermont may be a questionable one, there is a sense of relief that Martin has finally made a decision about his life and can enter into it with unconflicted passion.



Quotes

"The boy, normal village youngster though he was, given to stoning cats and to playing pom-pom-pullaway, gained something of the intoxication of treasure-hunting as the Doc struggled to convey his vision of the pride of learning, the universality of biology, the triumphant exactness of chemistry. A fat old man and dirty and unvirtuous was the Doc; his grammar was doubtful, his vocabulary alarming, and his references to his rival, good Dr. Needham, were scandalous; yet he invoked in Martin a vision of making chemicals explode with much noise and stink and of seeing animalcules that no boy in Elk Mills had ever beheld." Chapter 1, p. 5.

"Well—these darn' studes, they aren't trying to learn science; they're simply learning a trade. They just want to get the knowledge that'll enable them to cash in. They don't talk about saving lives but about 'losing cases'—losing dollars! And they wouldn't even mind losing cases if it was a sensational operation that'd advertise 'em! They make me sick! How many of 'em do you find that're interested in the work Ehrlich is doing in Germany—yes, or that Max Gottlieb is doing right here and now! Gottlieb's just taken an awful fall out of Wright's opsonin theory." Chapter 3, p. 24.

"No, I have done nothing except be unpleasant to people that claim too much, but I have dreams of real discoveries some day. And—No. Not five times in five years do I have students who understand craftsmanship and precision and maybe some big imagination in hypotheses. I t'ink perhaps you may have them. If I can help you—So!" Chapter 4, p. 38.

"Few women can for long periods keep from trying to Improve their men, and To Improve means to change a person from what he is, whatever that may be, into something else. Girls like Madeleine Fox, artistic young women who do not work at it, cannot be restrained from Improving for more than a day at a time. The moment the urgent Martin showed that he was stirred by her graces, she went at his clothes—his corduroys and soft collars and eccentric old gray felt hat—at his vocabulary and his taste in fiction, with new and more patronizing vigor. Her sketchy way of saying, 'Why, of course everybody knows that Emerson was the greatest thinker' irritated him the more in contrast to Gottlieb's dark patience." Chapter 5, p. 46.

"Sound of mating birds, sound of spring blossoms dropping in the tranquil air, the bark of sleepy dogs at midnight; who is to set them down and make them anything but hackneyed? And as natural, as conventional, as youthfully gauche, as eternally beautiful and authentic as those ancient sounds was the talk of Martin and Leora in that passionate half-hour when each found in the other a part of his own self, always vaguely missed, discovered now with astonished joy. They rattled like hero and heroine of a sticky tale, like sweat-shop operatives, like bouncing rustics, like prince and princess. Their words were silly and inconsequential, heard one by one, yet taken together they were as wise and important as the tides or the sounding wind." Chapter 5, p. 55.



"She pondered, 'I do feel we're nearer together than you and Her. Perhaps you like me better because you can bully me—because I tag after you and She never would. And I know your work is more important to you than I am, maybe more important than you are. But I am stupid and ordinary and She isn't. I simply admire you frightfully (Heaven knows why but I do), while She has sense enough to make you admire Her after Her.'" Chapter 6, p. 70.

"'Knowledge is the greatest thing in the medical world but it's no good whatever unless you can sell it, and to do this you must first impress your personality on the people who have the dollars. Whether a patient is a new or an old friend, you must always use salesmanship on him. Explain to him, also to his stricken and anxious family, the hard work and thought you are giving to his case, and so make him feel that the good you have done him, or intend to do him, is even greater than the fee you plan to charge. Then, when he gets your bill, he will not misunderstand or kick.'" Chapter 8, p. 83.

"He was very sorry for himself. The real tragedy, he felt, was that though Gottlieb had betrayed him and ended his career, ended the possibility of his mastering science and of marrying Leora, he still worshipped the man." Chapter 9, p. 95.

"'All right. Just as you want. In the long run it'll be better for her and for me and for you if I finish medic school and have my profession, but if you won't take care of her, I'll chuck school, I'll go to work. Oh, I'll support her, all right! Only you'll never see her again. If you go on being idiots, she and I will leave here on the night train for the Coast, and that'll be the end.' For the first time in his centuries of debates with the Tozers, he was melodramatic. He shook his fist under Bert's nose. 'And if you try to prevent our going, God help you! And the way this town will laugh at you!.... How about it, Leora? Are you ready to go away with me—forever?'" Chapter 10, p. 108.

"It was all so much easier, now that he was partly freed from the tyrannical honesty of Gottliebism, from the unswerving quest for causes which, as it drove through layer below layer, seemed ever farther from the bottommost principles, from the intolerable strain of learning day by day how much he did not know. It warmed him to escape from Gottlieb's icebox into Dean Silva's neighborly world." Chapter 10, p. 111.

"None of the hectic activities of Senior year—neurology and pediatrics, practical work in obstetrics, taking of case histories in the hospitals, attendance on operations, dressing wounds, learning not to look embarrassed when charity patients called one 'Doctor'—was quite so important as the discussion of 'What shall we do after graduation? Is it necessary to be an intern for more than a year? Shall we remain general practitioners all our lives, or work toward becoming specialists? Which specialties are the best—that is, the best paid? Shall we settle in the country or in the city? How about going West?



What about the army medical corps; salutes, riding boots, pretty women, travel?"
Chapter 10, p. 113.

"On the way to his room he passed the open door of the hospital laboratory, with its hacked bench, its lifeless rows of flasks and test tubes. 'Huh! That stuff! Poking 'round labs! This is real sure-enough life,' he exulted and he did not permit himself to see the vision of Max Gottlieb waiting there, so gaunt, so tired, so patient.'" Chapter 11, p. 117.

"He was of the great benefactors of humanity. There will never, in any age, be an effort to end the great epidemics or the petty infections which will not have been influenced by Max Gottlieb's researches, for he was not one who tagged and prettily classified bacteria and protozoa. He sought their chemistry, the laws of their existence and destruction, basic laws for the most part unknown after a generation of busy biologists. Yet they were right who called him 'pessimist,' for this man who, as much as any other, will have been the cause of reducing infectious diseases to almost-zero often doubted the value of reducing infectious diseases at all." Chapter 12, p. 123.

"Well—we shall be glad to offer you five thousand dollars a year, for a starter, and we shan't worry about the half-time arrangement. We'll give you all the space and technicians and material you need, and you just go ahead and ignore us, and work out whatever seems important to you. Our only request is that if you do find any serums which are of real value to the world, we shall have the privilege of manufacturing them, and if we lose money on 'em, it doesn't matter. We like to make money, if we can do it honestly, but our chief purpose is to serve mankind. Of course if the serums pay, we shall be only too delighted to give you a generous commission. Now about practical details—" Chapter 13, p. 134.

"Naturally! Now from what we hear, you are not giving your attention to the commercial side of things, and that tempts us to wonder whether you could be persuaded to join us at McGurk. So I just sprang on a train and ran down here. We should be delighted to have you become a member of the institute, and chief of the Department of Bacteriology and Immunology. Mr. McGurk and I desire nothing but the advancement of science. You would, of course, have absolute freedom as to what researches you thought it best to pursue, and I think we could provide as good assistance and material as would be obtainable anywhere in the world. In regard to salary—permit me to be business-like and perhaps blunt, as my train leaves in one hour—I don't suppose we could equal the doubtless large emolument which the Hunziker people are able to pay you, but we can go to ten thousand dollars a year—" Chapter 13, p. 141.

"He had intimates—the barber, the editor of the Eagle, the garageman—to whom he talked comfortably of hunting and the crops, and with whom he played poker. Perhaps he was too intimate with them. It was the theory of Crynsen County that it was quite all right for a young professional man to take a timely drink providing he kept it secret and



made up for it by yearning over the clergy of the neighborhood. But with the clergy Martin was brief, and his drinking and poker he never concealed." Chapter 16, p. 165.

"He told himself that however much he might relieve the sick, essentially he was a business man, in rivalry with Dr. Winter of Leopolis and Dr. Hesselink of Groningen; that though they might be honest, honesty and healing were less their purpose than making money; that to get rid of avoidable disease and produce a healthy population would be the worst thing in the world for them; and that they must all be replaced by public health officials." Chapter 16, p. 170.

"Dignity, hell! If I had my way I'd be doing research—oh, not this cold detached stuff of Gottlieb but really practical work—and then I'd have some fellow like Sondelius take my results and jam 'em down people's throats, and I'd make them and their cattle and their tabby-cats healthy whether they wanted to be or not, that's what I'd do!" Chapter 17, p. 178.

"No, that's not fair. I've learned a little something. I've failed here. I've antagonized too many people. I didn't know how to handle them. We could stick it out, and I would, except that life is short and I think I'm a good worker in some ways. Been worrying about being a coward, about running away, turning my—What is it?—turning my hand from the plow. I don't care now! By God, I know what I can do! Gottlieb saw it! And I want to get to work. On we go. All right?" Chapter 18, p. 188.

"I get it," said Leora, as they dressed for dinner at Pickerbaugh's. "Your job will only take about twenty-eight hours a day, and the rest of the time you're perfectly welcome to spend in research, unless somebody interrupts you." Chapter 19, p. 199.

"I don't have to be consistent. I'm a mere woman. You, Martin Arrowsmith, you'd be the first to tell me so. And for Dr. Pickerbaugh they're all right, but not for you. You belong in a laboratory, finding out things not advertising them. Do you remember once in Wheatsylvania for five minutes you almost thought of joining a church and being a Respectable Citizen? Are you going on for the rest of your life, stumbling into respectability and having to be dug out again? Will you never learn you're a barbarian?" Chapter 20, p. 217.

"Orchid is too easy. I hate to give up the right of being a happy sinner, but my way was so straight, with just Leora and my work, and I'm not going to mess it. God help any man that likes his work and his wife! He's beaten from the beginning." Chapter 21, p. 235.

"Martin went home to Leora snarling, 'That man was just as lovable as a cucumber salad, but my God, Lee, with his freedom from bunk he's made me wild to get back to research; away from all these humanitarians that are so busy hollering about loving the dear people that they let the people die! I hated him, but—Wonder what Max Gottlieb's doing this evening? The ol German crank! I'll bet—I'll bet he's talking music or



something with some terrible highbrow bunch. Wouldn't you like to see the old coot again? You know, just couple minutes. D'I ever tell you about the time I made the dandy stain of the trypanosomes—Oh, did I?" Chapter 22, p. 239.

"She demanded, 'Do you want me to become a harem beauty? I could. I could be a floosey. But I've never taken the trouble. Oh, Sandy, I won't go on fighting with you. Either I'm the foolish sloppy wife that I am, or I'm nothing. What do you want? Do you want a real princess like Clara Tredgold, or do you want me, that don't care a hang where we go or what we do as long as we stand by each other? You do such a lot of worrying. I'm tired of it. Come on now. What do you want?'" Chapter 22, p. 246.

"But that week he read, as an announcement issued by the McGurk Institute of Biology of New York, that Dr. Max Gottlieb had synthesized antibodies in vitro. He pictured the saurine Gottlieb not at all enjoying the triumph but, with locked door, abusing the papers for their exaggerative reports of his work; and as the picture became sharp Martin was like a subaltern stationed in a desert isle when he learns that his old regiment is going off to an agreeable Border war." Chapter 24, p. 259.

"I suppose this Rouncefield Clinic is probably nothing but a gilded boob-trap—scare the poor millionaire into having all the fancy kinds of examinations and treatments the traffic will bear. I hope it is! I expect to be a commercial-group doctor the rest of my life. I hope I have the sense to be!" Chapter 24, p. 269.

"I've got a lovely description for your dratted Famous Surgeons. You know how polite and important they are, and they smile so carefully? Well, don't you remember you once said that Professor Gottlieb called all such people like that 'men of measured merriment'? He caught up the phrase; they sang it together; and they made of it a beating impish song: 'Men of measured merriment! Men of measured merriment! Damn the great executives, the men of measured merriment, damn the men with careful smiles, damn the men that run the shops, oh, damn their measured merriment, the men with measured merriment, ho, damn their measured merriment and DAMN their careful smiles!'" Chapter 25, p. 272.

"Don't you ever learn anything? I remember once in Nautilus we stopped on a country road and talked till—oh, darn' near dawn, and you were going to be so energetic, but here we are again tonight, with just the same thing—Good God, couldn't you even take the trouble to notice you had a spot of soot on your nose tonight? Mrs. Duer noticed it, all right! Why are you so sloppy? Why can't you take a little care? And why can't you make an effort, anyway, to have something to say? You just sit there at dinner—you just sit and look healthy! Don't you want to help me? Mrs. Duer will probably help Angus to become president of the American Medical Association, in about twenty years, and by that time I suppose you'll have me back in Dakota as assistant to Hesselink!" Chapter 25, p. 273.

"Succeed? I have heard that word. It is English? Oh, yes, it is a word that liddle schoolboys use at the University of Winnemac. It means passing examinations. But



there are no examinations to pass here... Martin, let us be clear. You know something of laboratory technique; you have heard about dese bacilli; you are not a good chemist, and mathematics—pfui!—most terrible! But you have curiosity and you are stubborn. You do not accept rules. Therefore I t'ink you will either make a very good scientist or a very bad one, and if you are bad enough, you will be popular with the rich ladies who rule this city, New York, and you can gif lectures for a living or even become, if you get to be plausible enough, a college president. So anyway, it will be interesting." Chapter 26, p. 277.

"But once again always remember that not all men who work at science are scientists. So few! The rest—secretaries, press-agents, camp-followers! To be a scientist is like being a Goethe: it is born in you. Sometimes I t'ink you have a liddle of it born in you. If you haf, there is only one t'ing—no, there is two t'ings you must do: work twice as hard as you can, and keep people from using you. I will try to protect you from Success. It is all I can do. So... I should wish, Martin, that you will be very happy here. May Koch bless you!" Chapter 26, p. 279.

"God give me unclouded eyes and freedom from haste. God give me a quiet and relentless anger against all pretense and all pretentious work and all work left slack and unfinished. God give me a restlessness whereby I may neither sleep nor accept praise till my observed results equal my calculated results or in pious glee I discover and assault my error. God give me strength not to trust to God!" Chapter 26, p. 280.

"With all his amateurish fumbling, Martin had one characteristic without which there can be no science: a wide-ranging, sniffing, snuffling, undignified, unself-dramatizing curiosity, and it drove him on." Chapter 27, p. 292.

"Gottlieb's arrogance had returned, and with Capitola McGurk he needed it. She had such interesting little problems for her husband's pensioners to attack. Once, in excitement, she visited Gottlieb's laboratory to tell him that large numbers of persons die of cancer, and why didn't he drop this anti-whatever-it-was and find a cure for cancer, which would be ever so nice for all of them." Chapter 27, p. 293.

"Now in Martin Arrowsmith there were no decorative heroisms, no genius for amours, no exotic wit, no edifyingly borne misfortunes. He presented neither picturesque elegance nor a moral message. He was full of hasty faults and of perverse honesty; a young man often unkindly, often impolite. But he had one gift: curiosity whereby he saw nothing as ordinary. Had he been an acceptable hero, like Major Rippleton Holabird, he would have chucked the contents of the flask into the sink, avowed with pretty modesty, 'Silly! I've made some error!' and gone his ways. But Martin, being Martin, walked prosaically up and down his laboratory, snarling. 'Now there was some cause for that, and I'm going to find out what it was.'" Chapter 28, p. 308.



"As he hustled to the Institute he swelled with the certainty that after years of stumbling he had arrived. He had visions of his name in journals and textbooks; of scientific meetings cheering him. He had been an unknown among the experts of the Institute, and now he pitied all of them. But when he was back at this bench the grandiose aspirations faded and he was the sniffing, snuffling beagle, the impersonal worker. Before him, supreme joy of the investigator, new mountain-passes of work opened, and in him was new power." Chapter 28, p. 314.

"But I'm not ready to publish! I want to have every loophole plugged up before I announce anything whatever!' 'Nonsense! That attitude is old-fashioned. This is no longer an age of parochialism but of competition, in art and science just as much as in commerce—co-operation with your own group, but with those outside it, competition to the death! Plug up the holes thoroughly, later, but we can't have somebody else stealing a march on us. Remember you have your name to make. The way to make it is by working with me—toward the greatest good for the greatest number.'" Chapter 29, p. 324.

"Vell. Anyway. D'Herelle of the Pasteur Institute has just now published in the Comptes Rendus, Academie des Sciences, a report—it is your X Principle, absolute. Only he calls it bacteriophage. So.' 'Then I'm—' In his mind Martin finished it, 'Then I'm not going to be a department-head or famous or anything else. I'm back in the gutter.' All strength went out of him and all purpose, and the light of creation faded to dirty gray." Chapter 29, p. 327.

"Max Gottlieb had ever discoursed to Martin of 'the jests of the gods.' Among these jests Martin had never beheld one so pungent as this whereby the pretentiousness and fussy unimagination which he had detested in Tubbs should have made him a good manager, while the genius of Gottlieb should have made him a feeble tyrant; the jest that the one thing worse than a too managed and standardized institution should be one that was not managed and standardized at all. He would once have denied it with violence, but nightly now he prayed for Tubbs's return." Chapter 30, p. 336.

"Still there was no quarantine, no official admission. Inchcape Jones vomited feeble proclamations of the inadvisability of too-large public gatherings, and wrote to London to inquire about Haffkine's prophylactic, but to Sir Robert Fairlamb he protested, 'Honestly, there's only been a few deaths and I think it's all passed over. As for the suggestions of Stokes that we burn the village of Carib, merely because they've had several cases—why, it's barbarous! And it's been conveyed to me that if we were to establish a quarantine, the merchants would take the strongest measures against the administration. It would ruin the tourist and export business.'" Chapter 31, p. 346.

"There may have been in the shadowy heart of Max Gottlieb a diabolic insensibility to divine pity, to suffering humankind; there may have been mere resentment of the doctors who considered his science of value only as it was handy to advertising their business of healing; there may have been the obscure and passionate and



unscrupulous demand of genius for privacy. Certainly he who had lived to study the methods of immunizing mankind against disease had little interest in actually using those methods. He was like a fabulous painter, so contemptuous of popular taste that after a lifetime of creation he should destroy everything he had done, lest it be marred and mocked by the dull eyes of the crowd." Chapter 32, p. 347.

"It comes to me that there is pneumonic plague in Manchuria and bubonic in St. Hubert, in the West Indies. If I could trust you, Martin, to use the phage with only half your patients and keep the others as controls, under normal hygienic conditions but without the phage, then you could make an absolute determination of its value as complete as what we have of mosquito transmission of yellow fever, and then I would send you down to St. Hubert. What do you t'ink?" Chapter 32, p. 348.

"And you watch me! I am the captain-general of rat killers! I yoost walk into a warehouse and the rats say, 'There's that damn' old Uncle Gustaf—what's the use?' and they turn up their toes and die! I am yoost as glad I have you people behind me, because I am broke—I went and brought some oil stock that don't look so good now—and I shall need a lot of hydrocyanic acid gas. Oh, those rats! You watch me! Now I go and telegraph I can't keep a lecture engagement next week—huh! me lecture to a women's college, me that can talk rat-language and know seven beautiful deadly kind of traps!" Chapter 32, p. 350.

"As the unknown woman in black came aboard, Martin saw in lantern light how her lips tightened once, then her whole face went blank, like one who waited hopelessly." Chapter 33, p. 363.

"I am not afraid, but yoost once more I would like to see Stockholm, and Fifth Avenue on the day the first snow falls and Holy Week at Sevilla. And one good last drunk! I am very peaceful, Slim. It hurts some, but life was a good game. And—I am a pious agnostic. Oh, Martin, give my people the phage! Save all of them—God, I did not think they could hurt me so!" Chapter 34, p. 381.

"By evening he strode to the garden, the high and windy garden looking toward the sea, and dug a deep pit. He lifted her light stiff body, kissed it, and laid it in the pit. All night he wandered. When he came back to the house and saw the row of her little dresses with the lines of her soft body in them, he was terrified. Then he went to pieces." Chapter 35, p. 392.

"The reporters, who had been only a little interested at his landing, came around for interviews, and while Martin was sulky and jerky Holabird took them in hand, so that the papers were able to announce that America, which was always rescuing the world from something or other, had gone and done it again. It was spread in the prints that Dr. Martin Arrowsmith was not only a powerful witch-doctor and possibly something of a laboratory-hand, but also a ferocious rat-killer, village-burner, Special Board addresser, and snatcher from death. There was at the time, in certain places, a doubt as to how benevolent the United States had been to its Little Brothers—Mexico, Cuba, Haiti,



Nicaragua—and the editors and politicians were grateful to Martin for this proof of their sacrifice and tender watchfulness." Chapter 36, p. 401.

"Martin had heard about the superiority of poverty to luxury, but after the lunch-wagons of Mohalis, after twelve years of helping Leora check the laundry and worry about the price of steak, after a life of waiting in the slush for trolleys, it was not at all dismaying to have a valet who produced shirts automatically; not at all degrading to come to meals which were always interesting, and, in the discretion of his car, to lean an aching head against softness and think how clever he was." Chapter 38, p. 417.

"For science Joyce had great respect and no understanding. Often she asked Martin to explain his work, but when he was glowing, making diagrams with his thumb-nail on the tablecloth, she could interrupt him with a gracious 'Darling—do you mind—just a second—Plinder, isn't there any more of the sherry?'" Chapter 39, p. 435.

"'And give up my own chance?' 'Why need you? You'd be head of your own department just the same. And even if you did give up—You are so stubborn! It's lack of imagination. You think that because you've started in on one tiny branch of mental activity, there's nothing else in the world. It's just as when I persuaded you that if you got out of your stinking laboratory once a week or so, and actually bent your powerful intellect to a game of golf, the world of science wouldn't immediately stop! No imagination! You're precisely like these business men you're always cursing because they can't see anything in life beyond their soap-factories or their banks!'" Chapter 40, p. 443.

"'I feel as if I were really beginning to work now,' said Martin. 'This new quinine stuff may prove pretty good. We'll plug along on it for two or three years, and maybe we'll get something permanent—and probably we'll fail!'" Chapter 40, p. 450.

Topics for Discussion

Martin is immediately drawn to the mysterious Professor Gottlieb while the other medical students make fun of Gottlieb. What does Martin see in Professor Gottlieb that the other students do not?

Sinclair Lewis is noted for writing brilliant satire. Discuss the technique of satire and why this novel is the perfect example of that style.

Discuss the concept of success. What characters in the novel do you consider to be successful? Why?

Martin gets varying definitions of success from several people. Do you think he has achieved success by the end of the book?

Discuss the differences between Leora and Joyce and the impact they each had on Martin's life.

In this book Sinclair Lewis ridicules the flaws in the medical and pharmaceutical worlds in the early 1900s. What would Lewis think of today's medical practices, pharmaceutical giants and health insurance in America?

In what ways can you compare Martin's life to your own life as you make important career and life decisions?