

## Paul's Manipulation of the Three Major Women in D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*

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### Abstract

This paper investigates the development of Paul's personality and the influences that shaped it in D.H. Lawrence's major novel *Sons and Lovers*. The study has approached the novel from psychological perspective, particularly, emphasizing the protagonist's various attempts to manipulate the three women characters he came in contact with, in order to create a personality for his own self, and it also reveals Lawrence's treatment of women through the delineation of their characters and their relationship to Paul Morel. The qualitative research paradigm is adopted focusing on textual data analysis of the novel. The findings of the study revealed that what Lawrence actually wrote about was the relationship between man and a series of female stereotypes, for women characters were treated unfairly by the author, who seems to blame them for their attempts to absorb the character of Paul. And that a healthy and successful relationship between men and women is a dream that is difficult to achieve. This can be seen through Paul's failure to establish a successful and healthy relationship with all of the three women characters in the novel. At the end of the novel, Paul decides to free himself and go on alone. Freedom is what he has been looking for, and that kind of free life cannot be achieved unless he runs away from the women he came to know.

**Keywords:** Female, male, manipulation, relationship, stereotype

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### **Paul's Manipulation of the Three Major Women in D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers***

D.H. Lawrence's men and women are simply human nature, with the elemental endowment of instincts and passional impulses in more than the normal measure. In order to lay the souls of his characters naked in front of the readers, Lawrence probes deep into the human consciousness and makes a study of pain, pleasure, hate, arising from the interplay of sex. He goes to the extent of probing deep into his characters' subconscious and the unconscious. His characters tend to be centers of radiation, quivering, with the exchange of impulses, as the carriers of the vital life-force. What this paper tends to achieve is to shed some light on the three major women characters and their relationship to Paul Morel in Lawrence's major novel *Sons and Lovers*; the paper will also unveil the influence the three women have on Paul's make-up and temperament, and his ways of manipulating them for self-interests.

Right from the beginning till the end of *Sons and Lovers*, we come in contact with various women characters, one after the other. A few of these characters pervade the whole atmosphere of the novel from the beginning till the end. All the major women characters have been delineated so artistically and intimately that the reader feels he/she knows them personally. A few of these characters have their counterparts in real life.

In an effort at self-identification, Paul Morel manipulates the three major characters (the mother, Mirriam, and Calra) to become himself. They are delineated as merely instruments to achieve that identification. Paul Morel is a curiously passive figure in comparison with his elder brother William, who, until his death, is the lover and of whom Paul is extremely jealous. But Paul, at the age of fourteen, when he is expected to go out into the world and make his living, has no higher goal than the regressive one of living with his mother. In this connection, Lawrence says:

His ambition, as far as this world's gear went, was quietly to earn his thirty-five shillings a week somewhere near home, and then, when his father died, have a cottage with his mother, paint and go out as he liked, and live happily ever after p. 113

This wish-fulfillment is actually expressed by Lawrence himself in a letter to Earnest Collings (Letters, 17 January 1913) When he said: "It is hopeless for me to try to do anything without having a woman at the back of me ... I daren't sit in the world without a woman behind me" (p. 93). This quote suggests the autobiographical element in the novel; Paul can be seen as a copy of Lawrence himself, who was also attached to his own mother. "After his brother William's death, Paul becomes his mother's favorite and struggles throughout the novel to balance his love for her with his relationships with other women" (<http://www.sparknotes.com>). Thus it is clear to us that Paul is a shadow of his mother, and cannot live without her being by his side, even in the smallest things he tries to accomplish. Some critics think that Lawrence has not done justice to the women characters in his novel, but justice is what he wanted to do to his protagonist Paul, who, throughout the narrative, tries to free himself from the negative influence the three women try to exert on his soul.

Instead of attempting at the creation of the other sex, Lawrence is usually defining some aspect of himself in his portraits of women because he is an extremely egotistical writer. Lawrence's main object was always to examine the male psyche and to use his women characters to that end. Lawrence's women are allowed their liberty only in so far as they will always acknowledge him as the master. Lawrence remained deeply bound to his early Eastwood life. In that his later relations with women were determined by his privileged mother's boy status and his taking over many feminine characteristics. Lawrence's later longing for a tender male

friendship comes from the nurturing companionship between his father and his father's male friends at the pit; a community life, from which the women were completely excluded. Morel's ineffectual attempts to control his wife and dominate her, by physical means if necessary, were later mirrored in Lawrence's struggles with Frieda. Because the world of the novel is a patriarchal one, husbands in *Sons and Lovers* are called "masters who always try to subdue their wives" (Frieda Lawrence, 1934, p. 32). Lawrence isn't concerned with women as themselves, but only as examples; he has marked a tendency to undervalue individuality in women, and to value them as supporters to males. Mrs. Morel is much more of a stereotype than her husband. But since Paul is dependent on his mother for emotional security and self-esteem, he is unable to appreciate his father's qualities because this would have been seen as treachery by his mother. But the reality is that Paul sides with his father, whom he things lives life naturally, without affectation and prejudices, while his mother represents the social class system which existed in England and caused much discrimination between the upper and lower classes.

In *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence presents Paul as a male version of Mrs. Morel only because he is afraid that he is like his father. He even looks like her: "Paul was now fourteen, and was looking for work. He was rather small and rather finely-made boy, with dark hair and light blue eyes" (p. 112). There is a great deal of class antagonism here. Paul, through his mother, is determined that he will not be a common laborer. Social mobility demands that he take on the characteristics of Mrs. Morel's lower middle class status. The children refuse to speak in dialect and they read books only to find a position in that society, so what makes them avoid being like their father Mr. Morel, is not their hatred for him, but their desire to rise in class and be intellectuals like their mother. In an article written on the languages the Morels use in *Sons and Lovers*, Ross (2014) stated "Walter Morel is a dialect speaker, and his speech predictably becomes tinged with associations of brutality and ignorance, though it is initially attractive to Gertrude and displays, again, a kind of erotic masculine robustness" (p. 3). The children's struggle in their relationships with their mother and father is symbolic of the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, which is a common theme that runs throughout all of Lawrence's major novels. Lawrence himself was with the blood, rather than with the mind, because, according to Lawrence, we can go wrong with our minds, but what our hearts feel is always true.

Lawrence found it hard to resist the temptation of blaming women. For coming too close and impinging on his divine selfhood, or for being too detached and daring to have a life of his own. *Sons and Lovers* is concerned mainly with condemning Mrs. Morel for her stifling hold on Paul. He is presented as a mere victim on whom her view of the world is forcibly branded. As Jessie Chambers pointed out, "the climatic rejection of Miriam does not come about because Paul has made a conscious decision, but because he cannot successfully resist his mother" (p. 69). In other words, Paul is an object over whom two strong women are struggling. He attempts to justify this action by insisting on Miriam's inadequacies, both as a personality and, specifically in sexual terms. However, as Lawrence himself said in a letter to A.D. McLeod, "one sheds one's sickness in books" (Letters, p. 150). One of the main sicknesses has been pointed out by Helen Corke, one of the most perceptive of Lawrence's early critics. In the novel, Mrs. Morel is a *type* of woman, so is Miriam and so is Clara. Lawrence's error was to talk in terms of Man and Woman; whereas, as Corke (1968a) says, "there is no such abrupt and total distinction between the sexes" (p. 71).

What makes Paul very cruel is his effort to emancipate himself from the influence of his mother. In spite of his deep involvement with his mother, he is determined to get away from her and his passion for her in the end is unreal and self-indulgent, in line with his self-dramatizing desire to join her in death, as stated by Sagar (2011, p. 27). All this is healthy in the sense that

Paul must separate himself from his mother in order to survive. As she is dying, Paul wishes her to get it over as quickly as possible with little pain. It can be argued that this intensity is simply a mask for Paul's terrible pain, and yet, there is also a very real sense in which Paul wants to see his mother off, since she has ended her usefulness to him. According to Lawrence's gloss on the novel, in the Garnett letter (Letters, pp. 76-7), "Mrs. Morel realizes that she is an obstacle to Paul's sex life and so decides to die." There is truth in this view, but it also indicates that Paul was never able to develop an adult relationship with his mother, and therefore remained an abandoned child, rather than a male lover. The Paul that can be seen at the end of the novel is a child rather than a grow-up man, who can face reality and start a life of his own.

In order to make sense of his story, Lawrence had to create women characters that are not really credible, so that he could avoid guilt and responsibility. And the relationship with the mother (the magical figure) who is literally breathing life and purpose into her son, and on one occasion, saving him from death, is the basis on which Lawrence was later to found his theory of the man-woman relationship. This theory as stated in *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (Lawrence, 1921) is little different from the ideal life of Paul Morel when he works at the factory and comes home to be restored by the admiration of his mother. In the unpublished foreword that Lawrence wrote to *Sons and Lovers*, and made clear in a letter to Garnett, he says:

Now every woman, according to her kind, demands that a man shall come home to her with joy and weariness of the work he has done during the day: that he shall then while he is with her, be re-born of her; that in the morning he shall go forth with his new strength. Pp. 101-2

The above quote shows a negative male passivity, which renders man weak and helpless in the face of Eve. This demand made by woman cannot and shouldn't affect the law of polarity advocated by Lawrence in almost all his works. Lawrence's law of polarity advocates respect and equality between the sexes, which is absent in real life, and which causes the failure of so many relationships.

Lawrence's novel *The Trespasser* shows the same pattern of male passivity, victimized by representative woman, in which Siegmund kills himself because he failed to resolve the situation between himself and two women. In the final chapter we see the Lawrentian self-pity, where the women concerned are shown getting on with life after Siegmund has hanged himself. Despite the weaknesses of his hero, women are blamed. The same kind of sexual repression was suffered by Helena as the wretched Miriam: "She belonged to that class of 'dreaming women' with whom passion exhausts itself at the mouth" (*The Trespasser*, 1912, p. 23). Siegmund's wife, on the other hand, is a bad housekeeper whose husband is a kind of lover who feels inadequate to the demands of women. Finally, Siegmund is destroyed by the two women. Lawrence's basic sickness, which paradoxically provided much of the most compelling material in his work, is a series of conflicts aroused by his Oedipal situation with his mother. It is often, as here, conceived of as a battle to the death between Man and Woman. Siegmund is killed, but, in *Sons and Lovers* Paul manages to kill his mother, or at least, hasten her death. So if this relationship is to be termed as battle, then Paul is to be considered the winner, simply because he is able to save his soul.

The following scene from *Sons and Lovers* is an important and instructive one as regards to Lawrence's attitude to women. In this scene Paul breaks Annie's doll and gives it a strangely vindictive funeral that suggests Lawrence's hatred of women, though he is deeply upset at the

pain he has caused:

Let's make a sacrifice of Arabella," he said, "Let's burn her." She was horrified, yet rather fascinated. She wanted to see what the boy would do. He made an altar of bricks, pulled some of the savings out of Arabella's body, put the waxen fragments into the hollow face, poured on a little paraffin, and set the whole thing alight. He watched with wicked satisfaction the drops of wax melt off the broken forehead of Arabella, and drop like sweat into the flame. So long as the stupid big doll burned he rejoiced in silence. At the end he poked among the embers with a stick, fished out the arms and legs, all blackened, and smashed them under stones. "That's the sacrifice of Miss Arabella," he said. "An' I'm glad there's nothing left of her. pp. 75-6

In the same way, Paul hates Miriam because he has broken her since she has failed to rise to his requirements and deserves to be discarded, just like a toy in the hands of a child.

The above passage is significant because of the language Paul used to describe his emotional response to the situation, the "stupid" doll, "wicked satisfaction" etc. Paul's unconscious intention in burning the doll is to revenge himself on a female substitute when he thinks he can get away with it. It seems that Lawrence is condemning Miriam for her excessive love for her little brother. But it's notable that Lawrence himself felt a deep affection for young children, as expressed in his poem, "A Baby Running Barefoot" (in actual fact, the child of his London landlady). Apparently, this was acceptable; what was unacceptable was children coming between the male protagonist and women.

What is at the center of *Sons and Lovers* is Paul's weird and absorptive relationship with Miriam. Lawrence tries to be just in his assessment of the failure of this relationship, and he shows Paul's contribution to that failure. It can be deduced that both Miriam and his mother are to blame, Paul is not. Again he is acted upon, rather than active. Paul bitterly resents the emotional hold of both, Miriam and his family have on him. It's because Paul is not an adult, he cannot choose for himself. Similarly, he doesn't really choose Clara Dawes; he just suggested the idea to his mother who encouraged him to go ahead, and he actually did after her permission. Lawrence is here revealing the inner consciousness of his protagonist Paul, since the novel was originally entitled *Paul Morel*. From *A Personal Record* (1935), we know that Jessie Chambers had a strong hold on Lawrence because, as she thought, he was unable to desert her, since she was necessary to his career. This factor is very much presented in the novel, where Miriam is cast as a disciple, rather than any kind of intellectual equal. Paul's brutal insensitivity to Miriam often repels even the mild creature Lawrence wishes to recast Jessie as:

Miriam was the threshing floor on which he threshed out all his beliefs. While he trampled his ideas upon her soul, the truth came out for him. She alone was his threshing floor. She alone helped him towards realization. Almost impassive, she submitted to his argument and expounding. And somehow, because of her, he gradually realized where he was strong. And what he realized, she realized. She felt he could not do without her. P. 279

The above passage indicates that Paul wants to maintain a sexless companionship with Miriam, so that he can continue to have her help with his work, without giving anything in turn. She is a source of inspiration to him. His cruelty consists in the fact that he doesn't treat her as a real human being, with needs and desires. Clara often believes that Paul is mistaken in his

interpretation of this situation, and it is his sexual inhibition that causes the terrible tensions between them. He occasionally realizes this fact, but he continues to blame his own mother for this failure.

Lawrence wants to blame Miriam here because of her lack of self-confidence which has never been displayed in the text. In a sense Miriam appears to be "a strong figure with a secure sense of herself and of her surroundings" (Corke, 1933b, p. 25), but in this, she is merely being manipulated as a mirror image of Paul. He wants her to write, though she shows no real aptitude for it and he wants her to have his own interests. What she must not do is compete with him. "Perhaps he could not love her. Perhaps she had not in herself that which he wanted. It was the deepest motive of her soul, this self-mistrust" (p. 271). To Paul's disappointment, Miriam is not all the accepting fantasy-figure he would like her to be, and she is not a passive figure.

The following scene suggests a typical movement in the dealings between man and woman occurs in Lawrence's work. Paul is complaining that Miriam is making unnatural demands on him which he is right to refuse to fulfill:

You don't want to love-your eternal and abnormal craving is to be loved.  
You aren't positive, you're negative. You absorb, absorb, as if you  
must fill yourself up with love, because you've got a shortage  
somewhere. P. 268

If Paul is talking about his mother, this statement would be irrelevant to the situation. Her demands on his love are excessive and unnatural; but he has allowed them to be so. Paul wants to maintain his relationship with the Lievers because they provide him with what he does not get at home. In his immaturity, Paul thinks that he can continue to have all the privileges of a relationship without the responsibility. After his cold reception by Miriam in one of the scenes, Paul turns to Edgar in order to punish her for the pain he caused for himself. This is contained in the following sentence: "At this time he gave all his friendship to Edgar" (p. 180). This is hard to credit because Miriam is not the only one to blame for whatever pain is caused.

When she brought about the first meeting between Paul and Clara, Miriam doesn't show any lack of self-confidence. According to Lawrence, she sees it as a test, in which Paul must choose the higher (herself) over the lower (Clara). This cannot be totally correct since no woman would bring a rival to herself, especially when love is concerned. Here again, Paul is using women to explain his own personal problems. It is possible that Miriam might want to force the issue by indicating the existence of other kinds of women. Physically, Miriam is described as fully mature; and there are many occasions when she is expecting an "animal" response from him, as stated by Murfin (1987). Notably, during the holiday at Mapplethorpe:

He turned and looked at her. She stood beside him, forever in shadow. Her face, covered with the darkness of her hat, was watching him unseen. But she was brooding. She was slightly afraid-deeply moved and religious. That was her best state. He was impotent against it. His blood concentrated like a flame in his chest. But somehow she ignored him. She was expecting some religious state in him. p. 220

Lawrence's following interpretation is that Miriam could scarcely stand the shock of physical love. The references, in the above passage, to Miriam's religious quality seem more like special pleading to disguise Paul's own ineffectuality. The transference of Paul's interest from Miriam to

Clara, is indicated at the point where the three meet Limb with the stallion.

Paul's interest shifts from Miriam to Clara Dawes, and this fickle-mindedness is indicated when the three of them meet Limb with the stallion. Miss Limb's admiration for the masculinity of the horse embarrasses both Paul and Miriam, but Clara is aware of the fact that Miss Limb wants a man. Paul insists that "it is the loneliness sends her cracked" (p. 250), in other words, lack of friendship is more important than lack of sex. Soon after this incident, Paul forgets Miriam and turns his attention towards Clara, demonstrating his desire to control her through pity. "Rather than walking, her handsome body seemed to be blundering up the hill. A hot wave went over Paul. He was curious about her. Perhaps life had been cruel to her" (p. 201).

It seems that Paul takes pleasure in seeing women suffer physically. Miriam is often described as clumsy and her lack of physical dexterity is insisted on rather gloatingly in contrast to Paul's own neatness and competence in everyday domestic affairs. Paul considers himself a better woman than any of the actual women that he encounters. His critical attitude to women is literally deadly. It is only Clara who is able to point out some confused elements in Paul's response, but he avoids the issue by treating her remarks as a form of love-play:

"I have no doubt." said Clara, "that you would much rather fight for a woman than let her fight for herself."

"I would. When she fights for herself she seems like a dog before a looking-glass, gone into a mad fury with its own shadow."

"And you are the looking glass?" she asked, with a curl of the lip.

"Or the shadow," he replied.

"I am afraid," she said, "that you are too clever."

"Well, I leave it to you to be good," he retorted, laughing "Be *good* sweet maid, and just let *me* be clever." P. 215

The above words indicate that there is a perverse kind of sexual feeling here. One which rejoices in failure, unhappiness and physical suffering in woman; all states that allow the male to dominate. The dialogue makes Clara miserable rather than happy. Needless to say that any reciprocal move on the part of women to comfort men is seen as stifling and destructive. At the age of twenty one, Paul writes Miriam a letter which doesn't show he has grown up to be an adult. In the letter he says: "See, you are a nun. I have given you what I would give a holy nun-as a mystic monk to a mystic nun" (p. 270). These words demonstrate his lack of awareness about himself, and the affectation of style in this passage conveys clearly the unreality of the emotion. In any case, what had the non-conformist Paul to do with mystic nuns? It appears that Paul is accusing Miriam of a fault that very much exists in his character.

Clara's episode is, in many ways, the scheme of *Sons and Lovers*. Lawrence has intended it merely to show that Paul was capable of successful sexual relations, and that Clara, who is much older than him, seems to be swept away by his expertise, and that Paul is her "boss." "Here, I say, you seem to forget I'm your boss. It just occurs to me" (p. 290). And in spite of her attempt to appear superior, she is in fact subject to his will. A very titillating situation and one that Lawrence would have liked to get every woman into. Once Clara has fulfilled her purpose of vindicating Paul sexually, she can be casually handed back to her husband, in whom Paul is actually more interested.

Lawrence's later protagonists seem to impose themselves on their women. In itself it mirrors his own struggles to escape from his mother, as he described them in a letter to Garnett:

"I had a devil of a time getting a bit weaned from my mother at the age of 22. She suffered, and I suffered, and it seemed all for nothing, just waste cruelly. It's funny. I suppose it is the final breaking away to independence." P. 112.

Fearing the role of the helpless victim, and engaged in a life-long struggle for self-assertion, Lawrence has always made an effort to assert himself as a man, and that was not easy for him, especially with the dominant women. This effort made him unable to accept women as individuals.

The relationship between Paul, Clara and Dawes is a clear case of this kind of manipulative interest on the part of the author. In spite of their initial passion, Paul loses interest and Clara asks the following question: "is it *me* you want or is it *It*?" (p. 310), this question raises indignation in Lawrence and his protagonists because this reduces them to only objects of desire and fulfillment. But since Clara is a married woman, she has no claim on him and can make no demands. According to Ford (1970), the only source of danger, if there is any, is that of Miriam, who wants to "absorb" him completely (p. 88). Paul fears that she would take him away from his only "beloved" and that is his mother, since she is a mother-figure.

In *Phoenix* (1912-1930) Lawrence stated that Paul's growing love for Clara is repulsed because of her "nagging desire to get at him and possess him" (p. 77). Therefore, he begins to instruct her as a wife and to reprimand her for treating her husband rather rottenly. She accepts his claim and he was surprised. It's all right for Paul to leave Clara now because he has relieved her of her self-mistrust and had given her herself, but this wouldn't be easy for Clara since her life would be an ache after him. But now their "missions" were separate.

Withdrawing love from a series of women and criticizing and rejecting them seems to be Lawrence's mission. The fight between Paul and Baxter Dawes indicates much more sexual tension than ever was in the descriptions of physical love between Paul and Clara. According to Ingersoll (2014), when Paul's inevitable beating by Baxter Dawes occurs, Paul seems strangely unprepared, not only physically--even after all the talk earlier about defending himself--but also psychologically (n.p.). At the end of it, all Paul wants to do is to get to his mother. The repetition emphasizes the urgency: "he wanted to get to his mother--he must get to his mother--that was his blind intention" (p. 315). When Clara and Miriam visit him on his sick-bed, he rejects them both. It is because he believed that being involved with women is dangerous, but the physical contact with men is infinitely more exciting. When Paul visits Dawes in hospital, "the two men were afraid of the naked selves they had been" (p. 316). After the interview, "the strong emotion that Dawes aroused in him, repressed, made him shiver" (Ibid). Interwoven with this new concern with a man is the actual death of Mrs. Morel and the symbolic death of Paul's relationship with Clara. Paul uses the death of his mother as an excuse to drive Clara away from him. He tells her that he grudges the food his mother wants to eat. He condemns his mother for wanting to live, for wanting to continue to be with him. His attitude to her is vindictive; and the reader is not made to feel that this is simply a reaction to his mother's unbearable pain. Paul's feelings are summed up in his short, brutal sentences, "she won't die," "I don't want her to eat," "I wish she'd die" (p. 317). In the end Paul literally kills his mother, and, whatever the conscious motivation, it is clear that they are both aware that this will happen and are engaged in a terrible battle. And what is intolerable is the mother's will to live, but as soon as she has been overcome by death; Paul falls

into a sentimental lover like relationship with her. She becomes the young girl whom he would always like to see. This has been explicitly stated in the exchange between them on the trip to Lincoln: "why can't a man have a young mother? What is she old for?" (p. 260). The final scene between Paul and his mother is definitive:

She lay like a maiden asleep ... She lay like a girl asleep and dreaming of her love. The mouth was a little open, as if wondering from the suffering, but her face was young, her brow clear and white as if life had ever touched it. He looked again at the eyebrows, at the small, winsome nose a bit on one side. She was young again. Only the hair as it arched so beautifully from her temples was mixed with silver, and the two simple plaits that lay on her shoulders were filigree of silver and brown. She would wake up. She would lift her eyelids. She was with him still. He bent and kissed her passionately. pp. 485-6

The sleeping beauty connotations of this make clear the acknowledged fact that Paul was his mother's true husband. It is a symbolic picture of the essence of their purified and idealized relationship. The reality is that Paul has ruthlessly dispatched his mother because her continued existence and his inability to resolve the situation had become unbearable to him.

In the last scene, Paul can't take Miriam even after the death of his mother. This is an indicator of his immaturity and narcissism. Paul summed up the problem himself when he spoke to his mother of his inability to relate to his lovers as people: "You know, mother, I think there must be something the matter with me, that I can't love ... sometimes, when I see her just as the woman, I love her, mother; but then, when she talks and criticizes, I often don't listen to her" (p. 426). This is a true misogynistic attitude which only a selfish man can experience; Paul utters the above words only to please his mother at the cost of Miriam.

It is a response that Lawrence exploited in many of his later novels, usually to the detriment of women in general. The truth is that the Lawrence hero can't cope with women except in their maternal aspect or as faceless objects of passion. His descriptions of intercourse rely heavily on the pleasures of a descent to the unconscious and obviously contain an incipient death-wish. A woman, after all, can only give the unimportant part of herself to work; the rest must be available for the use of man.

It is wonder that Miriam remarks, in one of the truest sentences in the novel, "I've said you were only fourteen-you are only four!" (p. 190). Yet again, Lawrence makes Paul project his own feelings onto Miriam, to escape guilt:

She knew she felt in a sort of bondage to him, which she hated because she could not control it. She had hated her love for him from the moment it grew too strong for her. And, deep down, she had hated him because she loved him and he dominated her. She had resisted his domination. She had fought to keep herself free for him in the last issue. pp. 361-2

The above passage indicates that Miriam loves Paul and wants a lifelong relationship with him. The refusal and hesitation is all on his side. Miriam can't win because she would have been thrown out as a dominant woman by Paul. Paul is here condemning Miriam for not taking an active role, the role appropriate to himself as the male partner. His basic emotional response is fear of Miriam because she has forced him into the realization of the hate and misery of another failure.

The final pages of the novel concern Paul's determination to go on alone. As has often been noted, the "healthy" aspects of his mental state at this point are his urge to go towards the town (life) and reject the darkness (death); and the final word of the text is "quickly," used in both its senses. However, the mystical solution which Lawrence presents is not very satisfactory. Paul's mother, like Wordsworth's Lucy, has become part of the universe: "Who could say his mother had lived and did not live? She had been in one place, and was in another; that was all ... Now she was gone abroad into the night, and he was with her still" (p. 510).

This cannot be called a real consolation since what Paul wants is the actual physical presence of his mother, and he wants this much more than he ever wanted Miriam or Clara. The tone of the above passage shows how desolate Paul is. Paul has never become an adult—he has never emerged as a separate human being. What Lawrence presents here is a false situation and a false resolution of it. In his letters, and in *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1921-1922), he writes about the Paul Morel kind of dilemma, and, as usual, generalizes it into a common problem of the time by saying:

You have done what is vicious for any parent to do; you have established between your child and yourself the bond of adult love ... When Mrs. Ruskin said that John Ruskin should have married his mother, she spoke the truth. He was married to his mother. Pp. 120-21

Lawrence's own attachment to his mother, from which he was never able to release himself, meant that he was unable to relate to women as people. Given that he took the man-woman relationship as his great theme, this is rather a serious limitation. Insisting as he had to do because of his theoretical views, on total polarity of the sexes, he fell into the trap of producing diagrams, rather than portraits. Lawrence's psychic history meant that, in spite of his often brilliant insights, he was unable to present women as they are. Frieda Lawrence (1934), in her book *Not I But The Wind* (1934), has given a succinct summary of Lawrence's own sense of his dilemma: "In his heart of hearts I think he always dreaded women, felt that they were in the end more powerful than men. Woman is so absolute and undeniable" (pp. 52-3).

In conclusion, one can say that, instead of examining the interactions of real men and women, what Lawrence actually wrote about was the relationship between man and a series of female stereotypes. And that a healthy and successful relationship between men and women is a dream that is difficult to achieve, and is not possible unless both acknowledge the identity of the other, and unless it is built on respect and mutual understanding.

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- her, and unless it is built on respect and mutual understanding.