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SONS AND LOVERS - THE RAINBOW

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The Rainbow is a 1915 novel by British author D. H. Lawrence. It follows three generations of the Brangwen family living in Nottinghamshire,[2] particularly focusing on the individual's struggle to growth and fulfilment within the confining strictures of English social life.

Plot

The Rainbow tells the story of three generations of the Brangwen family, a farm/ labouring dynasty who live in the East Midlands of England near Nottingham. The book spans a period of roughly 65 years from the 1840s to 1905, and shows how the love relationships of the Brangwens change against the backdrop of the increasing industrialisation of Britain. The first central character, Tom Brangwen, is a farmer whose experience of the world does not stretch beyond Nottinghamshire; while the last, Ursula, his granddaughter, studies at University and becomes a teacher in the progressively urbanised, capitalist and industrial world that would become our modern experience.

The book starts with a description of the Brangwen dynasty, then deals with how Tom Brangwen, one of several brothers, fell in love with a Polish refugee, Lydia. The next part of the book deals with Lydia's daughter by her first husband, Anna, and her destructive, battle-riven relationship with her husband, Will, the son of one of Tom's brothers. The last and most extended part of the book, and also probably the most famous, then deals with Will and Anna's daughter, Ursula, and her struggle to find fulfilment for her passionate, spiritual and sensual nature against the confines of the increasingly materialist and conformist society around her. She experiences a lesbian relationship with a teacher, and a passionate but ultimately doomed love affair with Anton Skrebensky, a British soldier of Polish ancestry. At the end of the book, having failed to find her fulfilment in Skrebensky, she has a vision of a rainbow towering over the Earth, promising a new dawn for humanity:

"She saw in the rainbow the earth's new architecture, the old, brittle corruption of houses and factories swept away, the world built up in a living fabric of Truth, fitting to the over-arching heaven."

Censorship

Lawrence's frank treatment of sexual desire and the power it plays within relationships as a natural and even spiritual force of life, though perhaps tame by modern standards, caused *The Rainbow* to be prosecuted in an obscenity trial in late 1915, as a

result of which all copies were seized and burnt. After this ban it was unavailable in Britain for 11 years, although editions were available in the USA.

This detailed literature summary also contains Related Titles and a Free Quiz on **The Rainbow** by D. H. Lawrence.

The Rainbow chronicles three generations of Brangwens living near Marsh Farm. Sexually stormy marriages set the stage for conflict and power struggles within the home. Tradition, passion, children, and compromise define the Brangwen clan, giving its members both happiness and sadness. Ursula Brangwen, the granddaughter of the original Brangwens, takes on the pressures of her upbringing in order to experience life and love on her own terms.

The Brangwen family has lived at Marsh Farm for many generations. The family has a long established connection with the earth. When Tom Brangwen inherits the farm, he wants to add excitement to his life by marrying Lydia, a recent widow, and a Polish exile. Lydia has a daughter, Anna, from her previous marriage. Tom and Lydia's marriage is distant and silent. They do not understand each other, but have a strong sexual connection. During Lydia's pregnancy with Tom's children, Tom and Anna bond. Tom and Anna remain extremely close throughout her childhood. When Anna grows up, Tom has a difficult time dealing with Anna's marriage to his nephew, Will. Tom objects to Will and Anna's marriage at first, but eventually agrees to help them out.

Anna and Will set up their own home in a nearby cottage. They enjoy the first weeks of their marriage but quickly return to normal routines. Their marriage is full of passion, but is often sidetracked by many pregnancies. Anna is obsessed with fertility and Will withdraws into his handicraft hobbies. The only thing that bonds them to each other is sex. They battle each other for dominance in their stormy marriage, although neither one thinks that they are capable of understanding each other on anything other than a sexual level.

Will and Anna have eight children, the oldest of which is Ursula. Ursula dislikes having to take care of her younger brothers and sisters and longs for a more meaningful life. During her schooldays, she dreams of the life of the upper classes and explores her religious faith. She is often conflicted about the role of Christianity in everyday life. She falls in love with Anton Skrebensky, the son of an old family friend. When he goes to fight in South Africa, they are unsure how their relationship will progress.

Ursula finishes school after forming a relationship with one of her female teachers, Miss Inger. She is confused by Miss Inger's sexual advances, but eventually introduces her to her homosexual uncle. Miss Inger and the uncle marry to cover their homosexual activities. Ursula accepts a teaching position in a poor neighborhood, but continues to live at home. Ursula dislikes teaching, and particularly dislikes the corporal punishment she is forced to inflict on her students. After teaching for two years, she goes to college to get her degree. She enjoys the first year of college, especially Botany. Meanwhile, her father has been

promoted as an Arts and Handicrafts Instructor for the county. The whole family moves to a bigger house in a fancier neighborhood. They enjoy their new social position.
During her last year of college, Ursula reconnects with Anton Skrebensky. During his six-month leave from the army, he and Ursula begin an affair. Ursula loses interest in her classes and routinely leaves school to be with Anton. During the Easter holidays, the two of them go on holiday together, pretending to be married. Ursula fails her university exams and gets engaged to Anton. Ursula does not really want to marry Anton and calls off the engagement shortly before he leaves for India. After he leaves, Ursula realizes that she is pregnant. She tries to contact Anton, but he does not reply to her letters. She miscarries and loses her baby. She discovers a new independence and starts her life again novel by the English writer D. H. Lawrence. The Modern Library placed it ninth on their list of the 100 best novels of the 20th century. While the novel initially incited a lukewarm critical reception, along with allegations of obscenity, it is today regarded as a masterpiece by many critics and is often regarded as Lawrence's finest achievement.

Sons and Lovers

The third published novel of D. H. Lawrence, taken by many to be his earliest masterpiece, tells the story of Paul Morel, a young man and budding artist. Richard Aldington explains the semi-autobiographical nature of this masterpiece:

When you have experienced Sons and Lovers you have lived through the agonies of the young Lawrence striving to win free from his old life. Generally, it is not only considered as an evocative portrayal of working-class life in a mining community, but also an intense study of family, class and early sexual relationships.[*citation needed*]

The original 1913 edition was heavily edited by Edward Garnett who removed 80 passages, roughly a tenth of the text. The novel is dedicated to Garnett. Garnett, as the literary advisor to the publishing firm Duckworth, was an important figure in leading Lawrence further into the London literary world during the years 1911 and 1912. It was not until the 1992 Cambridge University Press edition was released that the missing text was restored.

Lawrence began working on the novel in the period of his mother's illness, and often expresses this sense of his mother's wasted life through his female protagonist Gertrude Morel. Letters written around the time of its development clearly demonstrate the admiration he felt for his mother – viewing her as a 'clever, ironical, delicately moulded woman' — and her apparently unfortunate marriage to his coal-miner father, a man of 'sanguine temperament' and instability. He believed that his mother had married below her class status. Rather interestingly, Lydia Lawrence wasn't born into the middle-class.[*clarification needed*] This personal family conflict experienced by Lawrence provided him with the impetus for the first half of his novel – in which both William, the older brother, and Paul Morel become increasingly contemptuous of their father – and the subsequent

exploration of Paul Morel's antagonising relationships with both his lovers, which are both incessantly affected by his allegiance to his mother.

The first draft of Lawrence's novel is now lost and was never completed, which seems to be directly due to his mother's illness. He did not return to the novel for three months, at which point it was titled 'Paul Morel'. The penultimate draft of the novel coincided with a remarkable change in Lawrence's life, as his health was thrown into turmoil and he resigned his teaching job to spend time in Germany. This plan was never followed, however, as he met and married the German minor aristocrat, Frieda Weekley, who was the wife of a former professor of his at the University of Nottingham. According to Frieda's account of their first meeting, she and Lawrence talked about Oedipus and the effects of early childhood on later life within twenty minutes of meeting.

The third draft of 'Paul Morel' was sent to the publishing house Heinemann; the response, a rather violent reaction, came from William Heinemann himself. His reaction captures the shock and newness of Lawrence's novel, 'the degradation of the mother [as explored in this novel], supposed to be of gentler birth, is almost inconceivable'; he encouraged Lawrence to redraft the novel one more time. In addition to altering the title to a more thematic 'Sons and Lovers', Heinemann's response had reinvigorated Lawrence into vehemently defending his novel and its themes as a coherent work of art. To justify its form, Lawrence explains, in letters to Garnett, that it is a 'great tragedy' and a 'great book', one that mirrors the 'tragedy of thousands of young men in England'.

Explanation of the novel's title

Lawrence rewrote the work four times until he was happy with it. Although before publication the work was usually called *Paul Morel*, Lawrence finally settled on *Sons and Lovers*. Just as the new title makes the work less focused on a central character, many of the later additions broadened the scope of the work, thereby making the work less autobiographical. While some of the edits by Garnett were on the grounds of propriety or style, others would once more narrow the emphasis back upon Paul.

Plot summary

Part I

The refined daughter of a "good old burgher family," Gertrude Coppard meets a rough-hewn miner at a Christmas dance and falls into a whirlwind romance characterised by physical passion. But soon after her marriage to Walter Morel, she realises the difficulties of living off his meagre salary in a rented house. The couple fight and drift apart and Walter retreats to the pub after work each day. Gradually, Mrs. Morel's affections shift to her sons beginning with the oldest, William.

As a boy, William is so attached to his mother that he doesn't enjoy the fair without her. As he grows older, he defends her against his father's occasional violence. Eventually,

he leaves their Nottinghamshire home for a job in London, where he begins to rise up into the middle class. He is engaged, but he detests the girl's superficiality. He dies and Mrs. Morel is heartbroken, but when Paul catches pneumonia she rediscovers her love for her second son.

Part II

Both repulsed by and drawn to his mother, Paul is afraid to leave her but wants to go out on his own, and needs to experience love. Gradually, he falls into a relationship with Miriam, a farmer's daughter who attends his church. The two take long walks and have intellectual conversations about books but Paul resists, in part because his mother disapproves. At Miriam's family's farm, Paul meets Clara Dawes, a young woman with, apparently, feminist sympathies who has separated from her husband, Baxter.

After pressuring Miriam into a physical relationship, which he finds unsatisfying, Paul breaks with her as he grows more intimate with Clara, who is more passionate physically. But even she cannot hold him and he returns to his mother. When his mother dies soon after, he is alone.

Lawrence summarised the plot in a letter to Edward Garnett on 12 November 1912: It follows this idea: a woman of character and refinement goes into the lower class, and has no satisfaction in her own life. She has had a passion for her husband, so her children are born of passion, and have heaps of vitality. But as her sons grow up she selects them as lovers — first the eldest, then the second. These sons are *urged* into life by their reciprocal love of their mother — urged on and on. But when they come to manhood, they can't love, because their mother is the strongest power in their lives, and holds them. It's rather like Goethe and his mother and Frau von Stein and Christiana — As soon as the young men come into contact with women, there's a split. William gives his sex to a fribble, and his mother holds his soul. But the split kills him, because he doesn't know where he is. The next son gets a woman who fights for his soul – fights his mother. The son loves his mother – all the sons hate and are jealous of the father. The battle goes on between the mother and the girl, with the son as object. The mother gradually proves stronger, because of the ties of blood. The son decides to leave his soul in his mother's hands, and, like his elder brother go for passion. He gets passion. Then the split begins to tell again. But, almost unconsciously, the mother realises what is the matter, and begins to die. The son casts off his mistress, attends to his mother dying. He is left in the end naked of everything, with the drift towards death.

Summary

"Hell Row" is a collection of cottages where colliers (coal-miners) live. They work nearby in the small gin-pits, as they have for years, and similar cottages dotting the countryside form the village of Bestwood. Roughly sixty years ago, large, financier-backed mines drove out the gin-pits. The company Carston, Waite and Co. appeared, and Hell Row

was burned down. Carston, Waite and Co. expanded their operations and developed six pits. They built housing for the miners; on the site of Hell Row, they established the Bottoms, seventy-two houses on six square blocks at the bottom of a hill. While the houses were fairly substantial and pleasant on the outside, the kitchens, which were the dwelling-rooms, opened on to the ash-pits in back.

Gertrude Morel, thirty-one years old, married for eight years, and expecting her third baby in September, is not pleased to move to the Bottoms in July, even though she has a more expensive and desirable house at the end of the strip. Walter Morel, her husband, is a miner. Three weeks into their stay, the wakes (a fair) begin, and he troops off one Monday morning to attend. Their children are excited: William, seven, goes off after breakfast, leaving behind Annie, five. Mrs. Morel promises to take her after dinner.

William returns for noontime dinner. After, he goes off on his own, and Mrs. Morel later takes Annie to the wakes. William has won two egg-cups from a game; Mrs. Morel knows he won them for her, and he gives them to her. He proudly shows her around the grounds. She leaves later with Annie, much to William's disappointment. William comes home later, unhappy from his mother's absence, and reports seeing his father working at a bar.

At night, Mrs. Morel goes to the side garden and watches families returning from the wakes. She feels dreary, as if nothing will happen to her in life. She cannot afford a third child, especially since her despised husband drinks away his wages. Her children are her only happiness. She later goes back into the house and laments her lost youth and feels powerless--only waiting--in life. Her husband returns late at night, and they get in an argument over whether he's been drinking. Mrs. Morel goes to bed.

Mrs. Morel comes from a good family. She has inherited her temper from her father, George Coppard, an engineer embittered by poverty. She hated her father's overbearing behavior toward her mother, whom she loved and favored. She thinks back on her youth, and remembers one afternoon spent behind her house with John Field, a well-educated young man who gave her a Bible that she still keeps. They discussed his reluctance to go into business; she had mistakenly believed that if one were a man, one could do anything.

She lost touch with Field. At twenty-three, she met twenty-seven-year-old Morel, a hearty, vigorous, humorous man, at a Christmas party. Her sensitive, quiet, intellectual nature was drawn to him, especially since he was completely opposite from her father. Morel, too, was fascinated by her refined qualities. They married the next Christmas, and she was very happy for several months. But it turned out they were not living in his own house, as Mrs. Morel believed, but overpaying rent to Morel's mother.

Morel's lie, his inability to communicate intimately, and his apparent increased drinking soured Mrs. Morel. She gave birth to William around their third Christmas together, and she turned her loneliness and disillusion into passionate love for him, much to Morel's

jealousy. They fought constantly over Morel's irresponsibility. One day, he cut off William's beautiful curly hair. This event finalized their rift, and Mrs. Morel would always remember it. Morel's tendency to mock his superiors led to his lower wages, which he squandered on drink.

On the Tuesday morning after the first day of the wakes, Jerry Purdy, Morel's best friend, visits. Mrs. Morel hates his cold, manipulative, and domineering nature. The men leave for a ten-mile walk to Nottingham, where they play cards for money. At the Bottoms, Mrs. Morel takes Annie to a nearby brook for relief from the heat. Morel irritably and drunkenly returns late at night. He and Mrs. Morel fight viciously about his drunkenness. He locks her out of the house, then goes to sleep at the kitchen table. Outside, her rage grows. After she raps for a long time at the window, Morel wakes up, ashamedly opens the door, and runs upstairs before she can be angry with him. She cleans up the kitchen and goes to bed, where he is asleep.

Analysis

Immediately apparent in the novel, especially to a reader in 1913, is its subject matter of miners. While Lawrence was certainly not the first English writer to depict the lower class, or even miners, he does so out of some personal experience (he maintained that the first part of Sons and Lovers was largely autobiographical) and with a keen ear for the rhythms of their speech Morel's especially and habits.

However, the first chapter is presented mostly from Mrs. Morel's point of view. Lawrence narrates in an omniscient voice that is at times detached the opening description of the Bottoms reads almost like the beginning to a fairy tale but more frequently zooms in on the interior emotions of each character.

Mrs. Morel's unhappy life is explored thoroughly. She represents intellect that has not been allowed to flourish because she is a woman; her shock that John Field could not do whatever he wanted as a man is a poignant projection of her own repressed ambitions. Her sense of being "buried alive" is a logical complaint for someone whose husband mines underground all day. However, she is just as repressed by their industrial life, a theme Lawrence will explore throughout the novel.

Though the sensual, passionate Morel seems an odd choice for Mrs. Morel, Lawrence demonstrates here, and elsewhere in the novel, how oppositions can attract as often as they repulse. Morel is also in attractive opposition to Mrs. Morel's loathed father. Still, the marriage is clearly a disaster, pitting mind against body, a conflict in which Lawrence was always interested. Morel is also irresponsible in regards to their children; he drinks away his wages, while Mrs. Morel lives only for William and Annie.

Sons and Lovers is informed by, and revises, Sigmund Freud's early psychoanalytic theories of sexuality. Freud's most famous theory, that of the Oedipus complex, in which the son unconsciously desires his mother sexually while murderously hating his father, is

given full treatment in the novel (the complex is named after the eponymous character in the Greek play Oedipus Rex). Here, the relationship between Mrs. Morel and William verges on romantic love; William wins her the egg-cups much as a lover proudly wins his girlfriend a prize at a fair, and he cannot enjoy himself once she leaves. Mrs. Morel, too, has projected the disappointment from her marriage into excessive love for her children, especially William. Lawrence uses several psychological symbols to demonstrate the complex relationships. Morel, threatened by his wife's love for their son, cuts off William's curly hair in a symbolic castration. Lawrence describes the act as "the spear through the side of her love for Morel." His metaphor suggests malevolent phallic imagery.

Tellingly, Mrs. Morel's first name, Gertrude, echoes that of the queen in Shakespeare's Hamlet, another work noted for its Oedipal themes.

Morel's physical presence seems to diminish around the house. He prefers to breakfast alone. Mrs. Morel gives birth to a boy while ill; Morel is indifferent. The Congressional clergyman, Mr. Heaton, visits her every day and becomes the child's godfather. Morel complains about the difficulty of his job in front of Heaton. One night, Mrs. Morel escapes to a meadow with Annie and the baby after Morel has kicked William. She watches the sky and feels peaceful in nature. The baby seems sad to her. Though it was brought into the world in an unloved state, she vows to compensate it with love from "all her soul." She calls him Paul.

On Friday night, Morel returns home late and drunk and, during a quarrel, throws a table drawer at his wife. It strikes her brow and draws blood. She pushes him away when he shows concern. When some of her blood drips on Paul, he helps her clean him up. The next day, Morel drinks to alleviate his guilt. However, he never apologizes and claims to himself that it was her fault. The family withdraws further from him.

With no money to drink more, Morel takes some from his wife's purse. Unable to pay for food the next day, she realizes her husband took her money. She confronts him and he denies doing it, then takes some belongings and leaves. The children are anxious he will not return, but their mother assures them he will be back that night. She is nervous, too, knowing that the family is dependent on him. She sees his bundle of belongings outside and knows he has not gone far. He returns later, and she mocks him for leaving his belongings nearby.

Analysis

Just as Mrs. Morel previously transferred her dissatisfaction with her life to her love for William, here we see her redouble those efforts with Paul. For every cruel turn Morel makes toward her, she reacts with overflowing love for her newborn child. This continues the Oedipal theme hinted at in Chapter I, and also bolsters the idea of oppositions playing off each other.

Another feature of oppositions explored here is how contradictory human nature is. Morel is usually heartless and detached, but he sometimes shows flashes of concern and love for his family. A greater contradiction emerges when he leaves, when Mrs. Morel realizes that "her heart was bitter, because she had loved him." In her anxiety over her husband's presumed departure, she has understood that she has some fund of love for him (they even share a somewhat romantic moment when he brings her tea in the morning). However, it is possible if she is confusing dependence with love, a mixture she seems to inflict upon her children as well.

Mrs. Morel gains insight into her life while in the meadow. In Chapter I, she was at peace among the flowers in her garden (the flowers will become an important symbol). The Modernist literary movement borrowed the Romantic tradition of transcendence in nature and frequently transplanted it to a number of other settings, including urban ones. James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, especially, were fascinated with how the single moment‹Joyce preferred the term "epiphany"; Woolf, "moments of being"‹could elevate a human beyond his normal mental and spiritual state into a transcendent vision of himself and the world. Lawrence continues to use nature as the setting for these epiphanies, and it seems a logical choice for Mrs. Morel, constrained by her house and the nearby dirty mines.

Lawrence is adept at planting small scenes within larger narrative sweeps to highlight general behavior. For instance, the scene in which Morel interrupts his wife and Heaton explains, without abstract commentary, Morel's jealousy over Heaton's relationship with his wife and even his child, his bitterness over his job in comparison with the clergyman's, and his growing irritation with his wife.

Morel is sick with inflammation of the brain, and Mrs. Morel nurses him in his ill mood. The neighbors help out with housework and money. Morel gets better and the relations between him and his wife are improved; he is dependent on her, and she can tolerate him now that she has a new baby. Mrs. Morel devotes her attention to William, who is growing into a smart, lively young man, while Morel feels left out. When Paul is seventeen months old, another boy is born, Arthur. Mrs. Morel is pleased that Arthur immediately loves his father, who often returns his affection.

Paul is small and reserved, follows his mother around, and sometimes cries without knowing why. William gets in trouble with a neighbor one day for ripping her son's collar. Morel wants to whip him for punishment, but Mrs. Morel threatens that he will regret it if he touches their son.

Mrs. Morel joins the Women's Guild, a club attached to the Bestwood Co-Operative Wholesale Society, where women meet weekly and discuss the social benefits of co-operation and other developments. Her children admire her membership in the intellectual community. When William is thirteen, his mother gets him a job at the Co-op office, though Morel wants him working in the mines. William attends night school and becomes an excellent clerk and book-keeper, and goes on to teach night school. He is an excellent

athlete and dancer. He gives his money to his mother and befriends the middle-class young men of Bestwood. He also enjoys the company of many girls in town, none of whom his mother approves of.

William leaves the Co-op when he is nineteen and gets a job, with a raise, in Nottingham. Annie is studying to be a teacher, Paul is doing well in school, and Arthur is trying to get a scholarship for school in Nottingham. After a year, William receives an offer for an even higher-paying job in London. His mother despairs, knowing she will miss him. He reads aloud and burns his love-letters from girls in front of Paul and his mother.

Analysis

The third chapter details the effects of the Oedipus complex that has been developing in the first two chapters, but with a twist‹it appears that, with William, there is a reverse Oedipus complex at play. Mrs. Morel seems to be in love with her son, who desires her approval but is not nearly as dependent on her as she is on him. Her jealousy over the girls who visit him and have sent him love-letters is thinly veiled.

The effect William's departure will have on Paul, her more effeminate son, is unclear, but we have seen ample evidence so far that Mrs. Morel has a tendency to transfer dissatisfied feelings from one area of her life (such as her marriage) to another area (her children). We may assume that she will project her longing for William onto Paul, though how that love may mutate is unclear.

Complicating this Oedipal relationship is Morel, who acts in an infantile, dependent manner and becomes, in effect, an ignored middle child. While this temporarily enhances his relationship with his wife, whatever love they had (which she admitted to having in the last chapter) is gone, and he no longer has the power of being an imposing father figure.

Alongside Morel's growing dependence is Mrs. Morel's burgeoning independence (aside from her dependence on her children). She easily defeats and bullies Morel in a fight and, more importantly, joins the Women's Guild and recalls her former intellectual skills that have been out of service for so long novel by the English writer D. H. Lawrence. The Modern Library placed it ninth on their list of the 100 best novels of the 20th century. While the novel initially incited a lukewarm critical reception, along with allegations of obscenity, it is today regarded as a masterpiece by many critics and is often regarded as Lawrence's finest achievement.

Lady Chatterley's Lover

Lady Chatterley's Lover is a novel by D. H. Lawrence, first published in 1928. The first edition was printed privately in Florence, Italy, with assistance from Pino Orioli; an unexpurgated edition could not be published openly in the United Kingdom until 1960. (A private edition was issued by Inky Stephensen's Mandrake Press in 1929.)[1] The book soon became notorious for its story of the physical (and emotional) relationship between a

working-class man and an upper-class woman, its explicit descriptions of sex, and its use of then-unprintable words.

The story is said to have originated from events in Lawrence's own unhappy domestic life, and he took inspiration for the settings of the book from Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, where he grew up. According to some critics, the fling of Lady Ottoline Morrell with "Tiger", a young stonemason who came to carve plinths for her garden statues, also influenced the story.[2] Lawrence at one time considered calling the novel *Tenderness* and made significant alterations to the text and story in the process of its composition. It has been published in three versions.

Plot introduction

The story concerns a young married woman, Constance (Lady Chatterley), whose upper-class husband, Clifford Chatterley, described as a handsome, well-built man, has been paralysed from the waist down due to a war injury. In addition to Clifford's physical limitations, his emotional neglect of Constance forces distance between the couple. Her sexual frustration leads her into an affair with the gamekeeper, Oliver Mellors. The class difference between the couple highlights a major motif of the novel which is the unfair dominance of intellectuals over the working class. The novel is about Constance's realisation that she cannot live with the mind alone; she must also be alive physically. This realisation stems from a heightened sexual experience Constance has only felt with Mellors, suggesting that love can only happen with the element of the body, not the mind.

Themes

In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence comes full circle to argue once again for individual regeneration, which can be found only through the relationship between man and woman (and, he asserts sometimes, man and man). Love and personal relationships are the threads that bind this novel together. Lawrence explores a wide range of different types of relationships. The reader sees the brutal, bullying relationship between Mellors and his wife Bertha, who punishes him by preventing his pleasure. There is Tommy Dukes, who has no relationship because he cannot find a woman whom he respects intellectually and, at the same time, finds desirable. There is also the perverse, maternal relationship that ultimately develops between Clifford and Mrs. Bolton, his caring nurse, after Connie has left.

Mind and body

Richard Hoggart argues that the main subject of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is not the sexual passages that were the subject of such debate but the search for integrity and wholeness.[3] Key to this integrity is cohesion between the mind and the body for "body without mind is brutish; mind without body... is a running away from our double being."[4]

Lady Chatterley's Lover focuses on the incoherence of living a life that is "all mind", which Lawrence saw as particularly true among the young members of the aristocratic classes, as in his description of Constance's and her sister Hilda's "tentative love-affairs" in their youth:

So they had given the gift of themselves, each to the youth with whom she had the most subtle and intimate arguments. The arguments, the discussions were the great thing: the love-making and connexion were only sort of primitive reversion and a bit of an anti-climax.[5]

The contrast between mind and body can be seen in the dissatisfaction each has with their previous relationships: Constance's lack of intimacy with her husband who is "all mind" and Mellors's choice to live apart from his wife because of her "brutish" sexual nature.[6] These dissatisfactions lead them into a relationship that builds very slowly and is based upon tenderness, physical passion, and mutual respect. As the relationship between Lady Chatterley and Mellors develops, they learn more about the interrelation of the mind and the body; she learns that sex is more than a shameful and disappointing act, and he learns about the spiritual challenges that come from physical love.

Neuro-psychoanalyst Mark Blechner identifies the "Lady Chatterley phenomenon" in which the same sexual act can affect people in different ways at different times, depending on their subjectivity.[7] He bases it on the passage in which Lady Chatterley feels disengaged from Mellors and thinks disparagingly about the sex act: "And this time the sharp ecstasy of her own passion did not overcome her; she lay with hands inert on his striving body, and do what she might, her spirit seemed to look on from the top of her head, and the butting of his haunches seemed ridiculous to her, and the sort of anxiety of his penis to come to its little evacuating crisis seemed farcical. Yes, this was love, this ridiculous bouncing of the buttocks, and the wilting of the poor insignificant, moist little penis."[8] Shortly thereafter, they make love again, and this time, she experiences enormous physical and emotional involvement: "And it seemed she was like the sea, nothing but dark waves rising and heaving, heaving with a great swell, so that slowly her whole darkness was in motion, and she was ocean rolling its dark, dumb mass."[9]

Class system and social conflict

Besides the evident sexual content of the book, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* also presents some views on the British social context of the early 20th century. For example, Constance's social insecurity, arising from being brought up in an upper-middle-class background, in contrast with Sir Clifford's social self-assurance, becomes more evident in passages such as:

Clifford Chatterley was more upper-class than Connie. Connie was well-to-do intelligentsia, but he was aristocracy. Not the big sort, but still *it*. His father was a baronet, and his mother had been a viscount's daughter.[10]

There are also signs of dissatisfaction and resentment of the Tevershall coal pit's workers, the colliers, against Clifford, who owned the mines. By the time Clifford and Connie had moved to Wragby Hall, Clifford's father's estate in Nottinghamshire, the coal industry in England seemed to be in decline, although the coal pit was still a big part in the life of the neighbouring town of Tevershall. References to the concepts of anarchism, socialism, communism, and capitalism permeate the book. Union strikes were also a constant preoccupation in Wragby Hall. An argument between Clifford and Connie goes:

”Oh good!, said Connie. “If only there aren’t more strikes!”

“What would be the use of their striking again! Merely ruin the industry, what’s left of it; and surely the owls are beginning to see it!”

“Perhaps they don’t mind ruining the industry,” said Connie.

“Ah, don’t talk like a woman! The industry fills their bellies, even if it can’t keep their pockets quite so flush,” he said, using turns of speech that oddly had a twang of Mrs. Bolton.

The most obvious social contrast in the plot, however, is that of the affair of an aristocratic woman (Connie) with a working class man (Mellors). Mark Schorer, an American writer and literary critic, considers a familiar construction in D.H. Lawrence's works the forbidden love of a woman of relatively superior social situation who is drawn to an "outsider" (a man of lower social rank or a foreigner), in which the woman either resists her impulse or yields to it.[12] Schorer believes the two possibilities were embodied, respectively, in the situation into which Lawrence was born, and that into which Lawrence married, therefore becoming a favorite topic in his work.

Familiar, too, to much of Lawrence's work is the nearby presence of coal mining. While it has a more direct role in *Sons and Lovers* and in *Women in Love*, it casts its influence over much of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* too. Lawrence's own father was a miner, and the author was intimately familiar with the region of the Derby/Notts coalfield, having been born at Eastwood, Nottingham. The significance of coal in the background to Lawrence's novels cannot be overstressed, when considering his treatment of social class issues. Involved with hard, dangerous and health-threatening employment, the unionized and self-supporting pit-village communities in Britain have been home to more pervasive class barriers than has been the case in other industries (for an example, see chapter two of The Road to Wigan Pier by George Orwell.) They were also centers of widespread non-conformist (Non-Anglican Protestant) religion, which tended to hold especially proscriptive views on matters such as adultery.