Restructuring the Lawrence Image: Dismissing Misogyny and Accepting Feminism

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I would like to thank Dr. Joyce Forbes for her excellent criticism throughout the duration of this study

Introduction

There have been various attacks upon Lawrence's literary reputation. Lawrence's representation of women is perhaps the most criticised aspect of his work, with formal criticism beginning as early as 1953 with Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex. Some critics even recognize John Middleton Murry's disparaging comments about Lawrence and women in Son of Woman as early feminist criticism (Balbert,4). However, the point of integration between feminist criticism and the Lawrence text is not nearly so important as the intense debate that has arisen concerning Lawrence and feminism. Lawrence criticism up until the 1980's has generally represented him as a misogynist writer. Only within the last few years has there been a resurgence of Lawrence philosophy through complimentary readings of Lawrence texts. I believe that some of the critics mentioned in this study--Blanchard, Simpson, MacLeod, Paglia--fall into this category, which is one of compassion and respect. Blanchard's "Love and Power: A Reconsideration of Sexual Politics in Lawrence", Simpson's D.H. Lawrence and Feminism, MacLeod's Lawrence's Men and Women and Paglia's Vamps and Tramps are included in this study. It should be noted that this resurgence is not a complete return to the values of the fifties, when male and female roles were clearly defined, a fact most notably demonstrated by Graham Hough in The Dark Sun. The readings are, instead, an acknowledgement of the male position, while yet retaining a level of faithfulness to feminism.

The structure of this particular study is meant to follow a similar pattern. I will not deny the importance of Lawrence in the

evolution of twentieth-century-literature or to my own educational and personal development. Lawrence is indeed a significant and informative writer. His insights and observations about the male/female relationship are unique and still hold interest for today's reader. Lawrence's theories, then, should maintain some level of credibility within the critical interpretations of his work. I feel Lawrence ideology has been generally ignored, especially in earlier essays, such as Millett's Sexual Politics. However, as a woman, I sympathize with criticism that rejects the continual emphasis on the phallus as an instrument of knowledge. The Lawrence critic now has two roles: she must acknowledge Lawrence's sexual teachings, and she must acknowledge them in a manner that is conscious of the feminist position.

Sheila MacLeod's 1985 book, Lawrence's Men and Women, is an exceptionally good study of Lawrence ideology, and it is always aware of the contradictions feminism imposes on the text. Even though it is essentially a close reading of Lawrence texts, she approaches the Lawrence text with willingness to consider the Lawrence philosophy. The allusions she makes to her own life and to her childhood are beneficial to students of Lawrence because they provide a measuring tape to determine the influence of Lawrence ideology on the female development. Is it beneficial to admire the phallus as an instrument of knowledge? MacLeod's answer is no. However, she does not underestimate the importance of Lawrence in her life or in the understanding of the development of all female lives.

Critics of the late sixties and early seventies also reject the Lawrence text. Kate Millett appears amazed that she should even be asked to consider Lawrence ideology. As with Millett, early feminist criticism tends to encompass two areas of concern: A feminist reading generally conceptualizes the text as the authoritative voice of women's experience. Lady Chatterley's submissive nature then becomes a comment about the rightful behaviour of all women; a feminist reading becomes a close reading of the text, paying little attention to other areas of discourse, i.e. essays, letters and biographies.[1] Also, the feminist is generally unwilling to separate Lawrence the writer from Lawrence's fictional characters. Biography becomes a major instrument of interpretation. This is Millett's greatest mistake. As tempting as it is to mix Lawrence's life with the text, (even Frieda does this in her autobiography 'Not I, But the Wind...'), the two mediums must remain separate. Even if Birkin closely resembles Lawrence, Birkin does not necessarily speak for Lawrence.[2] These concerns are also of primary interest to recent feminist critics. Unhappy with early feminist criticism, today's Lawrence critic confronts disloyalty to the Lawrence text while yet finding a place for woman within Lawrence ideology.

This study is meant to follow a similar pattern, one that "balances" (a notion that corresponds to the Lawrence text), Lawrence ideology and yet also acknowledges the somewhat awkward position Lawrence creates for the female reader. My aim is to dismiss the unpleasant term "misogyny" and represent the Lawrence

text in a feminist light. The reader at first might find this goal impossible. But Lawrence was indeed conscious of the feminist movement and attempted to incorporate feminism within his work.

My study is, then, twofold. Lawrence's sympathetic relation to feminism will be examined separately through various letters and biographies and then through various essays and three novels. Because of the complexity of this issue I felt the need to create a double thesis: Lawrence the writer as sympathetic to feminism versus the Lawrence text as sympathetic to feminism. The structure of this study is designed to parallel one section of the paper to a specific part of the thesis. The breakdown between author and text should move the reader away from strict biographical interpretation. It should be noted that I am not advocating the elimination of biographical criticism entirely. I realize that certain periods require biographical criticism: for example, the Romantic period. However, I am displeased with the manner in which biographical criticism can be used to diminish the text. This is a significant problem in Lawrence criticism. With intense biographical criticism, the life of the writer becomes more interesting and in a sense more valuable to a literary discussion than the text. Text and biography actually trade places, giving prominence to biographical facts instead of the issues of plot, structure, language, and so on. By separating biography from all discussions of the text, the student of Lawrence has a clear image of the writer and, at the same time, is acknowledging the text as a concrete, living entity that is separate from its author. The

structure of this paper is as follows:

Chapter One: Sexual Politics and After provides the reader with various critical opinions, presented chronologically, that surround this debate.

Chapter Two: The Essays attempts to examine Lawrence's idea of sexuality. This section of the paper is difficult to parallel to my proposed thesis. Can one trust an essay to represent the opinions of its author? Or is an essay a text, a medium that is separate from its author and should be dealt with according to its fictional cousins-the short story and the novel? For the duration of this paper, I feel the need to acknowledge the Lawrence essay is related to the Lawrence novel. After all, the foundation that Lawrence sets for his essays has fictional tones. The peacocks in "Sex Versus Loveliness" are representative of human nature, and the man and woman in "Study of Thomas Hardy" and "Fantasia" are not identified as Lawrence and Frieda. Therefore, my aim here is to stay in line with Lawrence's vision. If Lawrence presents the essay as a tale, then this should be the guideline for our analysis.

Chapter Three: Biography recreates Lawrence's voice through the reflections of family and friends. The readings in this section which include personal records and findings by other critics provide two significant counterparts to Lawrence's personality:

his relationship with his wife and his poor health.

Chapter Four: The Novels is an analysis of Women in Love, The Plumed Serpent and Lady Chatterley's Lover presented in the shadow of the four essays discussed in Chapter Two and the various critical opinions expressed in Chapter One.

Notes

1.Lawrence was not part of the New Critical movement. It is too difficult to understand Lawrence's ideas from one text alone. Lawrence also tended to contradict himself as he grew older. See the Simpson essay.

2.It should be noted that Millett envisions a direct autobiographical reference within the "Foreword to Women in Love". Millett acknowledges "this novel pretends only to be a record of the writer's own desires, aspirations, struggles" (Lawrence,274) as an invitation to the reader to approach the text of Women in Love in a biographical manner. But Millett makes this connection out of context. Lawrence begins the Foreword with reference to The Rainbow and the censorship/banning of that text. Therefore the banning of his last novel is still ever present in his mind as he attempts to introduce his next novel. But this metafictional note is not an uncommon theme within Lawrence's work. Lawrence's uneasy relationship with the reader is a common concern that is present throughout the novels, especially in the later novels Kangaroo, Lady Chatterley's Lover and most predominantly in Mr. Noon. Lawrence's fears concerning the disapproval of his novels encourage him to guide the reader away from direct biographical references. Lawrence stresses creativity within the "Foreword to Women in Love" and acknowledges his inability as a writer to create a true conception of reality. Women in Love is merely a "record"; it is a document and should be treated in the textual manner in which it was intended.

Sexual Politics and After

A discussion of Lawrence and feminism is incomplete without a reference to Kate Millett's Sexual Politics (1969). Millett's essay has become a landmark in feminist criticism, creating a critical movement in Lawrence criticism that still exists today. In fact, Millett's essay is still motivation for today's Lawrence criticism. Why this essay made such a great contribution to feminism will perhaps never be certain. The historical period and the sentiments of that period undeniably aided the success of the essay. Millett's Sexual Politics is an exhaustive essay that encompasses literary criticism and historical analysis. It attempts to undermine the texts of four writers--Henry Miller, Norman Mailer, Jean Genet and D.H. Lawrence--illustrating the predominant misogyny of those works. The attention Millett pays to Lawrence is somewhat unprofessional since the critical observations within the Millett text border on sensationalism. In addition, the tone of the essay is stark and jabbing; it mocks not only Lawrence, but the Lawrence reader as well.

Millett focuses her attention mainly on the female characters. She disapproves of Lady Chatterley's Lover, calling the novel "...a quasi-religious tract recounting the salvation of one modern woman"(238).[1] This introductory comment creates an atmosphere of negativity in the essay that remains consistent throughout the Lawrence analysis. It is a tone that places all positive reception of Lawrence's work outside the realm of rationality. The reader

feels it is inappropriate if she does not align herself with Millett, regardless of what Millett is suggesting. When Millett labels Lawrence's other female characters (excluding Connie) as "irredeemably 'plastic'"(238), Millett's own criticism becomes plastic or false because of her inability to remain distant enough from the material to provide her readers with logical and informative observations.

Millett identifies two areas of concern displayed in the novels: the first is homoeroticism and the second is narcissism. Both concepts display masculine roots. She identifies Lady Chatterley's Lover as a narcissistic novel(238), and Millett clings to Simone de Beauvoir's idea that the Lawrence text is a guide book for women(239). Like most critics, Millett recognizes the political aspects of Lady Chatterley's Lover, such as the war, but acknowledges this political ground as a representation of female sexuality. She insists that the feminine and societal aspects in the novel are one and the same(240). The depleted picture of civilization after the war can then be extended to the stagnation of the female personality and, hence, to female sexuality. Millett recognizes Constance Chatterley as a totally dependent woman; Mellors directs and Connie acts under his direction(243). Therefore, sexual gratification comes to Connie only through Mellors. Ironically, Millett wants a truly independent woman, a woman who is not only active in sexual relations but who is economically productive. "Constance Chatterley was her husband's typist and assistant: she only ceases to serve this unworthy

master when she becomes Mellors' disciple and farm wife. At no point is she given the personal autonomy of an occupation, and Lawrence would probably find the suggestion obscene"(244). This becomes the first notion within the essay that is difficult to understand. While the notion of female employment is important as a topic in itself, 'paid' female employment for Connie is not acceptable and does not match the outline of the character. Millett appears to forget the historical period of this novel and also forgets the simple narrative structure. After all, it is unlikely that an aristocratic English lady would be obliged to work at any job. The link made between female employment and Lawrence's disapproval of female employment is such a large leap in logic that it is difficult to understand why Millett would have us believe that Lawrence would find such an idea obscene. If Lawrence made a disparaging remark in relation to female employment and Millett is aware of this idea, then Millett needs to document such a comment.

Millett, like most critics, attempts to predict the crucial point in Lawrence's career when his work becomes disrespectful towards and judgemental of women. Millett acknowledges The Rainbow and Women in Love as the pivotal novels that exemplify Lawrence's growing misogynistic feelings: "The Rainbow and Women in Love mark a transition in Lawrence's sexual affinity from mother to mistress, a shift that, when accomplished, finally produces powerful feelings of hostility and a negative attitude toward women of his own generation, who come more and more to threaten him"(257). Millett recounts a scene from The Rainbow, Ursula's inability to pass her

examinations, as proof that Lawrence was becoming threatened by the growing presence of women in his life and in his generation. Millett states: "Big women are dangerous items unless they be the maternal figures of the past, and so the fate reserved for Ursula is a very different one--Lawrence causes her to fail her examinations..."(262). Millett's reference to Lawrence's maternal relationship introduces an interesting aspect of this debate, for Millett makes a strong distinction between the mother figure and the `other woman', or, more appropriately, the sexual woman. The assumption derived from Millett's comment then becomes an examination of female sexuality. Millett seems to be suggesting that Lawrence is condoning female sexuality and applauding the more remote role of motherhood. But how accurate is this? Lady Chatterley's Lover, a novel that is dedicated to sexuality, even female sexuality, immediately comes to mind. Millett, like most feminist critics (Elaine Feinstein for example), does not separate Lawrence's voice from the text. However, Lawrence does not play such an active role in the text as Millett assumes. Ursula fails her examinations simply because Ursula failed to provide satisfactory work for a passing grade. Millett creates a sadistic picture of Lawrence and suggests that acts within the text are done with Lawrence's joyous approval. Hence, for Millett, Birkin and Lawrence are one and the same(262).

Lawrence's view of marriage is also another aspect of concern within the essay. Millett finds Lawrence's vision of marriage to be an end of all experience for woman: "What is particularly

surprising about all this is how very much Lawrentian marriage resembles a plunge into another sleep, even a death. Ursula resigns her position, allowing Birkin to dictate her letter of resignation"(264). Millett finds female unemployment to be a depriving mechanism that works against woman's growth. Unemployment is then connected with the institution of marriage. Unemployment becomes a method for the husband to monitor the woman and her motivations.

Sexuality also enslaves Lawrence's female characters. Millett considers the lack of sexual identity just as enslaving as perhaps the enforced masculine identity. Millett views Ursula as a sexually timid woman(265). The notion of Ursula's sexuality introduces a crucial problem into Millett's criticism. At first, Millett's observations are logical in the context in which she presents them, but she becomes less critical and more emotional as the essay continues. Thus, Millett's critique in the Lawrence section builds up to the point where it provides the reader with alarming sensationalism, not informative conclusions. I believe a sexually aggressive, educated, and gainfully employed woman would have been a frightening concept for Lawrence's 1922 readers. If Lawrence's texts were considered pornographic because of explicit sexual material, then Millett's vision of the acceptable Ursula would also have been considered pornographic by the standards of early twentieth-century England. A sexually competent, intellectual woman with a career is a notion that belongs to our own generation, not Lawrence's. Millett threatens her own ideology

by providing the reader with historically inaccurate and therefore illogical observations. At times, she forgets that the Lawrence critic must, on occasion, view the text from within its historical framework. Millett fails to historically contextualize Lawrence's texts. Instead, Millett provides her reader with mere sensationalism. Her observations become emotional outbursts that are not only rather faintly connected to the text, but also seem to be highly conscious of the audience that she must entertain. Millett believes that the text of Women in Love suggests that Gudrun is suffering from "penis envy" because Gudrun and her sister watch an attractive man swimming in the lake before them and desire his physical freedom. Millett states: "When Gudrun sees Gerald swimming in his ancestral lake and envies his wealth, freedom, mobility, and masculine privilege, we are given to believe that it is a case of penis envy with whom Ursula compares very favourably by accepting their poverty, pointless employment, and close supervision within their father's home"(268). This is an excellent example of how Millett tends to accentuate minor points within the Lawrence text. A small comment made between two women about the physical freedom of the male is not unusual. However, Millett reads this passage as an endorsement for Freud's theory of penis envy. If it is possible for minor comments to exemplify the theme(s) of the novel, then it is also possible that Millett is so conscious of the patriarchal influence on the Lawrence text, that at times she is trapped into the language of male discourse.

There are other exaggerated statements that border on

sensationalism. Again, Millett feels that Lawrence disapproves of the working woman. Millett states: "Gudrun, unmarried, continues to practice her art...much is done to persuade the reader that she has made the wrong decision"(268). But Millett does not explain her assumption "much is done"; Gudrun is indeed unhappy with her position as an artist but Millett does not indicate "why" Gudrun is discontented. Millett must expand on these assumptions in order to win over her reader. Corroborating ideas by stating specific passages in the text is a basic and fundamental aspect of good critical writing.

Millett also perverts Birkin's theory of blood brotherhood. Millett believes that "Birkin had harboured ambitions for a ménage à trois"(268). It is difficult to see how Millett formulates this information from Birkin's theory. The notion of a *ménage à trois* conflicts not only with Birkin's but also with Lawrence's theory of brotherhood. Blood brotherhood heightens the male/female relationship. If man understands and is at one with his masculinity, then he can be a better partner within the marriage union.[2] Blood brotherhood suggests there should be a male relationship before man begins a successful heterosexual relationship. Lawrence never insists on, or hints at, an existing sexual relationship between a man, a woman and another man.

The Millett essay contains so many problems in its critical interpretations that it is therefore essential to ask how important Sexual Politics is to an examination of Lawrence philosophy. Millett's observations now seem unreliable and almost unacceptable.

The impact of her essay is partially explained by the date it appeared on the scene. It was fashionable to remove and examine the patriarchal building blocks that constructed the male representation of woman within the text. However, Sexual Politics is important less for what it says than for the precedent it developed for future Lawrence critics. The critic finds herself defending her position in relation to Millett's essay. Millett created an image of Lawrence that is so extreme that it is difficult to eradicate. In addition, her essay is important because of the intensity it created in Lawrence criticism. It is still unacceptable to examine the Lawrence text without reference to the female situation. It is still unfashionable even to 'like' Lawrence.[3] Millett's scorn for the Lawrence text moved beyond the text itself to envelop the Lawrence reader. I ask my reader not to become overwhelmed by Millett's sensationalism. Instead, I advise her/him to note the influence of the Millett essay on the following essays discussed in this section. Norman Mailer's essay is still defensive, maintaining Lawrence's rightful position. However, after Blanchard, this defensive, aggressive tone ceases. It is replaced by a calm, patient voice that is willing to consider past criticism and to accommodate feminist criticism and Lawrence ideology within readings of the text.

As a professed Lawrence disciple, Mailer felt the need in 1971 to defend his own status as a writer, as well as to defend the status of the Lawrence text. Mailer's book, A Prisoner of Sex (1971), is similar to Millett's essay in that it attempts to place

Lawrence within a larger construct. A Prisoner of Sex is a masculine examination of feminism, sprinkled with literary criticism and small bits of prison anecdotes. Mailer's analysis of Lawrence is not always sympathetic to the writer, but Mailer's presentation of Lawrence is important because of common connections between the Lawrence text and the Mailer text. "Mailer's intensely manichean novels--through their familiar litany of concern with love, sex, inhibitive society, and modern mechanization--appear like a karmic reformulation of Lawrence's own most prominent preoccupations"(Balbert, 67,"From Lady Chatterley's Lover to The Deer Park"). Mailer's essay then becomes important in this feminist debate because of its strong links with Lawrence ideology. And, since Millett categorizes both Lawrence and Mailer as misogynistic, she is therefore presenting Mailer as perhaps the closest tie we have today to Lawrence. Mailer's defense against the charges of misogyny also becomes Lawrence's defense.

Mailer recognizes Lawrence's fascination with industrialization as a force connected with the misogynistic quality of Lawrence's novels: "Technology, by extending man's power over nature, reduced him [man] before women"(127). Unlike Millett, Mailer attempts to place the text historically. Mailer introduces an important concept to Lawrence's writing by reiterating Anaïs Nin's notion that Lawrence often wrote as a woman wrote. Nin states in An Unprofessional Study (1964) that Lawrence's writing can be described as androgynous and that Lawrence "had a complete realization of the feelings of women. In

fact, very often he wrote as a woman would write. It is a well-known fact that a critic attributed The White Peacock to a woman"(57). Mailer agrees that there is a prominent female quality in Lawrence's writing: "never [has] a male novelist written more intimately about women--heart, contradiction, and soul; never [has] a novelist loved them more, been so comfortable in the tides of their sentiment, and so ready to see them murdered"(134); "he lived with all the sensibility of a female burning with tender love"(138). His praise of Lawrence does not match Nin's, but it shares the same foundation as Nin's. Each views Lawrence's intuitive connection with the female personality as the main component of and perhaps the integral motivation behind the Lawrence text.

Mailer also introduces the concept of androgyny by linking Lawrence's intuitive connection with the female personality to Lawrence's physical stature. Mailer suggests that it was the writer's delicate frame that created an understanding of the feelings of both sexes: "He was locked into the body of a middling male physique, not physically strong, of reasonable good looks, a pleasant to somewhat seedy-looking man, no stud"(152). Mailer's concentration on Lawrence's stature and failing health creates an image of Lawrence as an isolated man. Mailer even states that Lawrence's "psyche was originally shaped to be homosexual"(157). Lawrence's dedication to restructuring the attitudes of a repressive English society displays two forms of sickness: the sickness of a Victorian, prudish society and also the sickness that

Lawrence fought on a personal level--tuberculosis.

Mailer views this illness motif as a motivating factor in Lawrence's sexual ideology: "Lust was meaningless fucking and that was the privilege of the healthy"(155). Thus, Mailer's critique provides the reader with a blunt reflection of Lawrence and a full attack upon Millett. The manner in which Mailer defends himself, however, does not elevate him from the role of chauvinist. In fact, the reader tends to feel sympathetic with Millett after reading Mailer's account of the 'truth'. Terms such as "sister Kate"(127) reinforce many of Millett's ideas about Mailer, and, unfortunately, such an attitude extends to the four male writers in general. But, again, Mailer's essay is important because of Balbert's noted thematic connection with Lawrence. Mailer becomes representative of Lawrence ideology by placing Lawrence's concerns within his own text.

Lydia Blanchard's 1975 essay "Love and Power: A Reconsideration of Sexual Politics in Lawrence" provides a different tone to the Lawrence/feminist debate. Unlike Millett's essay or even Mailer's, this essay takes a neutral, more relaxed look at Lawrence and his women. Blanchard disagrees with de Beauvoir's notion that Lawrence wrote guide books for women. She states: "to accept Lawrence as a writer whose ideas are anathema for any self-respecting woman--or man--is to misunderstand the canon of his fiction"(431). Blanchard identifies Lawrence's work as a feminist exploration of what it is to be a woman in the early twentieth century: "His work, in fact, is at least in part an

attempt to describe the crippling results of male domination of female, and his descriptions of the economic and social handicaps under which women labour, almost completely ignored in the Millett-Mailer furor, are, quite simply, brilliant"(432). Blanchard also introduces an idea that is identified by several later critics--Lawrence's ability to contradict himself. Blanchard believes it is Lawrence's multi-faceted personality that creates such contradiction(432). She separates Lawrence's voice from the voices of his characters and encourages his readers to do the same(433).

Throughout Blanchard's analysis, Lawrence's theories about sexuality, about man's role and woman's role, become suggestions, not commandments. As with Mailer, Blanchard also identifies industrialization as an important factor in Lawrence's representation of women and as a significant theme in the early novels: "Conflict is directly tied to the increased industrialization and urbanization of England; it is the machine--not any inherent difference between the sexes--that makes it impossible for man and woman to live together in peace"(433). Lawrence then analyzes the politics of relationships from the high levels of governments down to the most intimate relationships between man and woman(437). Blanchard, unlike Millett or Mailer, also notes that "the few women in Lawrence who ask for male domination, like Hermione,...are usually the subject of ridicule themselves"(439). "Only in Lady Chatterley's Lover does Connie seem to submit to Mellors..."(440). Blanchard acknowledges technology as the force that dominates man and which in turn leads man to

dominate woman. Technology is then viewed as a disrupting force in the male/female relationship(443).

Hilary Simpson's 1982 book, D.H. Lawrence and Feminism is perhaps the most thorough study of the feminist movement as it pertains to Lawrence's work. Simpson's book is a historical analysis; she links the Lawrence text closely with the social movements of the period, giving prominence to the First World War and the growing suffragette movement as significant influential factors on Lawrence and his work.

Simpson highlights two main problems within current feminist criticism and suggests the existence of yet another problem. She objects to the New Critical fashion in which critics approach the Lawrence text, and she recognizes biographical interpretation as a major crux within Lawrence criticism(14). Simpson also disagrees with the critic who attempts to read the text as representation of Lawrence's psychological state(14). Therefore, psychological interpretation cannot be categorized alone because of its dependence on biographical criticism.

And, interestingly, Simpson associates the contradictory notions within Lawrence's "Study of Thomas Hardy" and "Fantasia" with social and political states during the beginning of the twentieth century: "It is not simply a case, in 'Fantasia', of Lawrence being unable to come to terms with the feminine components in his make-up; it is also, and perhaps more significantly, the articulations of a whole society's inability to come to terms with the massive change in sexual ideology which the war had

engendered"(15). Therefore, the issues played out within the Lawrence text are not internal but external. The movement of women into the work force created a connection between the home and the external world. The relation of a woman's home to her work is common in a Lawrence text(17). Simpson argues then that the war is the most important influence on the Lawrence text, for the war created Lawrence's critical views about men and women and helped him to create his phallic ideology: "He believed that the dominant ideology of the post-war world was feminine...a perverted femininity of will and idealism...and that a masculine renaissance was necessary to restore the balance"(17). The world after the war, as seen in Lady Chatterley's Lover, is in a state of ruin because of the male's sexual inadequacies; these inadequacies can be parallelled to the new freedom of the female. Simpson identifies the theme of female strength as one theme among several that were of a primary concern among the writers of this time period(17).

Simpson characterizes the woman in the Lawrence text as a Pre-Raphaelite woman(46), and a product of the Victorian period who as a transitional figure, is changing into a twentieth-century woman. "These women are emancipated, educated and intelligent; they are stimulating companions and are often crucial in the spiritual development of the men with whom they are involved; but they cannot, or will not, satisfy these men's sexual desires"(47,48). As with Blanchard, Simpson views the Lawrence text as offering alternatives, not commandments, and Simpson sees

these suggestions as the reader's call to position herself in relation to the issue. Only after a complete study of the Lawrence texts, Simpson insists, will the reader be understanding of and compassionate towards Lawrence's portrayal of women: "Ultimately, the reader of Women in Love feels that Lawrence has no one axe to grind; in a complex presentation of possibilities and potentialities we are not forced to take sides"(65). Because of the perverted will of the ruined postwar society, Lawrence uses his sexual theories as an attempt to reassert the male position in his relationship with woman. Lawrence's concentration on the phallus in the later novels is an attempt to restore the male's lost place in society(109).

The historical analysis within the Simpson book provides another approach to the Lawrence/feminist debate. Since Millett ignored the period in which the Lawrence texts evolved, Simpson gains more credibility by arguing that the war is the primary motivating factor of the Lawrence text and the key to understanding his relationship with women. Her references to postwar sentiment allow Simpson to place the text constructively against a documented event or events. Essentially, her argument is more convincing than Millett's because of the manner in which she presents it. At times, Millett fails to ground her statements logically and historically. However, I believe historical interpretation also involves problems similar to any other form of criticism. Historical criticism diminishes Lawrence and his ideology by simply making the writer a product of his time. Simpson's insistence that

Lawrence's concerns were also the concerns of other writers does not address the issue of why Lawrence was hated and scorned so much, while most writers (excluding James Joyce) were not.

This chapter of the thesis, Sexual Politics and After, is meant to provide the reader with a representative review of Lawrence criticism and to display how most of such criticism is overlapping. We no longer find critics who either hate Lawrence or love him. Some critics insist that they hate scenes within the Lawrence text but are still enamoured in some way of the writer's work. I believe Sheila MacLeod and Sandra Gilbert are examples of the new kind of Lawrence critic.

As a teenager, MacLeod was fascinated by Lawrence's work. The Lawrence text provided her with an introduction to male/female relationships. By making her critical analysis of Lawrence's work so personal, MacLeod provides the reader of Lawrence's Men and Women (1985) with an underlying thesis --that is, the teenage girl will embrace the Lawrence text, while the mature woman will reject the Lawrence text. But though she was attracted to Lawrence's work, even as a girl MacLeod began to feel uneasy about the manner in which the female characters interacted with male characters: "There seemed to be no way of knowing about myself except through men: it was through men that women became 'fulfilled' and attained true womanliness"(2). This "true womanliness" came at a cost: "There seemed to be no other way towards 'fulfilment'...than to subject oneself to male violation, whether of the body or of the mind"(3). MacLeod continues to argue that female creativity did

not exist in the Lawrence text that she read as a child; imagination came only through men(3). As she grew older, MacLeod began to question the Lawrence text(4). Maturity, therefore, for MacLeod (and I believe for other women), rejects Lawrence ideology.[4]

But MacLeod's reading of the Lawrence text, as a mature woman, is always clouded by her approval and disapproval of Lawrence's work. Hence, she feels Lawrence's representation of women is a controversial theme within the writer's work; Lawrence at times is sympathetic to women but at times he also dismisses them. MacLeod states, "So often he shows uncannily intuitive insight into his female characters: as often his understanding comes to an abrupt halt, wiped out by a wave of apparent misogyny, usually in the form of a recantation or a sudden reversal of fortune. What starts out as a sympathetic and accurate portrait degenerates into a series of unconvincing stereotypical reactions..."(5). MacLeod then constructs an argument that would conflict with Simpson's views, attempting to read the Lawrence text as a psychological representation of the writer. Lawrence's misogyny, MacLeod insists, is a product of low self-confidence (6) and his bouts of misogyny are created through the ever growing prominence of the female(7).

MacLeod finds the Lawrence female to be more convincing than the Lawrence male and the Lawrence female to be consciously aware of feminism as it pertains to her own life(83). MacLeod also parallels the brotherhood theme within the texts with the growth

and/or presence of feminism(85). The presence of feminism then becomes a female *blutbruderschaft* that is played out against the male version.

MacLeod's essay differs slightly from Millett's in that MacLeod views marriage in the text as Lawrence's definition of "womanliness"(85). Millett implied that female sexuality was not present, while MacLeod feels sexuality is the only aspect that forms the female identity. But MacLeod agrees somewhat with Millett when MacLeod questions the purpose of marriage for the female character: "Is marriage necessarily a dead end...an automatic bar to self-realisation? Or does it offer an opportunity, perhaps the supreme opportunity, for personal growth? The assumptions in Women In Love are, first, that the latter might be true, and then that it should be true..."(87). Marriage then becomes an important force throughout the Lawrence text because of its close association with female sexuality.

Ironically, MacLeod finds the Lawrence male to be the weaker sex(226). Women, according to MacLeod, are not oppressed; instead, they rise above the situations that Lawrence has created for them.

> Women are now the stronger sex but their strength is not inherent. It is rather the result of men's craven abnegation of their own manliness, especially in their attitude towards women. Women have taken over some of the qualities rightfully belonging to men as well as

> various forms of masculine behaviour. At the same time they have kept their maternal qualities, thus rendering men almost superfluous. In following intellectual and/or solitary pursuits, on the one hand and, on the other, elevating motherhood to a position of central importance, women too are living only in their upper, day lit selves and are thus less than true women. In neglecting their dark lower selves women have lost sight of such womanly qualities as courage, sensitivity, sensuality and a vitally passive desirability. If they were in touch with their lower selves, they would not dominate men and, in doing so, upset the laws of nature(227).

MacLeod parallels the male struggle within the text with that of the female struggle. Male issues become female issues, balancing the characters, not pitting them against each other. MacLeod's criticism adheres to the basic requirement of balance within the Lawrence text.

Sandra Gilbert's criticism also falls into this category. Her 1991 article "Feminism and D.H.Lawrence: some Notes towards a Vindication of his Rites" is a re-examination of an earlier essay. The material in her 1991 essay examines the women in Lawrence's personal life and their relationships with the author. Since Lawrence had many female friends, it seems paradoxical that Lawrence would be the object of hatred by women. Gilbert addresses this issue when she identifies Lawrence as a radical(95). She

insists it was this radical nature that attracted women, since Lawrence did not speak for the majority but, instead, the oppressed minorities(96,97). Because Lawrence was the object of such intense hatred, Gilbert insists that Lawrence experienced much the same oppression as did women(97).

Gilbert identifies Lawrence's collaboration with writer Mollie Skinner as an acceptance of the female imagination. This collaboration, (The Boy in the Bush), suggests "a kind of usurpation, it also constituted a tribute to the power of the material produced by a woman writer"(97). In fact, Lawrence collaborated several times with women.[5] Gilbert uses the term "reverence" (94) in the place of collaboration, suggesting that women simply admired him and used Lawrence as inspiration for their own writing. However, the issue of Lawrence's collaboration with female writers is a point that needs consideration. Feminist critics have stretched Lawrence's accommodating manner to the point that suggests that Lawrence was willing to consider all possible female partners for his work. But Lawrence collaborated only once with a female writer--Mollie Skinner--and simply made tentative plans to work with Catharine Carswell. There is a great difference between asking someone to provide insights into the female imagination and actually asking someone to write a novel with one. Jessie Chambers was merely a critic, and, as for Frieda, her writing in 'Not I, But the Wind...' is testimony enough that she did not write passages within Sons and Lovers. MacLeod identifies Frieda not as a writer, but, instead, as "a sort of Muse, a

provider of both sex and ideas--notably ideas about sex"(179).

Gilbert agrees with Millett and to some extent with MacLeod when Gilbert recognizes the mother figure as a motivating factor in Lawrence's misogyny: "The mother's predominance left her son with a lingering, if sometimes grudging, respect for women, even while it no doubt also fostered the sexual anxieties that underlay his bouts of misogyny"(97). Terms such as "grudging respect" and "bouts of misogyny" produce a contradictory quality that is also evident in MacLeod's writing. The MacLeod and Gilbert readings produce answers to the feminist debate that are not one-sided; both critics recognize the dual quality found in Lawrence's writing.

However, Gilbert introduces a notion that is new and interesting, albeit incorrect. She draws attention to the titles of the novels and suggests that they hint at a central feminine theme: women as the first sex and men as secondary.(97) But this is an inaccurate assumption, since Lawrence did not choose the majority of his titles. It is known that Lawrence's editor, Edward Garnett, created some of the titles we now associate with some Lawrence texts. Concerning Edward Garnett Lawrence writes: "The Rainbow is a better title than The Wedding Ring, particularly in these times. Garnett was a devil to call my book of stories The Prussian Officer--what Prussian Officer?"(letter #821, 240-241, The Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol.II).

There are common elements that keep recurring within the previously mentioned essays, but at the same time there are trends

that move away from the initial criticism delivered by Millett in 1969. Readers who reject Millett's essay disagree with her biographical interpretations. Blanchard and Simpson both dispute the interjection of biography into the text, and Simpson rejects New Critical readings as well as psychological readings. Blanchard and Simpson disagree with the notion that the Lawrence text is a guide book for women, while both Blanchard and Simpson believe the Lawrence text offers possibilities rather than presenting commandments. Perhaps it has been the changes in feminist criticism that have affected feminist readings of Lawrence.

What differentiates current feminist criticism from Millett's early criticism is the growing relationship of feminism with critical theory. According to K. M. Newton, Millett's Sexual Politics concentrates on the "'Images of women'...criticism which is predominantly concerned with how women characters are represented in literature, particularly in works written by men"(156,57). Millett's essay introduced criticism that is seen today as somewhat superficial in its exploration of the female identity. Although still important to feminist criticism, the "images of women" criticism is only one aspect that interests today's feminist critic.

While the "Images of women" feminist criticism is conscious of the woman "as reader", "gynocritics" (a term fashioned by Elaine Showalter), concentrate on the woman "as writer"(Newton,159). The perspective of woman as writer introduces many variables that have bearing on the text, including, for example, sexual preference and

special environment, such as financial and social, among others. It is clear, therefore, that women's literature has become diverse in its representation of the female identity.

There has also been a change in the manner in which texts are perceived. Newton acknowledges Gilbert and Gubar's now classic study, The Madwoman in the Attic, as a crucial text in the acceptance of feminist criticism because of that study's engagement with the analyzed texts.(164) Gilbert and Gubar determine the importance of the text by presenting their readers with a close analysis of the text--the kind of intensity that is missing from the Millett study.

Newton also identifies two modes of thinking in feminist criticism, modes that continue to illustrate the diversity of current feminist criticism. The first is the belief that the established presence of feminist criticism in academic scholarship suggests the possibility of changing the patriarchal literary institution. The second notion is that the acceptance of feminist criticism places it in a liminal relationship with other literary interpretations(154 & 164). With this idea, feminist criticism becomes simply just another form of literary interpretation.

If feminist criticism is a reaction to hegemony and virtually attempts to eradicate patriarchal thinking, the process of feminist interpretation appears somewhat destructive--especially in regard to Lawrence. Feminist criticism is indeed detrimental to Lawrence ideology. Perhaps Camille Paglia has found an alternative: she glorifies the Lawrence text as an accurate expression of sexuality

and suggests that Women in Love holds a contemporary quality that would interest "every student of sex"(335).

Most likely Lawrence would have found Paglia's ideas intriguing. Paglia's article and film recreated in Vamps and Tramps entitled "The Penis Unsheathed" has echoes of Lawrence doctrine. In fact, Paglia states in Vamps and Tramps that Women in Love influenced her work in Sexual Personae(329). Is Paglia representative of today's feminist critic? Her controversial statements about date rape and her approval of Madonna's sexual antics have troubled many women, including myself. However, there is something liberating about Paglia's ability to embrace alternative forms of discourse, pornographic and otherwise.

As Gilbert admits, the Lawrence critic has matured since 1969, and is willing to consider an alternative ideology. However, she does so with the understanding that she will also have the opportunity to express her own ideology. The Lawrence critic of today has not forgotten Sexual Politics. Millett's essay has become a precursor of all Lawrence criticism and works either knowingly or unknowingly within the mind of the critic, influencing her work.

Notes

1.Millett does not disapprove of all Lawrence texts. She applauds Sons and Lovers, approving of the strong, active role of the mother. Why Millett approves of this is not certain. This point becomes one point among many that needs further elaboration by Millett.

2.See Delany's explanation of blood brotherhood in D.H. Lawrence's Nightmare, p.313.

3.A female friend once whispered to me in class that she also liked Lawrence but was afraid to admit this in an academic environment.

4.Although I will never condemn the Lawrence text, there are aspects of his work that now do not hold my attention as much as they once did. There is indeed something within the Lawrence text that matches the passionate state of the teenage years. Like MacLeod, I also became interested in Lawrence as a teenager and considered his prose to be quite serious observations on male/female relationships. However, now in my late twenties, I cannot help smiling at some statements that Connie makes in regard to the phallus. The seriousness that masked the Lawrence text when I was a teenager has somewhat disappeared, leaving in its place a text that is still important because of its close connections with today's concerns about relationships.

5.He planned a novel with Scottish writer and friend Catherine Carswell. The novel was never completed nor even started because of Lawrence's poor health; only an outline was produced. Frieda also boasts in her autobiography that she helped Lawrence write several passages in Sons and Lovers, providing the novel with a 'female perspective'.

The Essays

This chapter presents the second half of my thesis which is namely, to illustrate that the Lawrence text was and still is sympathetic to feminism and that Lawrence voiced feminist notions within his essays.

Lawrence's essays deal with a wide variety of topics: politics, education, literature. Sexuality is not the primary concern in every Lawrence essay; however, the male/female relationship backgrounds much of his criticism. This section will concentrate on six Lawrence essays: "The Real Thing", "We Need Each Other", "Sex Versus Loveliness", "Give Her a Pattern", "The Study of Thomas Hardy" and "Fantasia of the Unconscious".

Students of Lawrence will be aware of the vast quantity of his writing; he produced an incredible amount of work within his short life time. The six essays to be discussed within this section were chosen because of the prominence of their concerns with feminist issues. The smaller essays are generally from the same period; though many of Lawrence's essays were published posthumously. "Study of Thomas Hardy" and "Fantasia of the Unconscious" are large essays and involve serious questions about their relationship to feminist issues. Therefore, I have separated the "Hardy" and "Fantasia" essays from the shorter ones and will introduce these two contradictory pieces of work to my reader in the second part of this chapter.

It is Lawrence's contradictory nature that creates significant

problems for his readers. Those who are looking for an established Lawrence philosophy--one that runs through all essays--will be disappointed. It is undeniable that Lawrence's ideas about women take a turn towards misogyny in his essay "Fantasia of the Unconscious". In an effort to understand this and similar swings, Sachidananda Mohanty has charted Lawrence's misogynistic swings and suggests that there are three phases to Lawrence's writing career:

1) a sympathetic view in the early days;
2) a mood of belligerence in the middle period; (and finally)
3) an attitude of greater understanding and 'tenderness'(37).

Placing the essays in a pattern that corresponds to the period of their production (Mohanty's three stages) will aid our understanding of Lawrence's relationship with feminism. However, I am hesitant to assume that a composition date and a publication date are one and the same. I know Lawrence wrote quickly when he began a project and that he could juggle several different writing projects at the same time. And yet it is this work habit that concerns me. Since Lawrence must have worked on more than one project at the same time, I believe that this fact creates an overlapping quality to Mohanty's three phases. If "Fantasia", the most misogynistic piece in Lawrence's essays, was published in 1922 and Women in Love was published a year earlier, does this exclude Women in Love from all misogynistic charges? The divisions create misogynistic prose and feminist prose. But the feminist issue that

surrounds Lawrence is not as simplistic as these categories might suggest. Also, how does one deal with an essay that was published posthumously? Essentially, we can only deal with these essays in terms of content alone and speculate as to which stage of Mohanty's chart they belong.

"The Real Thing" is an essay that calls for speculation. Lawrence published this essay posthumously in June of 1930. He states in "The Real Thing" that "perhaps the greatest revolution of modern times is the emancipation of women; and perhaps the deepest fight for two thousand years and more has been the fight for woman's independence, or freedom, call it what you will"(196). From the content of this essay, I believe it is safe to place the essay either in the first period or in the final stage since Lawrence states, "The sexes are not by nature pitted against one another in hostility. It only happens so, in certain periods: when man loses his unconscious faith in himself, and woman loses her faith in him, unconsciously and then consciously"("The Real Thing",197). For Lawrence, the heterosexual relationship becomes one of balances: husband and wife are unified in the relationship and in their responsibilities to that relationship. MacLeod recognizes the notion of balances as an essential prerequisite to marriage in the Lawrence text (177) and views this uniform duality as the integral part of all Lawrence texts: "The whole thrust of Lawrence's work is towards wholeness: the unity of being and of experience. This means not only the integrity of the microcosm which is a human being, but the integrity of the universe, the

macrocosm of which the human individual is inevitably a part"(173). Unity then becomes the prime focus of Lawrence's statements about marriage and relationships.

To rectify the problems in current male/female relationships, Lawrence situates man and woman working together in their attempt to produce a positive relationship. Lawrence insists that, without the woman, the relationship ceases to exist; the woman as well as the man needs to give on all levels in order for the relationship to work. This ideology is predominant in "We Need One Another", published in 1930. This essay bares comparison with "The Real Thing" as both were published together in the same volume.

In "We Need One Another", the consistent use of the pronouns "we" and "our" reinforces the notion of unity.

> We have our very individuality in relationship. Let us swallow this important and prickly fact. Apart from our connexions [sic] with other people, we are barely individuals, we amount, all of us, to next to nothing. It is in the living touch between us and other people, other lives, other phenomena that we move and have our being.(190)

Individuality becomes a discussion of polarity (MacLeod,174), and individuality is rooted in the pull and force of other beings.

As stated in the Introduction, Lawrence uses animal imagery to express his ideas and incorporates this technique into his essay

"We Need One Another". The male/female relationship is compared with the mating of skylarks: "A skylark that was alone on an island would be songless and meaningless, his individuality gone, running about like a mouse in the grass. But if there were one female with him, it would lift him singing into the air, and restore him his real individuality"(191). The positive relationship of husband and wife reinforces other individual characteristics and the woman adds song to the marriage relationship.

The introduction of feminism affects the marriage relationship, disrupting the stability of that relationship. Lawrence states that women now prefer to cut off relationships(189). Women are thus threatening the male/female relationship in their search for personal freedom. Since Lawrence respects the institution of marriage, he finds woman's willingness to ignore her male partner disconcerting. Woman's inability to commit herself entirely to the male/female relationship is in fact the inability to accept the Lawrence doctrine. Lawrence believed marriage to be a necessary and important part of the male's growth. Lawrence defines marriage or "merging" as he calls it, in Studies in Classic American Literature, as a transitional phase: ("The great merge into the womb"(178). This merging allows the male to move on to other levels within his masculinity and life.

If woman develops her own individuality without the male, Lawrence blames the male for the disintegrating marriage. It is from the male that the woman finds the need to assert herself. The

male is the main motivation for woman's growing independence and hence the creator of the traditional ideals that 'kill' the male/female relationship: "There are many popular dodges for killing every possibility of true contact: like sticking a woman on a pedestal, or the reverse, sticking her beneath notice; or making a 'model' housewife of her, or a 'model' mother, or a 'model' help-meet. All mere devices for avoiding any contact with her....it is time we got rid of these fixed notions"(191). Lawrence recognizes the unrealistic presentation of the female and acknowledges all the roles that a woman must play in her life: sweetheart, mistress, wife, mother(194). Lawrence's depiction of woman as a river of life (194) expresses the notion of woman not as a fixed entity trapped within the roles man has created for her, but instead as a conscious, independent creature who exists alongside the male. Again, unity is the key to this analogy. The female river runs alongside the 'male river', but at times "mingling, then separating again, and travelling on"(194).

Lawrence concentrates on woman's unique personality by alluding briefly to the interaction of peacocks. Independent of the male, female sexuality does not need the stimulus of the male to exist. In "Sex Versus Loveliness" (written in 1928), the male and female are analyzed through the mating habits of peacocks. Lawrence compliments woman's sexuality when he states, "we cannot believe that her sex-urge is so weak that she needs all that blue splendour of feathers to rouse her"(13). Similar to the "river of life" image, the female peacock exists beside the male but with the

same splendour that is considered important to the male.

Woman's individuality is again explored in the essay "Give Her a Pattern", written 1928-29. In this essay Lawrence finds woman's individuality to be a forced response to male reaction. Lawrence states that "the real trouble about women is that they must always go on trying to adapt themselves to men's theories of women, as they always have done. When a woman is thoroughly herself, she is being what her type of man wants her to be"(19). Lawrence proceeds to connect this idea with literature stating that the Renaissance produced the "learned woman" and Dickens created the "child-wife". Therefore, there is a great desire in the woman, (I presume well-read woman), to pattern herself after the images produced in literature(19). This suggests that Lawrence is conscious of the importance placed on him and his writing; that is, he is aware of how consciously the modern woman is aware of his writing. As in "We Need One Another", Lawrence again acknowledges the roles a woman is expected to play and the role she is not allowed to play: "Man is willing to accept woman as an equal, as a man in skirts, as an angel, a devil, a baby-face, a machine, an instrument, a bosom, a womb, a pair of legs, a servant, an encyclopedia, an ideal, or an obscenity; the one thing he won't accept her as, is a human being, a real human being of the feminine sex"(20). Through these visual images, Lawrence has created the impossibility of the female situation. After all, once a woman plays these roles, man rejects her(21).

It is difficult to image Lawrence as a misogynist after

reading these comments, especially statements like, "Modern woman really isn't a fool...modern man is"(21), and "Women are not fools...woman's logic of emotion is no less real and inexorable than the man's logic of reason. It only works differently"("Give Her a Pattern",21,22). If modern woman is not a fool, than modern man is and Gerald and Birkin fit the role of the modern man. The two men are placed in opposition to Gudrun and Ursula allowing the male's actions to become subordinate to the female's actions. Gudrun and Ursula then become the heroines of the novel. When Kate Leslie is rejected by her lover Cipriano, it is not Lawrence who is denying the woman full sexual satisfaction, it is Cipriano, the character within the novel. The male is therefore rejecting the female for being a human being, "of the feminine sex."

As stated previously, the "Hardy" and "Fantasia" essays need to be separated from the shorter, less known essays because of the contradictory nature of each of these two pieces. "The Study of Thomas Hardy" (1914) and "Fantasia of the Unconscious" (1922) are quite long, extremely paradoxical and are the focus of much criticism. What complicates our analysis is the fact that "Fantasia" is a product of the "belligerence period" in that it denies woman in almost every sphere--sexually and creatively. "Fantasia" is almost a complete reversal of the sexual ideology Lawrence formulates in the "Hardy" essay (or other essays), and therefore needs more consideration than most Lawrence essays. Because of its contradictory nature, "Fantasia" creates a difficult position for the Lawrence reader. Mohanty reminds us that Lawrence

experienced a misogynistic period before the end of his life and that the phase would level off and Lawrence would be concerned with promoting tenderness once again. Hence, Lawrence originally chose to title Lady Chatterley's Lover 'Tenderness'.

"The Study of Thomas Hardy", as the title suggests, was originally meant to examine the writings of Thomas Hardy. However, Lawrence appears so enthusiastic about his project that he attempts to pack everything he can into this essay. Chapters six and seven, which are a close exploration of sexuality and therefore relevant to our discussion of Lawrence and feminism, will be the focus of our attention as we attempt to understand how Lawrence felt about women.

Although the "Hardy" and "Fantasia" essays are contradictory, there is one common element that pertains to our discussion: Lawrence acknowledges in both essays the importance of man and woman. In the "Hardy" essay, man needs woman not only for sexual purposes--"the supreme desire of every man is for mating with a woman"(444)--but also for his career, or his world outside the relationship. The union of man and woman is necessary, not simply for procreation, but for the evolution of all things, of all ideas, and of all creations: "The interaction of the male and female spirit begot the wheel..."(444).

The "Hardy" essay portrays woman as a supportive, nurturing figure in the male's life, for the woman is a wall (446) who sustains the chaos within the man. Man's social development without woman seems impossible for she delivers the feelings of

"Eternality, Infinity and Immutability"(446). The Woman is presented as loving and worth loving: "And the vital desire of every woman is that she shall be clasped as axle to the hub of the man..."(444). This wheel is a constant symbol that, when broken, suggests disruption in mechanical continuity and progression towards new horizons. Hence, the male should not attempt to navigate foreign territories without the guidance of the female(446).

Lawrence extends this locking image to a spiritual level as well: When axle and hub become one, the woman receives the man, in "every" sense--his beliefs, ideas, motion, and so on(445). But this union is never perfect; therefore, Lawrence insists that man needs something outside of marriage, something that will give him peace within his masculinity(445). Perhaps this is a hint of the virtual outcome of the female in "Fantasia": Woman is excluded from male activity and simply becomes the hearth and home.

Simpson acknowledges the role of sexual pleasure as an important theme in the "Hardy" essay(84). Pleasure is not present in "Fantasia" where Lawrence portrays the woman as manipulative and cunning and preying on the male. It is difficult to examine "Fantasia" in relation to other Lawrence texts because it appears as a foreign piece within the Lawrence milieu. The ideology found within the "Fantasia" essay hints at something more than a simple logical rejection of woman. Even though Simpson would dispute a psychological reading of the Lawrence text, "Fantasia" does appear to be motivated by scorn and contempt or Lawrence's own personal

rejection by assumably, women. Even so, "Fantasia" is worth exploring in relation to the feminist question; it provides the reader with a female whose purpose appears to be the destruction of men.

In the "Hardy" essay Lawrence suggests that individuals can contain different aspects of a male or female identity(446), whereas, in "Fantasia", Lawrence insists that males are born completely or all male, as females are born completely female:

> A child is born sexed. A child is either male or female; in the whole of its psyche and physique is either male or female. Every single living cell is either male or female, and will remain either male or female as long as life lasts. And every single cell in every male child is male, and every cell in every female child is female. The talk about a third sex, or about the indeterminate sex, is just to pervert the issue("Fantasia",96).

In "Fantasia", the woman's role has changed: She does not resemble the nurturing, stable wall described in the "Hardy" essay but is now portrayed as one who acts and preys upon the male. Lawrence appears unsettled here about the manner in which men and women are interacting, especially in the love relationship: Man is no longer strong and confident but is, instead, "gentle" and "all-sympathetic"(97). These adjectives echo Lawrence's earlier description of woman in the "Hardy" essay. The roles are now

switched: "woman has become the energetic party, with the authority in her hands. The male is the sensitive, sympathetic nature, the woman the active, effective, authoritative"(97). The forces of these actions are described as positive and negative: "In knowing and doing, man is positive and woman negative: man initiates, and woman lives up to it"(98). The woman is now a thinker, manipulating the conversation, reminding man that he was born of woman(98).

Procreation was not a concern in the "Hardy" essay, but in "Fantasia", it is a consistent theme. Lawrence states that "man still remains the doer and thinker. But he is so only in the service of emotional and procreative woman"(98). Thus, man appears to feel enslaved by woman. Man is still active, but in an unflattering manner: "Man is the fetcher, the carrier, the sacrifice, the crucified, and the reborn of woman"(99). The differences between the sexes isolate man and woman: "women can never feel or know as men do. And in the reverse, since men can never feel and know, dynamically, as women do"(102). This limitation forces man and woman to learn from each other: "And women, when they speak and write, utter not one single word that men have not taught them. Men learn their feelings from women, women learn their mental consciousness from men"(102).

Again, the purpose of "Fantasia" remains uncertain. What does one do with such a distinct and contradictory piece of writing? In the other essays, Lawrence creates male and female identities that can be compared with the characters in his novels. Perhaps

"Fantasia" can be used to **understand** the difficult male character rather then to condemn the difficult male character of the Lawrence text.

"Fantasia" was published in 1922 during the "alleged" belligerence period. Lawrence also published Aaron's Rod (1922) at this time, creating for his readers perhaps a connection between "Fantasia" and the later novels: Kangaroo, (1923) The Plumed Serpent (1926) and Lady Chatterley's Lover (1928). Each novel presents a central male figure who is confronting a restrictive ideology for the male must dominate his domain and he refuses to lose his own identity; that is, he desires the female to acknowledge his masculinity. The masculine struggle is therefore similar to the feminine struggle. The obstinate male character of the later novels (although technically Lady Chatterley's Lover is not part of this period) illustrates the troubled male within "Fantasia".

Aaron's Rod, a novel that disgusted MacLeod as a child, correlates the male experience of Aaron Sisson with that of the male experience in "Fantasia". Sisson deserts his wife and family on Christmas Eve. At first his actions seem deplorable and inexplicable. But, as the text unfolds, the reader discovers that Sisson is not content in his marriage. In fact, Aaron is so unhappy that even the sexual advances of a woman fail to rouse him from his depression: "He was not happy--nor comfortable. There was a hard, opposing core in him, that neither the whisky nor the woman could dissolve or soothe, to-night"(31). In the course of

his marriage, Aaron appears to have lost the ideals and dreams he had before marriage. With a musical career forgotten because of the responsibilities of a family, Aaron conformed to what his wife expected. Aaron assumed the "gentle, all-sympathetic role", (Fantasia,97) and his wife was and continues to be presented as the authority figure in the family: she is "energetic", "active" and "effective"(Fantasia,97). Aaron has found himself "in the service of emotional and procreative woman"(Fantasia,98).

Richard Somers in Kangaroo also refuses to be dictated to. Kangaroo is Lawrence's political novel where men question not only their role(s) within their families, but within their country as well. Influenced by The Diggers, Somers attempts to organize his marriage in the same manner as the revolutionary group interacts with its followers. He tells his wife Harriet, "I want you to yield to my mastery and my divination..."(192). Somers believes strongly in the notion that "man initiates, and woman lives up to it"(Fantasia,98). However, his wife objects to a dictatorial marriage for she is the verbal woman found within "Fantasia": "But woman, as soon as she gets a word in, points to the fact that man inevitably, poor darling, is the issue of his mother's womb"(Fantasia,98). Harriet tells her husband, "without me you'd be nowhere, you'd be nothing..."(193).

Kate of The Plumed Serpent is allowed to experience sexual satisfaction only through the phallus because she has denied Cipriano his right as a man to be the sole pioneer: "Primarily and supremely man is always the pioneer of life..."(Fantasia,109). The

controversial scene in The Plumed Serpent is an extremely alienating one, not just in a physical sense, but in a spiritual and social sense as well: "Woman will never understand the depth of the spirit of purpose in man, his deeper spirit. And man will never understand the sacredness of feeling to woman. Each will play at the other's game, but they will remain apart"(Fantasia,103).

Isolation of the sexes is also relevant within Lawrence's last novel. Just as with the male in "Fantasia", Mellors in Lady Chatterley's Lover is also confused about women, about lesbianism, and about his role with women. Divorced from his first wife, Mellors has reserved notions about women. Bertha, his first wife, tells neighbours about her husband's unusual sexual requests, and Bertha is known to have made a game of their love-making by controlling the moment of climax. Mellors tells Connie "she'd never come-off when I did. Never! She'd just wait"(217). Mellors appears as a victim within the novel: emotionally wounded by his first marriage, he becomes the victim of the new feminine personality. In the role of gamekeeper, he services the needs of the Chatterleys on all levels: he is "the fetcher, the carrier, the sacrifice, the crucified"(Fantasia,99). Mellors delivers, and the woman who opposes this notion of service is considered perverse. Bertha's delayed and self-gratifying response to Mellors's love-making encourages him to view active female participation in love-making as lesbianism, and hence the male envisions an active woman as a threat to the male existence. After

all, if a woman can achieve satisfaction alone, the male is no longer required in the pursuit of such gratification.

It should be noted that within each of these novels, the obstinate male always has a strong female counterpart. The women become stronger because of the male's inability to adhere to the marriage relationship. Let us not forget that balance is the notion and aim within all Lawrence texts. The women are actually forced by circumstances to become stronger, allowing the feminist stance to grow out of the isolating stubbornness of the male.

The essays clearly illustrate Lawrence's sympathetic relationship with feminism. Even in "Fantasia" Lawrence is still aware of feminism and is promoting feminist concerns. If Lawrence was conscious of the feminist movement in 1928 (the date of the Italian private publication of Lady Chatterley's Lover), it would be logical to attempt to identify a corresponding expression of Lawrence's idea of female emancipation within Lady Chatterley's Lover. If the novels provide suggestions about the concerns explored in the essays (Blanchard,Simpson), then the essays are to be connected with the character presentations in the novels. Lawrence's male/female relationship in the essays becomes quite similar to the male/female relationship in the novels. One wonders, then, if Connie Chatterley is indeed struggling with her own feminist revolution and whether the emancipation of women is an important theme within this novel.

Biography

I have suggested in the Introduction that there are two ways of looking at Lawrence and feminism. The Lawrence text can be examined to note all feminist concerns raised within it, or the text can be isolated from our discussion through a strictly biographical approach. Biography favours the writer, not his work, and represents a clear image of the writer and his relationship with feminism. By eliminating the text from its author, this action recognizes the text as a separate entity. Although it is tempting to merge the texts with actual events in Lawrence's life, such an action creates confusion when attempting to analyze a Lawrence text. If text and life become one, it becomes difficult to distinguish what is real and what is textual.[1] The structure of this entire paper is based on this premise because I believe strongly that combining textual criticism with biographical criticism is a dangerous approach when confronting a study of Lawrence. In literature studies, the work of the author should be foremost in the student's mind since a literary analysis is not essentially a biographical analysis. In fact Lawrence attempts to establish the importance of fiction through his insistence that we "trust the tale". Definitely, his problems with obscenity charges influenced his need to reassert the "fictional" quality of his writing. Some of his acquaintances were also sensitive to the character presentation in Lawrence's novels, for example Lady Ottoline Morrell was upset at what she believed to be a

presentation of herself in Women in Love.[2]

In spite of the strictures made in the preceding paragraph, this section is strictly biographical; therefore, I request that the reader ignore the tale for now and trust the author and the people who knew him.

Consider the following two quotations.

> A.She then went out of the kitchen and began to walk round and round the house in the dark. Suddenly Lawrence appeared and made a kind of horrible blind rush at her and they began to scream and scuffle. He beat her--he beat her to death-her heart and face and breast [,] and pulled out her hair. All the while she screamed for Murry to help her. Finally they dashed into the kitchen and round and round the table. I shall never forget how Lawrence looked. He was so white--almost green[,] and he just hit, thumped the big soft woman. Then he fell into one chair and she into another. No one said a word. A silence fell except for Frieda's sobs and sniffs. In a way I felt almost glad that the tension between them was over for ever, and they had made an end of their 'intimacy'. Lawrence sat staring at the floor, biting his nails. Frieda sobbed.... Suddenly, after a long time--about a quarter of an hour--Lawrence looked up and asked Murry a question about French literature. Murry

replied. Little by little, the three drew up to the table...Then Frieda poured herself some coffee. Then she and Lawrence glided into talk, began to discuss some 'very rich but very good macaroni cheese.' And next day, whipped himself, and far more thoroughly than he had ever beaten Frieda, he was running about taking her up her breakfast to her bed and trimming her a hat.

B.It was on a Sunday in September 1927 when, for the first and the last time, I met and talked to D.H. Lawrence...because of the condition of his lungs he was not supposed to talk much, so we left him for quite some time to finish his patience, and only our ten-year-old son stayed with him on the porch, watching the cards, exchanging now and then an expert's remark with him and, in general, overawed to be in the presence of a real poet...looking back, I often think with gratitude of this afternoon, of Lawrence's illuminating advice, evoking imagination and therefore relevant not only to the translation of dialect-and of the gentle kindness he showed to a novice in the field of translation. He stimulated and encouraged me, and I like to think of him as a kind of 'patron saint' of my work.

These two quotations placed side by side present quite a contradictory image of Lawrence. The first quotation is by writer

Katherine Mansfield from a letter to S.S. Koteliansky, dated May 11, 1916. The second quotation is by translator Elizabeth Mayer, from an undated letter. Both quotations can by found almost adjacent to each other within Moore's D.H. Lawrence: A Critical Survey which emphasizes the contrasting quality of each presentation of Lawrence. What do these two quotations tell the uninformed reader? The first quotation portrays an explosive Lawrence, a man who beat his wife and felt remorse for this the following morning. The second quotation radiates with the warmth of god-like devotion. The tone is almost pastoral, presenting Lawrence as an infallible being, or more precisely, as a "patron saint". It should be noted that the first quotation is from a woman who was jealous of Lawrence's friendship with her husband, and that this comment was made only two years after Lawrence and Frieda had married. Although not problem free, the early part of the Lawrences' marriage was the happiest time in Lawrence's life. The friendship between Lawrence and Mansfield would continue to deteriorate, eventually breaking off before her death in 1923. Lawrence's persona as portrayed in the second quotation could be a combination of a reserved personality towards strangers and/or the reemergence of former teaching abilities. But, as noted within the quotation, Lawrence was so ill that it was recommended that he remain quiet. Therefore, the quotations provide the reader with two significant dimensions of Lawrence's personality: his relationship with his wife and his poor health.

Catharine Carswell, a writer and friend of Lawrence, said of

Frieda that she "lived in a placid dream, which was variegated at times by love affairs that were almost equally unreal"(8). For Frieda, marital infidelity appeared to be a necessary accompaniment to any marriage. She had cheated on her first husband, Professor Weekley, numerous times before Lawrence was invited to dinner that fateful afternoon, and she continued to cheat. With Lawrence as her husband, Frieda would offer herself to Lawrence's best friend (Murry) and at times to virtual strangers. Aldous Huxley, a writer and acquaintance of the Lawrences, suggests that Frieda's infidelity was extensive. Prussian cavalry officers and Italian peasants supposedly kept Frieda happy while Lawrence and Frieda were travelling through Italy(Feinstein,89). Although they were not married until after their time in Italy, Frieda's actions suggest that she could not be faithful to any man.

Ironically, Frieda insists that there was something different about Lawrence, that he was not just another student her husband had invited to dinner. Her recollection of Lawrence playing toy boats with her children is now a famous scene in literary minds. Even though she had been acquainted with Lawrence for only a few days, the kindness he displayed towards her children that day, and perhaps the romantic atmosphere of the lake convinced Frieda that she loved the aspiring writer. And Lawrence's actions are also unique in that he told her she should leave her husband and run away with him. After all, Lawrence was not innocent of marital affairs. Alice Dax had been another married woman in Lawrence's life, and one who, after the Lawrence affair, returned to her

husband.

Once married, Lawrence was allowed to formulate and test his marital theories. One might say that because of Frieda's sexual indiscretions, he was forced to. Jessie Chambers states that Lawrence told her "every great man--every man who achieves anything...is founded in some woman"(59). Marriage, for Lawrence, was a serious institution. As a married man, he expected his wife to uphold the monogamous relationship that he himself honoured.[3] Perhaps Lawrence felt that it was necessary for him to have a stable marriage in order to continue with his writing career, or perhaps memories of his own dysfunctional family life encouraged him to set certain standards within his marriage. Of Frieda's infidelity, Carswell writes that "while he [Lawrence] admired this woman's [Frieda's] 'freedom' it was torture to him. At the same time he would hold his own and not be at her mercy"(9).

Just as men found Frieda attractive, women were drawn to Lawrence.[4] Mabel Dodge Luhan, host to Lawrence while he and Frieda visited Mexico, became infatuated with the writer. Feinstein tells of Luhan's attempt to attract Lawrence with scant clothing. "Once, when they were washing up and their fingers touched accidentally, he paused to explain that there was something more important than love, namely fidelity, which suggests some sexual arousal on his part; but otherwise there is little sign that he was drawn physically to Mabel"(Feinstein,185). Luhan, also a poet, perhaps mistook Lawrence's willingness to collaborate artistically as a suggestion of possible sexual intimacy. Or perhaps Luhan did not

know that Lawrence encouraged all his female literary friends, for instance, Carswell and Skinner, supporting them in their work. The relationship with some was close: Carswell was a favourite confidante to whom he sent a copy of Women in Love for her valued opinion(Carswell,J.Intro.,xi, The Savage Pilgrimage). Lawrence also collaborated with Mollie Skinner in producing the novel The Boy in the Bush. With Amy Lowell and Lady Cynthia Asquith he corresponded about literature and accepted what help they could provide with his current work.

Lawrence's status as a loyal husband is strengthened when we consider the number of literary female partners with whom he worked during his life. Even though his sexual philosophies tested the existence of most friendships, he valued friendship. He tells Dorothy Brett, another artist friend, that "friendship between a man and a woman, as a thing of first importance to either, is impossible: and I know it. We are creatures of two halves, spiritual and sensual--and each half is as important as the other"(Huxley letters,626). But Lawrence's theories would test even the limits of male friendship when he proposed a unique male friendship with John Middleton Murry.

Murry, critic and husband of Katherine Mansfield, was uncomfortable with Lawrence's idea of *Blutbruderschaft.* He rejected Lawrence's special friendship and gradually he, and his wife became removed from the Lawrence circle. Perhaps uncomfortable with the underlying tones of homosexuality that *Blutbruderschaft* suggested, Murry has since achieved the somewhat

dubious honour of introducing the subject of impotence into Lawrence criticism. Considering Lawrence's poor health, the idea that Lawrence experienced sexual impotence near the end of his life does not seem unreasonable. Feinstein even suggests that Lawrence and Frieda experienced sexual problems as early as 1919(162).[5] Whether their problems originated from Lawrence's impotence or Lawrence's sexual naivety, Feinstein identifies 1919 as a time when Lawrence was concerned about whether his wife was receiving full sexual satisfaction in their relationship(162). But if Lawrence's alleged impotence seems reasonable, Murry's actions do not. It seems strange that a male friend would be aware of the inadequacies of another male and wish to publicise them. Perhaps he received this information from Frieda, but Murry's extreme anger after Lawrence's death, as expressed in Son of Woman, is not fully explained. Murry held back something in regard to his friendship with Lawrence. I suspect this missing piece of information could explain his comments in Son of Woman in 1931 when other Lawrence acquaintances were writing respectful obituaries for the writer.

As Lawrence's own health declined, his interest in homosexuality, or blood brotherhood, increased. As Lawrence's body became more skeletal, he admired the beauty of a healthy male. Mailer understands why the phallus is a major theme of Lawrence's work: "No wonder he worshipped the phallus, he above all men knew what an achievement was its rise from the root, its assertion to stand proud on a delicate base"(154). The male relationship presented a world for Lawrence where masculinity was shared and

understood. Perhaps Lawrence saw this unique male relationship as a chance to elevate oneself above the mysteries of the female. The male relationship would also create a greater chance for his own failing masculinity to be acknowledged and appreciated.

Feinstein states that by 1928 Lawrence suspected that Frieda was already romancing her future husband, Angelo Ravagli(222). It is possible, therefore, that Lawrence viewed Frieda's infidelity as a reflection upon his inability to perform sexually as a husband. The paranoia and mental strife Lawrence experienced near the end of his life possibly had marital origins. If so, Lawrence's statements about female submission seem quite understandable. In a 1927 letter Lawrence states, "I'm not sure if a mental relation with a woman doesn't make it impossible to love her. To know the mind of a woman is to end in hating her"(Huxley letters,688). Although I do not believe Lawrence hated Frieda during any time in their marriage, I do believe he hated her actions. Hence, his theories about women and about marriage were not always welcomed by Frieda. As noted previously, Frieda was allegedly unfaithful to Lawrence even before they were married. His radical statements about the woman's expected role within relationships do not appear as early misogynistic tracts; instead, they are the latent awakenings of a husband whose wife's activities were known and responded to by men. In 1918 Lawrence tells the newly married Mansfield:

> I do think a woman must yield some sort of precedence to

> a man, and he must take this precedence. I do think men must go ahead absolutely in front of their women, without turning round to ask for permission or approval from their women. Consequently the women must follow as it were unquestioningly. I can't help it, I believe this. Frieda doesn't. Hence our fight.(Huxley edition,458)

In his theories about marriage, I believe Lawrence is not dismissing women but simply accepting their differences within the male/female relationship. Troubled by the problems in his own marriage, Lawrence attempted to save the relationships of others, using his insights about the male/female relationship. Instead of being viewed as someone who insists upon helping others, Lawrence is viewed as a radical husband who wished his friends to control their wives as he dreamed of controlling his own wife.

Upon further reflection, Lawrence's theories may not be so radical as we at first assumed. Perhaps he should have concentrated more upon his own marriage and not interfered in the marriages of others, but it is through the chaos of his own marriage that Lawrence comes close to an understanding of the balance between the sexes. In a 1915 letter he states:

> And women shall not vote equally with men, but for different things. Women must govern such things as the feeding and housing of the race. And if a system works up to a Dictator who controls the greater industrial aid

> of the national life, it must work up to a Dictatrix who controls the things relating to private life. And the women shall have absolutely equal voices with regard to marriage, custody of children, etc.(letter to Lady Cynthia Asquith, Huxley edition, 248)

Lawrence's formula for the perfect marriage is one of equality. However, his poor health and his relationship with his unfaithful wife tested the accuracy of his theories, especially in regard to his own marriage. Even though his wife did everything to upset Lawrence's sympathetic relationship with women, he did not lose his sympathy for feminism. Gilbert suggests that Lawrence was aware of minorities and the oppressed because his authority as husband and partner, similar to the woman's role, was ignored by his wife. Frieda's roaming life insulted Lawrence's views about marriage. Her presence at his death bed and her attention to detail as outlined in '<u>Not I, But the Wind...</u>'--she holds his frail, bony ankle as he dies--is touching, but her documented, frequent absences from the marriage is an important fact when attempting to understand the Lawrence persona. How did Frieda's absence affect a man who told a young Jessie Chambers that the success of every man is founded in a woman? Did Lawrence's inability to hold his wife to her marriage vows and to maintain sexual relations with her influence the growth or happiness of the man? His life was indeed a difficult one and perhaps more complex than his writings.

Notes

1. Many of Frieda's recollections expressed in her autobiography hint at lines and ideas expressed in the novels [e.g. Frieda's "his love wiped out all my shames and inhibitions, the failure and the miseries of my past"(xvi) echoes Connie's experience in Lady Chatterley's Lover--"Burning out the shames, the deepest, oldest shames, in the most secret places"(267)]. Frieda also seems confused about what was real and what was not, or, perhaps she is attempting to mimic the style of a great writer, her former husband being the best example to follow. Much of her writing is poor: Sentences are often child-like, and the majority of passages begin with an extensive description of the scenery, eventually concentrating on a certain chair that Lawrence sat on or a house where Lawrence slept.

2.Hermione, the somewhat psychotic and violent socialite in Women in Love was supposedly a character profile of Morrell (see D.H. Lawrence: His Life and Works, by Harry T. Moore, 135), even though Lawrence attempted to play down the issue. Also, note Lawrence's 1916 letter to Catherine Carswell:

> I think I shall have to give Ottoline Morrell the novel to read. Do you think it would really hurt her--the Hermione? Would you be hurt, if there was some of you in Hermione? You see it isn't really her at all--only suggested by her(The Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol.III, 44).

3.It has been suggested that Lawrence did not permit birth control to enter their love-making because of the falseness it added to the relationship(Feinstein,85).

4.In an undated letter to Edward Garnett (Huxley edition,38), Lawrence tells Garnett that he (Lawrence) is the object of an infatuation. The admirer is one of Lawrence's cousins. Lawrence is amazed that his young female cousin finds him (Lawrence) attractive. This is possibly the earliest recollection of Lawrence's effect on women. They were attracted to him for reasons even Lawrence could not comprehend. Lawrence asks, "Why is it women will fall in love with me?"(Huxley edition,38). Also note: Aldington misquotes this line in Portrait of a Genius. Aldington claims that women were indeed attracted to Lawrence but that Lawrence complained in the same letter about "women always falling in love with him"(Aldington,103). The omission of the word 'will' changes the perception of Lawrence as a man who did not understand the attraction women felt for him to the image of a man who expected the attraction and had grown tired of such affection.

5.Paul Delany suggests that Lawrence experienced a different kind of problem--the inability to father children. Delany links a quotation by Murry pertaining to Lawrence's alleged sterility to 1914, the beginning of Lawrence's marriage and a time when Lawrence and Frieda were most likely not using birth control(22).

The Novels:

Women in Love, The Plumed Serpent and Lady Chatterley's Lover

The difficulty surrounding the second half of my thesis is derived from the extreme masculine content of Lawrence's novels, The Plumed Serpent and Lady Chatterley's Lover. In the chapter of this thesis devoted to Lawrence's essays, problems of analysis arose in regard to "Fantasia" or the so-called "belligerence period". Is the Lawrence text sympathetic to feminism? We saw in chapter two on the essays that the Lawrence text is generally sympathetic to women's problems; however, the text shifts its focus during the belligerence period to concentrate on the victims of feminism--men. Within this period, the male embraces the masculine consciousness with its phallic ideology as a defense against the ever-growing status of feminism.

While Lawrence's essays display distinctive misogynistic patterns as well as feminist patterns, the novels present an integration of both heroine and victim. Ursula and Gudrun Brangwen of Women in Love are intellectual women. Conscious of the female's position in society, they rally against male domination. Rupert Birkin, beaten and emotionally abused by a previous girlfriend, formulates masculine theories that strengthen the man's troubled masculinity. In The Plumed Serpent Kate Leslie is a confident, mature woman who in her fortieth year marries Cipriano, a traditional Mexican man. Her husband (as well as other men),

detests the advancements of the twentieth century and especially the freedom of the female. Kate's third husband mainly wants a wife who will acknowledge traditional values and who will also acknowledge his masculinity. Constance Chatterley, of Lady Chatterley's Lover, refuses to remain in a loveless marriage. Her affair with Mellors, her gamekeeper, threatens several codes of behaviour. Not only does she initiate sexual contact with a man outside of her marriage, but she also fails to adhere to certain codes of selection.[1] In contrast to her lover, Connie is almost child-like: she is conscious of change and is open to such change. Mellors, haunted by memories of his ex-wife, remains emotionally distant.

The novels Women in Love, The Plumed Serpent and Lady Chatterley's Lover are explorations of masculine and feminine emotions. The feminine voice is balanced by the masculine voice, creating a powerful union of masculine and feminine ideals. The union of the Lawrence couple is so powerful that their relationship generally encompasses both love and hate.

Feminist criticism condemns the preachy quality of the novels, suggesting that the female characters are not conscious of feminism but merely lashing out against an entrapping masculine personality. But, as Gilbert and Gubar have noted, it is this environment that gives birth to feminist concerns("The Mirror and the Vamp",144). By creating a questionable environment for his female characters, Lawrence is indeed creating a novel which evokes feminism and feminist concerns.

The couples within Women in Love display the love/hate attitude better than most Lawrence characters. Women in Love is an explosive novel which positions characters against one another on a verbal battleground. Each character becomes a rival to his/her mate's ideology, and it is this conflict, arising from different positionings, that substantiates this dual ideology as the ultimate weapon of defense. It is from this stance that Lawrence must ultimately create the ideal woman.

Birkin is the primary theorist in the text, and hence his relationship with Ursula is theorized and justified. If theory fails within such a relationship, the relationship fails. Intelligence and reasoning are important concepts within Women in Love, more important than sexual attraction. Hermione and Gerald are unable to understand their mates intellectually and therefore, Hermione fails at dialogue with her desired Birkin: Past verbal negotiations, she resorts to smashing a paperweight on his head. Gerald also fails by failing to comprehend Gudrun's theories of love and personal freedom. He then chooses to die, buried in snow, at the bottom of a mountain because of his inability to survive his relationship with Gudrun.

Conforming to a theorized position is therefore the primary concern within the novel. My reader, as well as the feminist critic, might ask how this differs from any other male authored text. After all, the aim of the writer is to present his reader with a certain view, albeit a certain masculine view. Lawrence's predicament forces him to create bold, vibrant women within his

masculine centered novels. Their 'accuracy' can never be fully determined. Metaphoric images on a page, the Brangwen sisters are representative of the 1920's women Lawrence encountered and perhaps wished to meet.

The Brangwen sisters are involved with men who wish these women to conform to their own ideals. But the women also are conscious of their own needs and have their own aspirations. Gudrun Brangwen is involved with Gerald Crich, the troubled son of a notorious industrial family. The Gudrun/Gerald relationship is always strained, even more than that of Ursula and Birkin, and is represented by icy and barren imagery. Their relationship becomes an interchange of wills between man and woman and foreshadows its tragic conclusion. Ursula, a school teacher, is involved with school inspector Rupert Birkin. Birkin has left a troubled relationship and therefore is somewhat skeptical about relationships. Throughout the novel he analyzes the male/female relationship and the duties of each party, shaping and reshaping his "star--equilibrium" theory.

It is this male consciousness in Women in Love and in the following novels of our study that creates a feminist level of understanding. The Lawrence text becomes an exploration of women's experience and knowledge. Because of the masculinity that debases Gudrun and Ursula, the sisters are forced to become conscious of their concerns as women.

Gudrun and Ursula are not traditional women. Gudrun is a new woman, with a career and expectations that are not founded in child

rearing(9). She is not comfortable with her environment (13), and fights against most ideologies, especially the workings and structure of her family(420). Gudrun is indeed a feminist, interested in change and the woman's situation, and she is conscious of woman's limited freedom when compared with the man's: "The freedom, the liberty, the mobility! You're a man, you want to do a thing, you do it. You haven't the thousand obstacles a woman has in front of her"(52). Unlike Millett, who sees Gudrun presented as a sufferer of penis envy, MacLeod approves of Lawrence's presentation of Gudrun: She finds Gudrun "...totally convincing. Whenever she appears on the page, the other characters fade into insignificance. Her self-doubt, her sharpness, the cynicism with which she protects her own feelings, cannot but be attractive to [at least] most modern readers..."(108). MacLeod is representative of later Lawrence criticism in that Gudrun and even Ursula are examined in relation to other characters within the same text, while Millett appears as more conscious of the 'male authored' aspect of the text.

Does the notion of a male author determine how a feminist critic will read the text? In Millett's case, it appears so. Ideas and objections almost appear to have been formed before Millett begins her 'analysis' of Women in Love. For example, consider Gudrun and the notion of penis envy. While Millett rejects Lawrence ideology before confronting the text, MacLeod considers Lawrence ideology. Perhaps the linking of feminist criticism with theory (even though MacLeod's text is primarily a

close reading of Lawrence texts) has forced the feminist critic to become thorough in her examination of the Lawrence text. As Newton states, Sexual Politics is concerned with merely the 'image of women'(155).

Is Paglia representative of a branch of current feminist criticism or even future criticism? The Lawrence novel appears to be in the process of being accepted for the liberating text it was intended to be. Paglia almost revels in the sexuality within the Lawrence text. Gudrun and Ursula are viewed by Paglia as truly independent women who are active instigators in sexual relations: "The Brangwen sisters' yellow, rose, and emerald-green stockings are emblematic, in the Spenserian sense, and also sexually coded, the paradings of provocative mating display, appreciatively registered by men in the street"(331). Similar to the peacocks in "Sex Versus Loveliness", Gudrun and Ursula are attracting men in a primitive feminine style. Their coloured stockings evoke the evolutionary male/female struggle that fascinated Lawrence and is ever-present within all Lawrence texts. Lawrence's recurring reference to primitive man as "old Adam", is perhaps no longer an accurate description of the human condition. But because of Lawrence's sensitivity to the feminine, as well as the masculine voice, "old Eve" maintains her seductive presence within the text.

Although the sisters may differ on certain levels, (MacLeod envisions Gudrun and Ursula as "contrasted expressions of female sexual desire"[111]), their interest in woman's position in society is shared and highlighted in the novel. Ursula wonders, "Why does

every woman think her aim in life is to have a hubby and a little grey home in the west? Why is this the goal of life? Why should it be?"(423). These questions do not suggest a preconceived notion about woman's position in society. Ursula's questions are not condemning; they do not suggest that woman has one aim in life, but, instead, many aims. Ursula's open statements expand the text in that she is supplying a parallel view to Birkin's star-equilibrium theory. This feminine skepticism prevents the text from closing in on a constricting masculine ideology. The text is open and perhaps limitless in the opportunities it presents for the female.

Birkin's theory of star-equilibrium does not correspond with female growth--that is, according to Ursula. Birkin's theory is perhaps the pivotal equation in the novel. Balbert acknowledges Ursula as an important player in the star-equilibrium scenario: "Ursula Brangwen is the primary register of this 'essential criticism' in Women in Love in Rupert Birkin's 'system of morality'", and this 'system of morality' "is submitted to the scrutiny of Ursula's sceptical antagonism. It is a scepticism which is rooted in the instinctual essence of her being as a female and it strikes at the essential vulnerability of Birkin's less instinctive, more mind-centred formulations"(87). Ursula might be a representative for all women as she opposes this male-dominated theory of morality, or Ursula's reaction might be an individual response. Either way, feminism attempts to corner its masculine counterpart and to undermine the ignorance that is hidden in

Birkin's masculine ideology. Ursula's feminine consciousness views Birkin's theories as "one-sided" (281) and turns Birkin's vision of balancing stars into its integral components where one star is dependent upon another: "There you are--a star in its orbit! A satellite--a satellite of Mars--that's what she is to be!"(167). The star-equilibrium speech elaborates the balance system that is predominant within this text as well as other Lawrence texts. Birkin's theory strives to create an equality between the sexes. He desires to be on an equal plane with Ursula, and he wants to be acknowledged as a separate and distinct human being, just as Ursula should be: "What I want is a strange conjunction with you...not meeting and mingling;--you are quite right:--but an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings: as the stars balance each other"(164). Lawrence demonstrates the individuality of the male and female personalities when Ursula rejects Birkin's controversial theory. Her misinterpretation of Birkin's ideology is rooted in her feminine consciousness. She is not wrong; it is simply a case of the female mind differing from the male mind. Lawrence notes these distinctions in "Fantasia".

Women in Love then becomes an exploration of male and female identities. It should be noted that Birkin and Gerald do show some sympathy for women and their position in society. When asked about Mrs. Crich's remote nature, Birkin responds sensitively: "I think she only wanted something more, or other than the common run of life. And not getting it, she has gone wrong perhaps"(234). The theoretical attitude of the male is still present, evaluating the

'correctness' of standards of behaviour. Birkin's observations in regard to the unhappy Mrs. Crich suggest that Birkin is calling attention to a different kind of marriage. The old view of marriage presents an unfulfilled wife. Compare this idea to Lawrence's view of marriage in "Fantasia" and in Kangaroo. In "Fantasia", Lawrence believes in the notion that every successful man has a woman behind him encouraging his success. In Kangaroo, Lawrence dedicates a chapter to the analogy that a successful marriage should reflect a perfectly functioning ship. Man and woman appear to have definite roles within marriage, and if one spouse does not satisfy his/her marital obligations, the marriage will suffer.

In contrast to how he once felt, Gerald also shows some signs of becoming compassionate towards women:

> He had found his most satisfactory relief in women. After a debauch with some desperate woman, he went on quite easy and forgetful. The devil of it was, it was so hard to keep up his interest in women nowadays. He didn't care about them any more. A Pussum was all right in her way, but she was an exceptional case, and even she mattered extremely little. No, women, in that sense, were useless to him any more. He felt that his 'mind' needed acute stimulation, before he could be physically roused.(262)

Again, there is an emphasis on the relationship between sexual arousal and intellectual stimulation. Gerald's desire for an intellectual connection with a woman displays his maturing nature. Women are no longer representative of a sexual service. The feminine consciousness is further solidified in the novel by Gerald's desire to link himself intellectually with woman. The mature man analyzes his position in the male/female relationship in regard to his past female partners as well as with some reference to his future female relationships. Birkin exemplifies this maturing process best. His star-equilibrium theory comes to fruition most notably after Hermione smashes the paperweight over his head.

But if the masculine consciousness is different from the feminine, and Women in Love appears to emphasize this point, then men and women will never completely understand each other. I refer the reader again to chapter two, the essay analysis, to note the connections between Women in Love and "Fantasia". Lawrence states in "Fantasia": "women can never feel or know as men do. And in the reverse, men can never feel and know, dynamically, as women do"(102). Thus, Lawrence creates a novel that captures perfectly the impossibility of the male/female relationship. The emotional chaos and violence in the novel depict the sexual consciousness that is present between men and women: "In a typical conversation in Women in Love, jolts and surges of hostility and aggression go on just beneath the surface...sexual attraction is shown as an unstable complex of love-hate, a war of individuality and

survival"(Paglia, 334).

While Gerald is conscious only of his desire for Gudrun, Gudrun wishes him to acknowledge her feelings as he sneaks into her parents' home, past their room, and up to Gudrun's room:

> She suffered badly with fear lest her people should be roused. He hardly cared. He did not care now who knew. And she hated this in him. One must be cautious. One must preserve oneself.(393)

While sexual activity is acceptable for man, woman must still be discreet in her sexual relations with man. Still living under her parents' roof, Gudrun must be conscious of their moral presence as Gerald slips into her bed. Can Lawrence's presentation of feminist issues be linked with Lawrence's sexual theories in general? Lawrence has often voiced his unhappiness with the sexual mores of his prudish English society. He wished that his prose would liberate man and woman from the shame of sexual relations and encourage 'tenderness' within the act of love-making. Although Lawrence never directly addresses female sexuality, (remember there is only a small allusion to female sexuality in "Sex Versus Loveliness"), and I have always felt that the term 'blood consciousness' has more masculine connotations than feminine, Lawrence's presentation of feminist concerns allows the female characters to discover their own 'blood consciousness'. If Paglia can revel in the sexuality of this novel, then our focus upon the

woman's restrictions might be perceived as too limiting. Lawrence is allowing Gudrun to experience sexual relations in the midst of danger. Parental anger and the possibility of social isolation restrict Gudrun from fully enjoying her rendezvous with Gerald. In paralleling the cautious feminine consciousness with the risk-taking masculine consciousness, Lawrence presents barriers against the female identity. But he also balances those obstacles with opportunities for woman to acknowledge her own 'blood consciousness', such as Gudrun's and Ursula's right to be sexually active outside of marriage.

In Women in Love there are still other echoes of "Fantasia". Hermione is, for example, a female character with a male personality. Masculinity has polluted her female consciousness, distorting her behaviour and perhaps her sanity: "Hermione was like a man, she believed only in men's things. She betrayed the woman in herself"(331). At this point, Hermione is desperate to maintain her relationship with Birkin; however, her violent attack upon Birkin with the paperweight (117) suggests that her emotions are still in conflict.

Gerald also has close connections with "Fantasia", as Gerald is the counterpart to Hermione's diseased femininity. Guilty of the false adoration that Lawrence condemns in "We Need One Another" and "Give Her a Pattern", Gerald demonstrates the pitfalls that create the image of the insensitive male. Gerald fails to recognize Gudrun as a distinct individual and becomes intoxicated with her mere presence: "And she, she was the great bath of life,

he worshipped her. Mother and substance of all life she was. And he, child and man, received of her and was made whole"(389). Paglia notes the manner in which Lawrence uses the word "child" to describe man and identifies Gerald's maturation process as "infantilization"(335). This equation between child and man does not present the masculine presence in the novel as the acceptable alternative. After all, in "We Need One Another", Lawrence insists that false adoration "kills" (191); therefore, the Gudrun/Gerald relationship will not survive because of Gerald's inability to acknowledge Gudrun as a distinct feminine being. Gudrun's relationship with Loerke, even though Loerke is homosexual, corrects the wrongs of her previous affair. Gudrun explains to Ursula why she is attracted to Loerke: "Do you want to know what it is in him? It's because he has some understanding of a woman, because he is not stupid"(512). If Loerke is "not stupid", then we can assume that Gerald is. Gudrun confides that Gerald's "maleness bores me"(521). At this point the female consciousness almost outweighs the masculine presence within the novel. Lawrence's misogynistic reputation is difficult to accept as he creates female characters who have a reasonable amount of control over their lives. Gudrun chooses the friendship of Loerke whose sexual preference creates some suggestion that Gudrun has relinquished her sexual behaviour for a life of celibacy. The company of a homosexual man appears to be more attractive than the demanding nature of Gerald. Gudrun responds to Loerke because Loerke acknowledges Gudrun as an individual; he appreciates Gudrun's

unique qualities: "You are an extraordinary woman, why should you follow the ordinary course, the ordinary life?"(515). Loerke has learnt the rules of the intellectual game. He connects with Gudrun on a mental level because he acknowledges Gudrun's intellectual makeup and the things that are important to her. Perhaps conscious of the importance of individuality because of his sexual makeup, he does not attempt to make Gudrun conform to his wishes, but instead celebrates her individuality through flattery.

Gudrun's uniqueness is demonstrated in the controversial horse and train scene. This scene is symbolic in that it represents woman as cornered and beaten by the male. Though the sisters do not approve of Gerald's treatment of the horse, the objections are all Ursula's. As Gerald beats and whips the horse, Gudrun is uncomfortable with Ursula's verbal and emotional rally against Gerald. Gerald attempts to explain his actions: "She must learn to stand--what use is she to me in this country if she shies and goes off every time an engine whistles"(154). Birkin defends the beating of the horse: "He is justified. He is not a bully. He is only insisting to the poor stray that she shall acknowledge him as a sort of fate..."(166). Again, the masculine identity, one that feels the need to oppress and make its subject conform, is contrasted with the female consciousness, one that opposes conformity and violence.

This theory of opposition (Birkin's star-equilibrium theory) does not concentrate entirely on the male/female relationship. Birkin tells Gerald that he requires a relationship outside of the

experience with the female, one that will heighten his own relationship with Ursula: "You've got to take down the love-and-marriage ideal from its pedestal....I believe in the additional perfect relationship between man and man--additional to marriage"(397,398). Again the reader should be hearing the echoes of "Fantasia", where Lawrence insists that man needs a relationship with other men and also states that this is not a sexual relationship(108). Our analysis of Women in Love introduces a crucial point in Lawrence ideology that is also predominant in the other Lawrence texts. Lawrence's interest in *Blutbruderschaft* is an integral part of his understanding of the masculine consciousness.

A common mistake made among Lawrence readers is the assumption that Lawrence's texts are simply sexual. But sex is merely the actions of the consummate male and female consciousness that Lawrence attempts to create in his novels. His concentration is not so much on sexuality as it is on spirituality: "Assert sex as the predominant fulfilment, and you get the collapse of living purpose in man"("Fantasia",111). Lawrence undertook an exploration of his masculine make-up that was similar to the sixties notion of finding oneself. Lawrence was concerned with the role of man as well as with the factors that influenced man's gradual development. Hence, his novels display an inherent interest in the male identity and how the male identity works in congruence with the female identity.

The Gladiatorial chapter demonstrates beautifully this

masculine consciousness. The wrestling scene in this chapter becomes an exploration of male anxieties played out in sexual tones. The scene tempts the reader with the issue of sodomy; along with the issue of blood brotherhood, sodomy is another important concern in most Lawrence texts. Heterosexual sodomy then becomes an invitation to the world of male communication. As with Lady Chatterley's Lover, sodomy within Women in Love becomes a way of saving the woman and eradicating the wrongs of civilization: "He had taken her at the roots of her darkness and shame--like a demon, laughing over the fountain of mystic corruption which was one of the sources of her being, laughing, shrugging, accepting, accepting finally"(343). Like Connie, Ursula also "died a little death"(371). Even though Lawrence disapproved of homosexual sodomy--"the essential blood-contact is between man and woman,...the homosexual contacts are secondary"("A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'",508)--sodomy appears acceptable within a male/female relationship.

At first one questions Lawrence's use of sodomy in the male/female relationship. After all, is Birkin not denying the traditional form of intercourse for heterosexuals and in a sense denying Ursula's femininity? If Birkin desires anal intercourse, his choice of Ursula as a sexual partner appears inappropriate. But the 'threat' of homosexuality for Lawrence's fictional couples only increases the attention and the importance that surround the phallus; the phallus becomes a universal symbol and device in that it can provide pleasure in both heterosexual and homosexual

relationships.

Lawrence again emphasizes the importance of the phallus in his 1926 novel The Plumed Serpent, and the reader is once more provided with the homosexual element. The Plumed Serpent is perhaps the most phallic of all the Lawrence texts. In fact, the terms 'erect' and 'rigid' are used excessively throughout the text, creating an erectile atmosphere that is difficult to ignore. This novel perhaps stretches the term 'phallocentric' to the furthest possible limits of definition. Female readers and male readers as well might find this novel amusing. The extreme phallic content does not match today the seriousness that surrounds both the phallus and masculinity. However, the extreme phallic imagery in The Plumed Serpent does not take away from our feminist discussion. It, instead, provides the feminist discussion with more material for its readers to consider.

While travelling in Mexico, Kate Leslie of The Plumed Serpent becomes acquainted with Don Ramon, the leader of the group Quetzalcoatl. It is difficult to define the purpose of this group. The members are involved in politics (regulations within the town), with Ramon playing the role of a spiritual leader/high priest, for the men and the group are also involved with law enforcement. But most importantly, Quetzacoatl is a men's club, and the erect phallus is the club motto. The club exists around outlawed hymns, brutal ceremonies, masculine initiations (males tie each other with rope and lie in the darkness with their masculinity), and verbal rain dances that hint of male masturbation:

> Serpent of the earth...snakes that lies in the fire at the heart of the world, come! Come! Snake of the fire of the heart of the world, coil like gold around my ankles, and rise like life around my knee, and lay your head against my thigh. Come, put your head in my hand, cradle your head in my fingers, snake of the deeps. Kiss my feet and my ankles with your mouth of gold, kiss my knees and my inner thigh, snake branded with flame and shadow, come! and rest your head in my fingerbasket!(233)

Again, the reader is probably forced to recognize the difficulty, if not the absurdity, of my thesis. After all, with so much phallic imagery in The Plumed Serpent, how does one suggest that this Lawrence text is another feminist text? Male characters within the novel appear to be more concerned with themselves and with their own gratification, especially in regard to female sexuality. The female orgasm is explored in the sense that the female character is forced to achieve satisfaction only through the male orgasm. But the dynamics of The Plumed Serpent can be compared to those of Women in Love, again, through the notion of balancing: through the intense masculine philosophy of Quetzacoatl, the female identity is emerging. It is the denial of the female orgasm that allows us to understand the sexual make-up of the female.

The context for the phallic imagery within this novel and

perhaps for all Lawrence texts needs to be situated in a religious atmosphere. Simpson reminds her readers that the phallus is an ancient religious symbol, one that existed long before the Lawrence text(Simpson,129). It is important to recall this point for today's reader because of the loss of the religious significance that was once attached to the phallus. The phallus is now merely a device for procreation and/or pleasure. Simpson explains:

> The appropriateness of the phallus for Lawrence's purposes is obvious. He was of course aware of its long and prestigious history as a religious symbol. It embodies the idea of spontaneous life which was so important to him, since the capacity for erection is clearly dependent on something outside the range of the conscious will. The penis has a visible life of its own, and although the phallus is traditionally the image of an erect organ, it is not a static symbol, but carries with it the notion of change, of tumescence and detumescence.(129)

Kate's journey, then, throughout Mexico is a masculine journey (even the water is described as "sperm-like") (122): she must confront the overwhelming masculine philosophy and either conform to the phallic mysteries or remove herself from them and maintain her own femineity. At first, Lawrence presents the female character in opposition to the phallic ideology. Kate maintains

her femineity for the duration of the novel, but the masculinity is too much for her, and Kate gradually becomes an unwilling prisoner of such an ideology.

Violence is an integral part of the masculine ideology and, therefore, an important part of the masculine identity. Kate is thankful she is not a part of violence, as men are: "Thank God a million times that I'm a woman, and know poltroonery and dirty-mindedness when I see it"(58). It is this feminine consciousness that leaves Kate outside of the limits of masculinity, always questioning the Quetzalcoatl group and the actions of its members. As with Women in Love, there is an excessive concentration upon the differences between the sexes. In The Plumed Serpent, men and women are consistently apart, not even meeting on a spiritual or sexual plane:

> The men were the obvious figures. They assert themselves on the air. They are the dominant. Usually they are in loose groups, talking quietly, or silent: always standing or sitting apart, rarely touching one another. Often a single man would stand alone at a street corner in his serape, motionless for hours, like some powerful spectre. Or a man would lie on the beach as if he had been cast up dead from the waters. Impassive, motionless, they would sit side by side on the benches of the plaza, not exchanging a word. Each one isolated in his own fate, his eyes black and quick like a snake's,

and as blank.(186)

The alienating nature of the Mexican male in the novel allows Kate to envision the differences between the male and female identities. Kate, like Mellors in Lady Chatterley's Lover, is confused by the opposite sex's personality. Kate's quest to understand the male is also a quest to understand herself.

Kate is perhaps a mature Gudrun: twice married and now a widow, Kate travels to Mexico with male friends; she is rarely alone and must abide with masculine concern for her safety and her personal welfare throughout the novel. The male is always present: whether it be Villers, Cipriano, Ramon, or the maid's son Jesus, the male consciousness is always there, sleeping in her doorway or attempting to enter her bedroom through the open window. This male consciousness is continually pressed upon Kate as an appropriate manner of thought and action. But with this male consciousness, the chance of violation--emotional and physical--is always present. Violence is a part of the masculine identity; the possibility of any feminine ideals flourishing in Mexico seems virtually impossible. The bullfight is the introductory scene of violence: a central part of Mexican culture, the bullfight glorifies man's control over nature. Villers suggests that Kate should act accordingly: "After all, one must be able to look on blood and bursten bowels calmly"(59). Thus, the introductory bullfight introduces the primitive nature of Mexico and of Mexicans. Kate and her companions are introduced to the ritual culture that pits

man against woman. It is the advice of Villers that creates tension between Kate and her travelling companions. It is not a sexual issue, but it is gender related:

> She felt, moreover, that they both hated her first because she was a woman. It was all right so long as she fell in with them in every way. But the moment she stood out against them in the least, they hated her mechanically for the very fact that she was a woman. They hated her womanness.(60)

The anxiety Lawrence creates for the female character is faithful to his representation of the female identity. His intrinsic sensitivity to the emotions of the feminine consciousness corresponds to Nin's androgynous evaluation of Lawrence. This sensitivity presents Lawrence as a writer who has more of a right to represent female identity than have other writers.

Lawrence paints Kate as a unique figure and suggests that her voice should be considered in accordance with the restraints of her past: "As a woman, she had suffered even more than men suffer"(82). Therefore, Kate's voice, even more so than the masculine voice, is a crucial aspect within the story. At times the story is focused so much on Kate that the reader forgets that she is not alone. During the lake chapter, Kate is accompanied by her friend Villers, but the language is all Kate's. The chapter makes only a brief reference to Villers, heightening Kate's

experience as she moves through the country. The story at this point is perhaps in the transitional phase where Kate moves from being a 'flat' character to the predominant female character within the novel. After all, Kate proceeds to dismiss her male friends and travel through Mexico on her own.

Alone, she has the ability to contrast the masculine persona with the reserved traditional woman, without the imposing advice of her travelling companions. At a dinner party, Kate begins to acknowledge the sinister power of masculinity: "Kate felt she was in the presence of men. Here were men face to face not with death and self-sacrifice, but with the life-issue. She felt for the first time in her life, a pang almost like fear, of men who were passing beyond what she knew, beyond her depth"(99). This is the first instance in which Kate alludes to feeling inferior to her masculine friends. As masculinity rears an incredibly strong presence in Mexico, Kate holds on to her femineity, which in this case is an issue of survival. However, this is not a suggestion that Kate trembles with fear in the presence of this Mexican masculinity. Kate is a strong, sexually vibrant woman who finds the similar characteristic in the male, that of sexual power, to be quite arousing. Kate acknowledges this force in Cipriano: "There was something undeveloped and intense in him, the intensity and the crudity of the semi-savage"(100).

In contrast to the Mexican male, the Mexican woman, or more precisely, the Mexican wife, is a dutiful woman who complements her husband's masculinity. Don Ramon's first wife Carlotta is in

opposition to Mexican traditions and values an American education for her children. Since Carlotta contradicts the traditional Mexican marriage, her subsequent death, although wrapped in mystery, is not surprising. Disillusioned with her marriage, her departure from the text is necessary for the progression of the masculine ideology. At their first meeting, Carlotta tells Kate, "I always thought my husband such a clever man, so superior to me! Ah, it is terrible to have to change one's idea!"(199). Like Gerald Crich, the industrial magnate in Women in Love, Carlotta also disapproves of tradition and acknowledges the advances of the twentieth century as providing a better alternative for herself, her sons and perhaps her marriage. Simpson states of Carlotta that she "symbolises the veneer of western civilisation which has been imposed on Mexico, an artificial female refinement overlaying its primitive masculinity"(114). The fear of the industrial age and the thinking that accompanies this new age appear in Women in Love and The Plumed Serpent, as well as Lady Chatterley's Lover. With the deaths of Gerald in Women in Love and Carlotta in The Plumed Serpent, Lawrence does not 'kill' the character who represents twentieth century ideals. Instead, in Lady Chatterley's Lover, Mellors apologizes for the state of early-twentieth-century England.

Twentieth-century ideals are not present in Ramon's second wife, Teresa. This wife is young and more in line with the wishes of her Mexican husband. Teresa resents Kate's artificial feminine presence and opposes any contradictory notions that diminish the

Mexican and the Mexican existence: "And at the same time, she watched Kate, the potential enemy, the woman who talked with men on their own plane"(433). Kate disapproves of Ramon's new marriage to the young girl and visualizes the female in the traditional Mexican marriage as a "subservient, instrumental thing"(422). The Plumed Serpent and perhaps all Lawrence texts do not welcome futuristic alternatives, but, instead, root themselves in the basic elements of sexuality, with the phallus being the representative of sexuality and of life.

Lawrence does provide suggestions that this masculine ideology is not perfect. Again, false adoration is presented as a negative concept for female growth. Like Gerald of Women in Love, Cipriano worships Kate: "He watched her continually, with a kind of fascination: the same spell that the absurd little figures of the doll Madonna had cast over him as a boy. She was the mystery, and he the adorer, under the semi-ecstatic spell of the mystery"(115). The phallic attractiveness of this male ideology holds interest for Kate because of her current widowhood and also because of the significant turning point that her fortieth birthday marks. Like Birkin, Kate seems also conscious of her old relationships. Revolutionary men are exciting for Kate because "a woman like me can only love a man who is fighting to change the world, to make it freer, more alive. Men like my first husband,...let you down horribly..."(103). The death of her husband is perhaps a motivating force in Kate's confrontation with the masculinity of Quetzalcoatl and foreshadows the outcome of this masculine dilemma.

Most important is the acknowledgement Kate makes to herself that she, a modern woman, does not enjoy living alone: "She knew she could not live quite alone...she needed a man there, to stop the gap, and to keep her **balanced**"(288). Thus, she becomes involved with Cipriano, agreeing to marry him in a traditional Quetzalcoatl ceremony.

The consummation of the Kate/Cipriano marriage is a significant point for Lawrence criticism and is the topic of much debate. After the ritual marriage, the phallic nature of the Quetzalcoatl group continues to overshadow the male/female relationship. Kate is denied clitoral orgasm and is allowed to receive pleasure only via the phallus. Cipriano, unlike her previous husband, will not acknowledge a female sexuality. In a Quetzalcoatl marriage, male sexuality and male happiness take precedence over female pleasure.

> Cipriano was happy, in his curious Indian way. His eyes kept that flashing, black dilated look of a boy[2] looking newly on a strange, almost uncanny wonder of life. He did not look very definitely at Kate, or even take much definite notice of her. He did not like talking to her, in any serious way. When she wanted to talk seriously, he flashed a cautious, dark look at her, and went away. He was aware of things that she herself was hardly conscious of. Chiefly, of the curious irritant quality of talk. And this he avoided. Curious as it may seem,

> he made her aware of her own old desire for frictional, irritant sensation. She realised how all her old love had been frictional, charged with the fire of irritation and the spasms of frictional voluptuousness...Cipriano drew away from this in her. When, in their love, it came back on her, the seething electric female ecstasy,...he recoiled from her... when this sort of 'satisfaction' was denied her, came the knowledge that she did not really want it, that it was really nauseous to her(458-9).

The denial of the clitoral orgasm hints at Freud's theory of the female orgasm[3] and it also alludes to Lawrence's disgust at masturbation, as outlined in "Pornography and Obscenity".

Remember that for Lawrence sex "is a creative flow" ("Pornography and Obscenity",176); therefore, one-sided sexual pleasure is not reciprocal. Masturbation does not create; instead it destroys. Lawrence states, "This 'dirty little secret' has become infinitely precious to the mob of people today. It is a kind of hidden sore or inflammation which, when rubbed or scratched, gives off sharp thrills that seem delicious. So the dirty little secret is rubbed and scratched more and more, till it becomes more and more secretly inflamed, and the nervous and psychic health of the individual is more and more impaired"(177). Ironically, by condemning masturbation, Lawrence is condemning his own scenes of ritual worship in <u>The Plumed Serpent</u>. Although Lawrence does not categorize masturbation in "Pornography and

Obscenity" as either male or female, it seems evident that it is female masturbation he writes of and not male. After all, the Quetzalcoatl rain ceremony is productive, or, more specifically, "creative". It is the consistent worshipping or pleasuring of the phallus that produces the much needed rain. Kate, as well as other women, must acknowledge the phallus and be receptive to its gifts, thus allowing the forces of the male/female relationship and that of nature to remain in balance--or so Lawrence appears to believe.

MacLeod is not displeased with Lawrence's decision to remove the female orgasm; rather, she sees Lawrence as attempting to create on paper a point in sexual relations that is impossible to capture: "It has been claimed that Cipriano is at pains to deny Kate an orgasm or orgasms, but I think that this claim [especially when voiced in an indignant tone] misses the point: that the sexual act is not a mechanistic process, and that good sex is beyond the capabilities of language. Lawrence is attempting to describe the indescribable without resorting to clinical language"(136). If Lawrence is attempting to create the epitome of sexual awareness, we might at this point rephrase de Beauvoir's notion that the Lawrence text is a guide book for women and state that the Lawrence text is instead a guide book for men and women with specific emphasis on sexual relations. Lady Chatterley's Lover then becomes the definitive Lawrence text.

An instructional novel, with 'Tenderness' as the integral theme, and as the original title, Lady Chatterley's Lover presents a child-like Constance Chatterley and a bitter Oliver Mellors

embroiled in an adulterous affair. Connie, a member of the aristocracy, has been sheltered from the language and the thoughts of the lower class. Throughout the affair, Mellors attempts to teach Connie pertinent information about her body and about sexuality. This teaching becomes part of a new sensibility. The war is over, and the values and concerns of the past, especially prudish language, will remain in the past. This sexual consciousness is defined later as "cunt-awareness"(301):

> `What is cunt?' she said. 'An' doesn't ter know? 'Cunt! It's thee down theer; an' what I get when I'm i'side thee, and what tha gets when I'm i'side thee; it's a' as it is....'(191)

Like Women in Love and The Plumed Serpent, Lady Chatterley's Lover also confronts the evils of mechanization, presenting the text in an apocalyptic light.[4] The war is essentially bound to man and his achievements in the twentieth century. The novel begins on a dismal note, presenting the characters as helpless against the advancements of the new century. But it is a time of change--"we've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen"(Lady Chatterley's Lover,1)--creating a ground that is open for exploration and growth.

Within this theme of change, Connie Chatterley is unlike Kate Leslie or even Gudrun Brangwen. Lady Chatterley demonstrates a

unique upper class naivety. She is perhaps similar to Ursula in that Connie is also required to acknowledge the significance of something outside of marriage. Ursula must confront the male equation of Birkin's star-equilibrium theory, while Connie must accept infidelity as the only alternative to her loveless marriage.

In Lady Chatterley's Lover, the conventional guidelines for male and female conduct have become skewed. The 'norm' no longer exists, leaving the characters in Lady Chatterley's Lover as metamorphic creatures attempting to recreate life inside the decay of a postwar England. Like The Plumed Serpent, Lady Chatterley's Lover can also be viewed as a quest story. Here, the quest is sexual and centers upon the characters of Mellors and Lady Chatterley. Again, the exclusion or ignorance of the female identity calls feminist concerns to the surface and displays the masculine identity in opposition to the feminine persona.

As in Women in Love and The Plumed Serpent, in Lady Chatterley's Lover Lawrence again attempts to emphasize the social differences between the sexes. Excluded from sexual intimacy with her husband, Connie is also ostracized from male conversation. Exclusion is consistent throughout the novel, leaving Connie outside the limits of masculinity, and therefore, curious about this masculine consciousness. Once Connie interrupts the men's discussion, a discussion of sexuality, the men resent it(40). This resentment is interesting especially since the men of Clifford's circle find sex and conversation similar in their goals: Sex is examined as "another form of talk...a sort of normal, physical

conversation between a man and woman"(33). Therefore, if Connie is not conversationally appealing, she is also not sexually attractive. Though the members of this group, including Clifford and Michealis, may not be aware of it, Connie is also part of their circle. Like them, she is struggling with sexual and social problems that have been challenged by the onset of the war. Clifford, paralysed by the war, shares a similar paralysis with the other men of his circle. These men are also emotionally paralysed by the war and by the new sensibility that has emerged with the war. Conversation becomes an exploration of sexual identities. Human activity is equated with "calculations" and "astronomical matters"(33), and the probability of an exact equation leaves the men stumbling over their theories until Connie interrupts them.

Although Connie's sexual questions (Connie was aware...of a growing restlessness...18) are like those of Clifford or Michealis, Connie's concerns are wrapped in a feminine consciousness that is at most times confusing for the male. Lawrence examines the male and female consciousness by setting the masculine view of sex against the feminine one. Again, for man, "sex is just another form of talk"(33) or an "interchange of sensations instead of ideas"(32). And, in this text, the masculine view of the phallus as the instrument of knowledge is clearly outlined. Dukes states, "Real knowledge comes out of the whole corpus of the consciousness; out of your belly and your penis as much as out of your brain and mind"(37). However, Connie does not make a connection between intellect and sexuality: "Instead of men kissing you, and touching

you with their bodies, they revealed their minds to you. It was great fun! But what cold minds!"(35). Lawrence is again offering the reader alternative forms of intercourse. In Lady Chatterley's Lover, Lawrence instructs his reader on the value of sensitivity via the phallus. Even though the title of 'Tenderness' was replaced by the present title, tenderness continues to be an important part of the text. Knowledge therefore suggests something more than simple facts; here knowledge is deepened to primitive sensitivity that is available only through sexual intercourse.

Female sexuality then becomes a subordinate theme to the predominant theme of tenderness. As with The Plumed Serpent, female sexuality in Lady Chatterley's Lover is presented in a masculine light. Mellors attempts to understand female sexuality by the manner in which women respond to his own active body. Connie's actions with former lovers foreshadow Mellors' instructive love-making and present a link between male sexual ideologies. Connie appears to choose only incompetent lovers (there is no reference to Clifford's former sexual requests) and must act in response to her lover's authoritative nature. In fact, she must climax on demand. Michealis is repelled by her inability to respond immediately to his sexual activity, and, once Connie masters this male prerequisite (to climax on demand) Mellors applauds her ability to match his own orgasm again and again: "It's good when it's like that. Most folks lives their lives through and they never know it"(143). Unknown to Mellors (and perhaps to Cipriano), the female orgasm is not structured the same

as the male orgasm and hence this difference makes simultaneous orgasms almost impossible.[5] However, this does not alter Mellors' desire for his and Connie's lovemaking to include shared orgasms. Mellors' theory of sexuality is one of unity: he prefers the woman to climax when he does, thus unifying the experience of sexual pleasure.

Mellors' fascination with simultaneous orgasms makes him an interesting character. Tormented by a bitter marriage, the divorced gamekeeper initially intends to remain cut off from the female connection because having sex for Mellors is "to be brocken [sic] open"(125). He also had "a big wound from old contacts"(92). The manipulation and trauma Mellors experienced with his first wife force Mellors to form his sexual theories and his pessimistic attitude towards women. He feels the need to categorize all women in relation to his perception of their sexual identities(219). The Mellors list contains six distinctive types of women and suggests that the gamekeeper has spent much time attempting to comprehend the mysterious force of feminine sexuality. The experience with his first wife was significant enough for him to create a specific category for the woman who 'holds back' during intercourse.

> But when I had her, she'd never come-off when I did. Never! She'd just wait. If I kept back for half an hour, she'd keep back longer. And when I'd come and really finished, then she'd start on her own account, and I had to stop inside her till she brought herself off,

> wriggling and shouting, she'd clutch with herself down there, an' then she'd come off, fair in ecstasy. And then she'd say: That was lovely! Gradually I got sick of it: and she got worse. She sort of got harder and harder to bring off, and she'd sort of tear at me down there, as if it was a beak tearing at me(217).

Since Mellors does not respond to Connie with a similar pessimism, it is impossible to match her with one of these six distinctive types of women. It is conceivable, then, that Mellors and Connie have created the ideal relationship, one that is free from all sexual neuroses. The 'healthy' relationship between Connie and Mellors is therefore comparable to that of Clifford and Mrs. Bolton and even somewhat to that between Mellors and his former wife. The Bolton/Clifford relationship hints at a mother and child relationship and is an example of diseased sexuality: "And they drew into a closer physical intimacy, an intimacy of perversity..."(317). Bertha Coutts, Mellors' ex-wife, is called a lesbian (219), labelling her actions in bed as unfeminine.

Mellors' detailed analysis of female sexuality acknowledges a feminine identity, though one that Mellors finds confusing and somewhat threatening to his own masculinity. Contemplating the female situation, he makes connections between humanity in general, especially industrialization, focusing on what Mailer believed to be an important aspect of Lawrence's representation of women.

> It was not woman's fault, nor even love's fault, nor the fault of sex. The fault lay there, out there, in those evil electric lights and diabolical rattlings of engines. There, in the world of the mechanical greedy, greedy mechanism and mechanised greed, sparkling with lights and gushing hot metal and roaring with traffic, there lay the vast evil thing, ready to destroy whatever did not conform. Soon it would destroy the wood, and the bluebells would spring no more. All vulnerable things must perish under the rolling and running of iron.(Lady Chatterley's Lover,126).

The rapacious movement of machines and of war has created a moving effect that has picked up female sexuality and marked it with the chaos of this century. This notion hints strongly at the consensus of most modernist texts: Lady Chatterley's Lover demonstrates a modernist writer's fear of the twentieth century and of what it will bring, especially with regard to female sexuality. However, this fear is not shared by Connie. Lady Chatterley is in a transitional phase, and she welcomes the freedom that comes with this change. For Connie, her marriage and the customs of the past will remain in the past. While Millett acknowledges that Connie is being directed and ordered about throughout the text, there is little suggestion that Connie is unhappy with the direction she is intended to travel. She is an active participant in her affair with Mellors and encourages the relationship in every way that she

can. Connie requests a key to Mellors' cottage, even though Mellors is reluctant to relinquish his privacy. Moreover, Connie does not acknowledge his hesitation and, instead, uses her position as his employer to acquire the key and the time with him she desires. When Mellors orders Connie into the hut before their first encounter, Connie follows his direction without contemplation: "She obeyed him. He had that curious kind of protective authority she obeyed at once"(91,92). In order for the female character to be considered as oppressed, she herself must acknowledge that such oppression does exist. Connie does not. Connie enjoys her time with Mellors and even plans to have his child.

The story of Mellors and Connie is an excellent consummation of the concerns that are predominant in the other Lawrence texts. The anxiety of the early novels, The White Peacock, The Trespasser, and even Women in Love, is no longer present. The Lawrence couple has come full circle. The issues that confronted Lawrence within other texts are fully realized within Lady Chatterley's Lover and dealt with in a conclusive manner. Connie and Mellors realize that sexual intercourse becomes the one instance where man and woman can be unified on a spiritual plane if both parties are willing to accept the gifts of the phallus.

Notes

1.J.M Coetzee argues the Lady Chatterley's Lover is indeed a pornographic novel because of Connie's lack of proper English discretion. Coetzee states: "The intercourse of Lady Chatterley with the gamekeeper transgresses at least three rules: it is adulterous; it crosses caste boundaries; and it is sometimes 'unnatural,' i.e., anal"(4).

2.Notice how Lawrence refers to Cipriano as "boy". This is the second time Lawrence calls the character "boy"; Cipriano was first described as a boy when he admired Kate's appearance. If Cipriano is such a phallic-conscious individual, it seems unusual that Lawrence does not acknowledge Cipriano as a man.

3. Orgasm is the shortest phase of the sexual response cycle, typically lasting only a few seconds. Female orgasms often last slightly longer than do male orgasms....Freud, writing in the early 1900's, developed a theory of the 'vaginal' versus the 'clitoral' orgasm that, inaccurate though it is, has had a great impact on people's thinking about female sexual response. Freud viewed the vaginal orgasm as more mature than the clitoral orgasm, and thus preferable. The physiological basis for this theory was the assumption that the clitoris is a stunted penis....At adolescence a woman was supposed to transfer her erotic center from the clitoris to the vagina. If she were not able to do so at this time, psychotherapy was sometimes used to attempt to help her attain 'vaginal' orgasms. Unfortunately, this theory led many women to believe incorrectly that they were sexually maladjusted(Crooks, Baur, 202-204).

4.Lawrence was fascinated by the notion of apocalypse. See Apocalypse by D.H. Lawrence, 1931, for further reading.

5.See Table 6.4 "The Orgasm Phase: Sexual Response Cycle" in Our Sexuality, p.203.

Conclusion

In the introductory chapter of this thesis, I asked that the reader consider the question of Lawrence and feminism by eliminating Lawrence's personal life from all textual analysis and then consider the following equation: Lawrence the writer as sympathetic to feminism vs. the Lawrence text as sympathetic to feminism. By evaluating the text and biography in this manner, the reader is moved away from the temptation of strict biographical criticism.

Also, by examining a series of Lawrence texts, the reader is presented with several female characters and not simply one female voice. This approach discourages the reader from accepting any one female voice as the authoritative voice of all women. The reader is presented instead with several distinct voices that at times conflict with Lawrence ideology but also at times coincide with Lawrence ideology. Blanchard's assumption that Lawrence is providing alternatives within the Lawrence text and not commandments provides the female characters with many roles. This idea suggests a diversity that cannot exist if a Lawrence female character is the one voice who speaks for all women.

Since Lawrence attempts to "balance" the male and female voice within the text, Lawrence criticism should also balance the feminine consciousness against the masculine consciousness. This approach provides commentary that is both diplomatic and consistent. The fact that Millett dismisses the Lawrence ideology without even considering its potential presents an argument that

does not conform to either diplomacy or consistency. The Lawrence critic, of whatever school of criticism, must at first acknowledge the demands implicit in Lawrence philosophy. The destructive nature of analyzing the Lawrence text and Lawrence biography together does not provide the reader with adequate presentations of the text or of Lawrence.

In constructing this thesis, I have attempted to dissuade the reader from her/his evaluation of Lawrence as a misogynistic writer. The essays discussed in section two display a changing Lawrence. The early essays depict a Lawrence with a conscious awareness of and sympathy with woman. For example, "Sex Versus Loveliness" concentrates more on the female identity than it does on the male.

In chapter three, I discussed Lawrence's relationship with his wife and examined his poor health and concluded that perhaps they provide motivation for his changing sexual philosophy. Again, Blanchard's notion is important here. If Lawrence is offering alternatives through the texts, and even the essays, the suggestions made are then not so much for Frieda Lawrence or even for all women. Rather, the alternatives suggest the idea of options: hence, women "choose" Lawrence philosophy or they reject it. The Lawrence fictional woman has the ability to do either, as does the Lawrence reader.

In chapter four of this thesis--the exploration of the novels--we discovered that Ursula finds the notion of *blutbruderschaft* unsettling, Gudrun is bored by the whole masculine experience, and

Kate and Lady Chatterley are enamoured by the mysteries of the phallus. The varied opinions of these women of the masculine consciousness do not suggest one universal voice, but offer, instead, several differing opinions and identities. The Lawrence woman has the right to acknowledge the mysteries of the phallus, to accept the phallus as an instrument of knowledge, or to object to the masculine consciousness that is continually thrust upon her.

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