

## Love or Illusion of Love and Marriage Through D.H. Lawrence's Fictions with Special Reference to Sons and Lovers and The White Peacock

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**ABSTRACT:** *Getting married is one the key dream of young men at the age of maturity. The aim is getting a trustworthy partner to live together in good and worse moments. But living together often allow you to discover some strange faces of your partner. This may either be bitter, illusive or regretful or the opposite. The purpose of this paper is the show how important love is in life is and the necessity for both men and women to be truthful. To reach our goal, we essentially went through documentary research and have used Marxist Criticism, literary criticism as literary theory. At the end of our study we come to the conclusion that loving is good but being sincere and truthful in love is the best. The most important is what each partner is doing to keep the flame of love in permanently lit the house.*

**KEY WORDS:** life; love; illusion; women; men.

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**RESUME :** *Se marier est l'un des principaux rêves des jeunes hommes à l'âge de la maturité. L'objectif est d'avoir un partenaire de confiance pour vivre ensemble dans les bons et les pires moments. Mais vivre ensemble permet souvent de découvrir quelques visages étranges de votre partenaire. Cela peut être amer, illusoire ou regrettable ou le contraire. Le but de cet article est de montrer à quel point l'amour est important dans la vie et la nécessité pour les hommes et les femmes d'être honnêtes. Pour atteindre notre but, nous sommes essentiellement passés par des recherches documentaires et avons utilisé la Critique marxiste, la critique littéraire comme théorie littéraire. À la fin de notre étude, nous sommes arrivés à la conclusion qu'aimer c'est bien mais être sincère et véridique en amour c'est mieux. Le plus important est ce que chaque partenaire fait pour garder la flamme de l'amour allumée en permanence dans la maison.*

**MOTS CLES :** Vie ; Amour ; Illusion ; Femmes ; Hommes.

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## INTRODUCTION

Getting married and found a family is the dream of every young man at adult age. This is like a traditional transition from parents to children. It is not an easy task for all lovers. Marriage is often seen as an important step in adult life. It is a moment women and men becomes more responsible. Antoine De Saint-Exupery in the same vain said:

It is a lovely thing to have a husband and wife developing together and having the feeling of falling in love again. That is what marriage really means: helping one another to reach the full status of being persons, responsible...Love does not consist in gazing at each other, but in looking outward together in the same direction<sup>1</sup>.

Once married, the couple is call to found a family and develop true love, start having kids if desired. But the lifetime of their marriage would depend on the love and respect they share. In his 2003 love quotes, Frank Tebbets declared:

A life without love in it is like a heap of ashes upon a deserted hearth, with the fire dead, the laughter stilled and the light extinguished." Love allows us to be more and do more than we could ever accomplish without its power.<sup>2</sup>

For some couple, marriage could be a total success. On the opposite, in some families it leads to separation and disaster. Lack of true love and mutual understanding between the partners are some of the root causes. Lovers become enemies hating each other to death. Family gets broken putting an end to inner harmony and peace. For such a situation not to happen family members have to play important role. Encouraging discussions, education, mutual respect, building long-lasting love between couples as well as between kids, are keys functions expecting from families. The purpose of this article is to highlight the importance of love within a family with special reference to D.H Lawrence's *Sons and lovers* and *The White Peacock*.

## METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Love stories are among the main themes in literature, songs, and movies and a popular topic in even the most upstanding magazines and newspapers. Love causes people to fluctuate from the greatest heights of joy to the depths of depression or worse. The theoretical background of this work is based on literary criticism and Marxist Criticism through qualitative and analytical study of particular authors to show the relation between their attitudes and states of mind and the special qualities of their works. Two traditional approaches have been adopted to Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* and *The White Peacock*.

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<sup>1</sup> Antoine De Saint-Exupery [www.https://quotes-lover.com](http://www.https://quotes-lover.com)

<sup>2</sup> Frank Tebbets, [www.https://quotes-lover.com](http://www.https://quotes-lover.com)

The first approach reduces the novel to a case history, the second is the analytical approach, exploring the many passages where Lawrence seems to be retelling his own experience fictionally. However, there might be no evidence to prove that Lawrence wrote *Sons and Lovers* and *The White Peacock* with the intention of writing his own biography. In the collection of data for this work, we have used relevant literatures. We have used much more academic journals, books and websites.

### **Lawrence's Fictions as a mirror of his life**

*Sons and Lovers*, a fictional version of Lawrence's own childhood and adolescence follows the reality so closely that the novel almost seems to be an autobiography. Just like Paul Morel, David Herbert Lawrence was the younger child in a mining family living in a large village near Nottingham at the close of the nineteenth century. He was born on 11 September, 1885 in Eastwood, referred to Bestwood in the novel. His mother Lydia, was a proud and relatively refined and educated woman who came from a background somewhat superior to the mining community into which she got married. She could not be said to have had a happy married life. Once time and hard work in the coal mines had drained energy and vitality out of her husband, she ceased to have any interest in him.

Life with him had become meaningless and quite disappointing. Lawrence's father was perhaps not quite as rough as Morel in *Sons and Lovers*. Later in his life, Lawrence might have realised that he had painted a very gloomy picture of his father in his novel. After all, one of Lawrence's main beliefs was that vitality and warmth is better than lethargy and coldness, and his father was used to be a vital and attractive character who seemed to have been a good dancer as well as someone who was very keen on his pint of stout beer. However, there is no doubt that Lydia Lawrence was disappointed by her miner of a husband and that they had noisy arguments and rows which frightened their children. Lawrence's mother exerted a great influence on him. She encouraged his intellectual and artistic endeavours and helped him to enter high school in Nottingham where he stayed until he was sixteen. That year he met a girl called Jessie Chambers who clearly looks like Miriam in *Sons and Lovers*. Jessie lived with her parents and brothers on a farm, the Willey farm of *Sons and Lovers*, read romantic.

As most of the writers, Lawrence let his feelings appear in his literary works. When he wrote *The White Peacock* which is his first novel published in 1911, his mother was dying of cancer in circumstances very similar to those of Mrs Morel, and only lived long enough to have a copy of the novel placed in her hand. His father was shocked by the amount of money the publishers paid for the book (fifty pounds) and complained that his son had hardly worked hard enough to deserve this much. But while his novel, together with his poems and some short stories, were earning Lawrence some slight literary fame, his bad health brought his career as teacher to an end. He had pneumonia while at the school in London, he was ultimately to die of a related disease, and suffered from neuritis. Talking about Lawrence works, Nasrullah Mambrol said:

His spontaneity, his limitations and imperfections, and his fleeting moments of intuition were directly transmitted to the reader, whose own “instinct for life” would be thereby quickened.<sup>3</sup>

This is to confirm how ingenious, the author is in the process of conveying his message to the readers. Without being autobiographical works, a closer reading of his works shows part of his own family life between the lines. On the same way, Nasrullah (2019) wrote:

The initial experience of fragmentation in Lawrence’s life was obviously the primal conflict between his mother and father, which among other things resulted in a confusion in his own sexual identity. In the fiction of this period, the stunting of life by fragmentation and imbalance is evident in the portrayal of such characters as Miriam Leivers in *Sons and Lovers*, Anton Skrebensky in *The Rainbow*, and Gerald Crich in *Women in Love*, just as the quest for vital wholeness is exemplified in the same novels by Paul Morel, Ursula Brangwen, and Rupert Birkin, respectively.<sup>4</sup>

D H Lawrence is very good observer of her social environment. *The White Peacock* is a testimony of his childhood and adolescence based on and the mismatched marriages and class conflict, whereas *Sons and Lovers* is the final testimony of his background and its profound influence about love.

### **Attraction and illusion of love and married life**

Getting married and live with one love in a house and start having children is the dream of young men in life. But most of the time the so call love that lead them to get married often happens to be love at first-sight, not true love. The case of Walter Morel and Gertrude Coppard's in *Sons and Lovers* is of good example. Sometimes it is just attractions that is called love. Lettie and Leslie love history can justify our argument in *The White Peacock*. It may also a fruit of primitiveness that leads a young boy or girl to fall in love with a partner whom he/ she considers as an angel. In *The White Peacock*, for instance Meg fell in love with George who promised never to leave her.

I'd never leave thee... We'll be married soon, my bird are ter glad... She looked up at him as if he were noble. Her love for him was so generous that it beautified him.<sup>5</sup>

For the lovers there is no perfect creation apart from their partner. All the qualities and everything about him or her is good, nice, marvellous and rare. He/she is like a gift of God and

<sup>3</sup> Nasrullah Mambrol, *Analysis of D. H. Lawrence’s Novels*, 2019

<sup>4</sup> Nasrullah Mambrol, *Analysis of D. H. Lawrence’s Novels*, 2019

<sup>5</sup> *The White Peacock*, p.273

the promises not to abandon or to make suffer come up. Meg said to George in *The White Peacock* "You're too good-hearted to do anybody any harm"<sup>6</sup>.

Gertrude Coppard and Walter Morel met at a Christmas party. He was twenty-seven years old and she was twenty-three and they were smitten with each other. D.H. Lawrence described Walter through Gertrude eyes as follows:

He was well set up, erect and very smart... He had that rare thing, a rich ringing laugh. Gertrude Coppard had watched him fascinated... This man was different.<sup>7</sup>

The lovers are very happy to live in the same house. They are cheerful. Their dream is to integrate each one's family to better enjoy their love. He thinks that she is attractive and she thinks that he is delightful and earnest. Both find family life wonderful. On this point, Lawrence describes George's feeling about his new life as:

He rejoiced in having a place of his own, a home and a beautiful wife who adored him... If he wanted quiet he could sit with Meg, and she was such a treat, so soft and warm, and so amusing... He was, he said, incredibly happy. Really he could not believe it. Meg was, ah she was a treat.

Taking into account the above lovely and marvellous image of love, marriage and home life, one may think that it is just a piece of cake. Although some of those fairies may be true, the majority of them is often just on lover's imaginations. When far from each other living together is seen to be fantastic and dreamful. He or she thought that marriage would bring him or would bring her happiness but the bliss dwindles when they live side by side. Illusion vanishes when the couple starts facing life realities. The "my heart", "my darling" and "sugar cane" of the beginning gradually turns to bitterness. Each partner discovers that the other is not angel as such.

After three months of happy marital life, Gertrude Morel in *Sons and Lovers* discovered that Walter is just an image of an honest and a good person. In reality he is drunkard and a liar who started coming back home late even before his wife gave birth to their first baby. He did not even finish paying the bill for their wedding but had told his wife that all was paid. Still he has time to squander six pounds in eating and drinking. The house in which they were living is on credit bases. The woman thought is her husband property. But in reality the houses he told his wife to be for him belonged to his mother who had rented one to them. Gertrude was so surprised when her mother in law said "They're my houses, those two". Gertrude sat white and silent<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> *The White Peacock*, pp.16-17

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* pp 272

<sup>8</sup> *Sons and lovers*, p.20

She could not believe what she is undergoing. Her mind has completely changed. She is demoralised and indignant. “She sat rigid with bitterness and indignation”<sup>9</sup> This incident transforms her. She decided to change her manner with her husband:

She said very little to her husband, but her manner had changed towards him. Something in her proud, honourable soul had crystallized out hard as rock<sup>10</sup>.

An environment of mistrust is then created whereby two lovers living together could not trust each other. This would pave the road to hatred animosity. Former lovers became foes to one another. This type of feeling and pain within the family often lead to mutual destruction and to death. Gertrude was totally unconcerned with her husband. Mr Morel had a serious accident while he was working in the pits and he was quickly brought to the hospital. His suffering did not affect his wife. Indeed, she did not bother about nursing him and saving him. Instead of suffering from her husband's pain like a wife should do, she was unconcerned:

She felt indifferent to him and his suffering. ... In her heart of hearts, where the love should have burned, there was a blank.<sup>11</sup>

She hated her husband till death, she has told everything to her children. This is just an iceberg of what one can face in marital life. Gertrude Coppard used to dream of marriage and home life. She thought that may be the source of happiness. She was completely disappointed by her husband, a totally irresponsible and vulgar drunkard. This illusion of marriage harden her heart so that her love for her husband is transformed to hatred. The example of Gertrude and Morel is not so different from the plot in D H Lawrence’s *The White Peacock*.

What happens in *The White Peacock* is a great internal struggle of the will, almost like a battle. At first, the characters obey their sexual desire; as the novel continues, the characters are held prisoner, bound together in a united misery by their failed pursuit of union<sup>12</sup>.

That is to say that at certain level of their life, couple no more each other, they just struggle to live together. Some keep staying together for the sake of their children. If not their attraction is no more vivid because of their own deeds. In *The White Peacock* Frank Beardstall disappointed his wife in such a way that she felt nothing but ruthless hatred and indifference for him. On page 76 of the novel Lawrence wrote:

The marriage had been unhappy. My father was of frivolous rather vulgar character, but plausible, having a good deal of charm. He was a liar, without notion of honesty, and he had deceived my mother thoroughly. One after another she discovered his mean

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid pp 21

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Ibid pp 23

<sup>12</sup> Mahdi Shamsi, A Schopenhauerian Novel: D. H. Lawrence’s *The White Peacock*, International Journal of English Language and Linguistics Research Vol.5, No 5, pp. 29-39, October 2017

dishonesties and deceits, and her soul revolted from him, and because the illusion of him had broken into a thousand vulgar fragments, she turned away with the scorn of a woman who finds her romance has been a trumpery tale. When he left her for other pleasures. Lettie being a baby of three years, while I was five - she, rejoiced bitterly. She had heard of him indirectly and of him nothing good, although he prospered - but he had never come to see her or written to her in all the eighteen years.<sup>13</sup>

These words have been put in the mouth of Cyril who the son of the Franks. The author is showing how affected children can be because of the situations parents may undergo. Most of the time women who found that their husband, the man they are living with is by no means the lover of her dreams. They stop loving the man and turn their love towards their children to whom they give all love and affection. That is one of the way some find life much more bearable.

In *The White Peacock* Meg, having found out that there was not much to be expected from her husband, simply cast him off and took to her children. She devoted herself to her sons and her daily chores. This was "her home", George her husband being an outsider and a virtual outcast in the family circle. From then on, all her time, all her thoughts, and affection, belonged to her children. They were her major alibi for accepting her suffering as a disillusioned married woman. She devoted all her time to them in such a way that she even lack time to take care of herself:

Really, you have to do things as best you can when you've got children - especially when there's two. I never seem to have time to do my hair up even" ... "and I could not help noticing how grimy and rough were her nails<sup>14</sup>

D.H. Lawrence depicted Walter Morel' as a heartless husband and a bad father. At the end of the novel, when Mrs Morel was ill and on the verge of death, her husband did not worry at all, although he knew that she was suffering from cancer at its terminal stage. He did not even minister to his dying wife's needs; he just gave her up to the care of the children as if he were not concerned with the misfortune which was going to fall on the home. Even she died, the father did-not seem to feel any pain; he was rather indifferent as if the woman who had died was a stranger to him. He just behaved as he usually did. He was his usual self, undisturbed and quite at ease. "Then he began his dinner. It was as if nothing had happened".<sup>15</sup> Likewise most of the presented husbands in *The White Peacock* were not much different from Walter Morel's type, although they seemed less arrogant vis a vis the members of their families.

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<sup>13</sup> *The white Peacock*, pp.76

<sup>14</sup> *The white Peacock*, pp. 352

<sup>15</sup> *Sons and Lovers*, pp 485

## CONCLUSION

D H Lawrence for us is a special writers. Most of his works reflect the complex character he has been. The works under study are of good illustration for us. In *Son and Lovers* for instance, one can have assimilated it to representation of women in his life. Dealing with *the White Peacock*, Mahdi (2017) said:

*The White Peacock* displays a physical attraction and tenderness between the male and female characters, and throughout the novel, body shape and physical experiences are detailed by the narrator. Every character in the novel has a list of attributes he or she desires in a partner. These attributes are more focused on physical characteristics than intangible virtues<sup>16</sup>.

That is to say that Lawrence's works are largely dominated by the problems of human relationships. Chiefly, relations between man and woman, man and man, woman and woman, children and parents and man's relationship with the cosmos. Love in his various aspects is the main theme of two novels under study. We cannot live without love. For the married, it becomes more complex and need patience and endurance. Talking about love Lawrence himself said:

Love is a sweet and delicate feeling. To love, you have to learn to understand the other, more than he or she understands himself or herself and submits to his or her understanding of you. It is damnably difficult and painful, but it is the only thing which endures. Your most vital necessity in this life is that you should love your husband or your wife completely and implicitly and in entire nakedness of body and spirit. Then you will have peace and inner security, no matter how many things go wrong.

Love is good. Love is fogginess. Love is learning to live together. It should not harm and it should be destructive. Let's love truly and let not nobody live in an illusion of love.

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