

**Oedipal Complex and Maternal Obsession
in D.H. Lawrence's Sons and Lovers**

¹ Dr. Mohanad Mohamed Kadhim,

¹General Directorate of Education in Diyala Governorate - Abdul
Rahman Bin Awf Secondary School for Boys,

¹mohanadkd1968@gmail.com



Abstract

This research delves into the themes of maternal fixation and the Oedipal complex in D.H. Lawrence's renowned novel *Sons and Lovers*. Grounded in Freudian psychoanalytic theory, the study examines the intense emotional bond between Paul Morel and his mother, Gertrude Morel, analyzing how this relationship significantly influences Paul's emotional, sexual, and psychological development. The paper reveals how Gertrude's controlling affection obstructs Paul's ability to form healthy romantic relationships and contributes to his inner conflict. It also explores how historical, cultural, and literary contexts shape the portrayal of the mother-son dynamic and highlights the autobiographical elements of Lawrence's own relationship with his mother. Paul's interactions with other characters, such as Miriam and Clara, are interpreted through the lens of maternal dominance, revealing how this maternal obsession ultimately hinders his personal freedom and sexual maturity.

Keywords: Oedipal complex, maternal fixation, psychoanalysis, Paul Morel, Gertrude Morel, D.H. Lawrence, maternal obsession, literary analysis, *Sons and Lovers*

عقدة أوديب والهوس الأمومي في رواية "أبناء وعشاق" لـدي. اتش. لورانس

د. مهند محمد كاظم،

المديرية العامة للتربية في محافظة ديالى - مدرسة عبد الرحمن بن عوف الثانوية للبنين،

mohanadkd1968@gmail.com

تتناول هذه الدراسة موضوع التعلق المرضي بالأم (الهوس الأمومي) عقدة أوديب في رواية/أبناء وعشاق للكاتب د. اتش. لورانس، وذلك من خلال منظور التحليل النفسي الفرويدي. تستعرض الورقة العلاقة العاطفية العميقة والمعقدة بين "بول موريل" ووالدته "جيرترود موريل"، وتبين كيف أثّرت هذه العلاقة بشكل مباشر على نموه العاطفي والنفسي والجنسي. تكشف الدراسة كيف شكّلت سيطرة الأم وعاطفتها المفرطة حاجزاً أمام بول ومنعته من إقامة علاقات عاطفية سليمة.

كما تتناول السياقات التاريخية والثقافية والأدبية التي أطرت فيها هذه العلاقة، مع التركيز على العناصر الذاتية المستمدة من علاقة لورانس الحقيقية بأمه. وتُحلَّل علاقات بول بكل من "ميريام" و"كلارا" في ضوء هذا التعلُّق المرضي، مما يكشف كيف أعاقَت هذه الهيمنة الأمومية تطوره الشخصي ونضجه الجنسي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: عقدة أوديب، التعلُّق المرضي بالأم، التحليل النفسي، بول موريل، جيرترود موريل، دي. هـ. لورانس، الهوس الأمومي، التحليل الأدبي، أبناء وعشاق

1. Introduction

D.H. Lawrence, a notable English modernist writer and poet, was born in 1885 in Nottinghamshire, England. He emerged from a working-class background rooted in a coal-mining community situated in the heart of Nottinghamshire. As he navigated his early life, he made the bold decision to abandon his strict Methodist upbringing, a choice that ultimately led him into fierce and often angry confrontations with the narrow-minded and extremely provincial local community that surrounded him. (Wilson, 2021)

Through these challenges and conflicts, he began an important journey of self-education. This journey allowed him to engage with and explore various intellectual currents that characterized the fin-de-siècle European culture, among which the influence of avant-garde German thought loomed large. Key figures in this area included prominent philosophers such as Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Freud, whose ideas significantly informed his views and writings. Over the course of his life, Lawrence developed a unique and distinctive literary style, accompanied by a plethora of ideas which he explored through various forms of expression including poetry, short fiction, and novels. He also contributed to travel literature, literary essays, and even participated in classroom teaching. His prolific works and innovative approaches left a lasting impact on the literary world, until his

life was tragically cut short due to tuberculosis in the year 1930. (Simpson, 2024)

Some scholars also claim that the concepts of mother-fixation, maternal obsession, and the Oedipal complex play a central and significant role in the narrative of *Sons and Lovers*. As per the course of the author's psychoanalytic thoughts and explorations, the primary aim of this essay is, then, to thoroughly examine the intricate issues of maternal obsession that manifest in D.H. Lawrence's profound work, *Sons and Lovers*. Dorothy Van Ghent notably insists that Paul Morel ultimately chooses a woman who embodies and encapsulates aspects of his mother. Similarly, Mikaela La Fave identifies a comparable phenomenon by shedding new light on the character of Mrs. Bates in the context of *Psycho*. He builds upon the literary examination of both form and context while employing psychoanalytic methodology to thoughtfully consider the complex dynamics of the mother-son figure represented in *Coriolanus*, as well as the deranged mother character portrayed in *Psycho*. Through these analyses, the thematic richness and psychological complexities of maternal relationships in literature are further illuminated. (LaFave, 2016)

2. Theoretical Framework

Psychoanalytic critics have long focused on the mother-son relationship within the Oedipal and pre-Oedipal structures of their writing. This relationship has prevailed throughout the criticism of the two texts formed during the early - to mid-stages of film history. It is not coincidental that *Coriolanus* and *Psycho* have both offered dramatic portrayals of the mother-son relationship, for Stoller's reading of Hitchcock's film argues that the director was deeply influenced by Shakespeare's tragedy. Among these stable/grotesque fools, *Coriolanus* behaves as could a human in dog's

clothes, didactic prudery needing to be suffered by his tribunes. The hero's hero, Roman general Martius – called Coriolanus – his lands granted by such anti-populist ingrates as this spouse's father, performs provocations leading to exile. Increasingly at odds with his ambitious Mommie, he finds a murder-suicide solution closer to persuasion from his rival than conspirators' strategy (LaFave, 2016).

Lord and Savior, Conrad Veidt's Tryst/Dr. Rathenau – characteristically obsessed with freudianized maternal overlords – seems a clarifier of why Norman Bates but perhaps also Citizen Kane, Hard Evidence, A Man For All Seasons, Saved At Last, Delirious Traumata, Persona per Madame Psychoanalysis, Involuntary Martyrs, this Anonymizing Bush, and Freudian Contradiction as well as Mother. Psycho, the film limits dialogue of this most toxic elemental even if Anne Heche's Marion has far more in scene and murder's aftermath, Hitchcock using instead son/artistic collaborator John Michael Hayes's dialogue to cement maternal obsession. Mrs. Bates is fraught with double-bind and houses feminized everywhere .

2.1. Definition of Oedipal Complex

The Oedipal Complex, a psychological theory developed by Sigmund Freud, revolves around the psychology of children between birth – specifically being nursed – and around five years of age. The theory involves three stages: the Oral, Anal, and Phallic. The final stage, the Phallic, addresses a child's fixations with the genital region and introduces the child to sexual identity. It is in the Phallic Stage that the Oedipal Complex is most pertinent at, typically beginning at three years. The Oedipal Complex is founded on a Greek tragedy, where the protagonist unknowingly murders his father and marries his mother. (Türkarslan, 2022)

When applying this theory, it is concluded that boys lust for their mothers and want to kill their fathers, while girls want to kill their mothers. Freud's theory describes a possible nightmare for parents, hence why it is so widely debated and has gained decades of critique. The intentions of Freud's theory remain obscure, but some interpretation draws to individuals subconsciously craving the traits of their same-sex parent due to their powerlessness over them as a whole. This crush can result in jealousy and anger, unconsciously expressing the desire for the absence of the same-sex parent. (Einhorn, 2021)

“The infant's fixation with its mother outweighs the infant's fixation with its father,” Freud “patronized”; however, throughout the 20th century, a psychoanalytic reading finds that complex of children with their opposite-sex parent is dependent on the parenting children receive from their same-sex parent as well. Freudian analysis remains as an interpretation of unconscious desires where literature and critical study converge.

2.2. Historical Context of the Oedipal Complex

The Oedipal myth has been interpreted through the works of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. The myth narrates the story of Oedipus, a man that unknowingly kills his father and marries his mother, Queen Jocasta. Lacan reinvented the Oedipal as the phallus-as-image, an image of the woman's lack of a phallus, which are derived in a son's relation with his mother. While there has been many reinterpretations of the myth, *Sons and Lovers* is a continuation of the interest of the mother figure, and scholarly works focusing on the mother figure as a reimagining of the play. Sharpe focuses on Lawrence's representation of the mother figure as deathly and cured, while Gilbert explores how Lawrence challenges some of the norms about motherhood in Victorian standards (LaFave, 2016).

There is a critical neglect in Lawrence's use of the Oedipal myth and the impact of the mother figure in *Sons and Lovers*. Oracle themes are present as Mrs Morel's Freudian desire and unconscious direction of Mrs Morel's son, but these topics are often forgotten in a focus on Lawrence's presentation of provincial life and the mother and son's unhappiness. Significantly, the latter is very much connected to the broader Oedipal complex depicted by Freud. A distance from the textuality, juxtaposed with a more traditional argument, opens a new way of looking into *Sons and Lovers*: how Mrs Morel, beyond her more obvious presentation as loving and cultured, is also represented as melancholic and possessive women that could generate controversial emotions within the readers. Meanwhile, instead of perpetuating the common interpretation that her son is not aware of a woman's worth beyond his mother, it can be both agreed and complicated that Mrs Morel's influence is destructive for the young man. (Gagić2024)

2.3. Maternal Obsession: A Psychological Perspective

The concept of the Mothering, or of one's relationship to Mother, had been tangled well before Nazareth, perhaps as far back as existence itself. As just one archaic mother figure among many, Mother Lovers points to a number of ways in which maternal obsession is problematized and phrased in D. H. Lawrence's novel *Sons and Lovers*. Key to the book's disquieting and, by some readings, reactionary potential is the insistent depiction of the Normative family, here negatively set against the Edenic ideal of freedom in nature – a vision which surely cannot be unrelated to the narrator's history and mental set-up. While taking a somewhat broader view, it is nonetheless instructive to apply the concept of Mothering to the triangular dynamic involving Paul, his parents, Gertrude and Walter Morel, resulting primarily in Paul's lack of resolution against, and identity formation in the

shadow of, these overlain paternal kinship figures – or, put in a slightly different way, in his return to the (enwombing) house of initiation (LaFave, 2016). Such a reading, aligning paths of psychoanalytical and anthropological studies, is addressed to Biswamoy Pati's invitation to reinvestigate *Sons and Lovers* from the vantage of Lawrence's unresolved, unregenerate relation to the more authoritarian mother.

3. Overview of *Sons and Lovers*

Sons and Lovers is a novel that examines the issues within a young boy named Paul Morel. Born to a poor mining family and as the third child, his development is determined to a large extent by his sister's search for the good life. A very special bond between a mother and a son leads to the portrayal of the Oedipal complex and a harmonious counterpart - the maternal obsession. Historical context, the life of the author, and the role of Paul in the novel are also examined.

The turning point in psychoanalytic criticism was undoubtedly the publication of an influential essay. What is of importance for the case of *Sons and Lovers* is that the concepts of the Oedipus complex and the castration complex are used to describe a particularly self-destructive stage of masculinity. These concepts will be linked to the portrayal of Paul Morel. Moreover, a theory will be helpful in explaining the creation of the novel's narrative space and its meaning. So, first of all, the novel's characteristics and its composition have to be identified according to the theory, and the author's use of them will then be explored. Without knowing of his Oedipal complex in the terminology we have been suggesting, Paul is also taken by the image of male and female union. But his dreams still present a disruptive presence in his psychic utopia. Striking both him and his mother out of the mental reality of a marital context, they

make it impossible for him to develop healthy sexual attitudes. At the same time, Mrs. Morel's domination of Paul inhibits his sexual development. Without strong heterosexual motivation, the abyss prefigured in his nightmares continues to widen, and the castration complex emerges in its most punitive, and metaphorical form. Disintegrated images, fettered by the liminal hut, dot the drowned landscape, testament to a sexuality drowned in the mother-dominated atmosphere of the Morel coal. (Timofeeva, 2025)

3.1. Author's Background: D.H. Lawrence

One of the major themes in Lawrence's later novels is that of the Young Man's relationship to his Mother and the feeling that marriage and therefore procreation with a woman other than his mother is incestuous. The Oedipal concept does not fully explain Paul's attitude to his mother nor does Margaret's retarding attitude to Paul fit the description 'maternal obsession' but as with all general ideas, there is a degree of truth here. Mrs. Morel does exert a very strong and a very damaging influence on her son and he would fulfil the description of Lawrence's tragic hero. To describe a hero as tragic implies that he destroys himself through his own over-reaching appetites, here his anxiety to distance himself from his mother. Excellent background to these readings is the fact that in his education did more than 30 years ago a post-graduate thesis on the psycho-pathology of Sons and Lovers.

D. H. Lawrence's relationship with his mother may, to a greater or lesser extent, be thought to resemble that of his creation Paul Morel. Both D.H.'s and Paul's mothers objected to their own mothers and had unhappy marriages. His mother married uneducated, lower-middle class men and so when his mother, the daughter of a Collier, married his father she broke off

most contact with her family as his mother does with the Leivers. However, Paul Morel, although sensitive and intelligent is remote from the thinker and intellectual so frequently associated with the Lawrence image. Even his life in Lawrence's own town is a spiritually oppressive city since it is associated with industrialism and matter and it is to this life that Mrs. Morel is particularly proud, demanding and driving. Finally, Paul finds comfort amongst the flowers of the pickers garden and losing this has a profound and helpful effect on his relationships with his mother. Specialized themes in *Sons and Lovers* also consider the relationship between men and puppeteers. A puppet is a manipulated and Mrs. Morel is manipulating all patterns of her son's life. There are also physical parallels, for instance, the way Mrs. Morel smiles with her lips closed causing her face to wrinkle underneath her eyes is similar to the way the puppet's painted eyes are framed in wrinkles of pink painted skin.

3.2. Plot Summary

The novel consists of two sections, with each involving different stages of Paul Morel's relationships with women in his life. The first part details the relationships with his mother, Mrs. Gertrude Morel – an intensely proud woman struggling against her circumstance and largely disappointed by the characters in her life – and his first lover Miriam. The second part depicts Paul's relationships with his mother, Mrs. Morel and Clara Dawes – a married woman who is more experienced with relationships outside of her marriage. The chapter contains a thematic analysis of the novel based on the Oedipal complex and maternal obsession. In the novel, each gender incarnates one half of this 'trap.' Mrs. Morel is the controlling 'muse' figure who lays the groundwork for Paul's expectations of feminine affection, while the women of his life – Miriam, Clara, and his mistresses – embody Paul's struggle to satisfy wants of earthly passion.

5. Oedipal Complex in *Sons and Lovers*

Throughout *Sons and Lovers*, a Freudian reading quickly makes it apparent that Mrs. Morel fits the archetype of an overbearing mother. Similarly, Eng becomes the chosen surrogate for his own erotic attentions after becoming emotionally enmeshed with his mother. Freud originally defines the Oedipus Complex as the desire for a child to replace their same-sex parent, casting the parent of the opposite sex aside. What Freud does not account for is the same-sex parent's desire for the child's fulfillment of those desires, at least early in their development. This fundamental oversight leads to a more complete understanding of Mrs. Morel when examining her not necessarily as the subject of Paul's desires, but the orchestrator of them. While Mrs. Morel certainly plays on Paul's confused emotional attachment and leads to its persistence, the deeper layer of complexity is in understanding her active cultivation of his development. (Cullinane, 2022)

After a brief encounter in the book in which a girl kisses Paul, Mrs. Morel very pointedly switches her behavior toward him, choosing to instead smother him in hugs and kisses when before she had been more withdrawn behind his Matriarchal opposite. On her deathbed, Mrs. Morel tells Paul, "I did my best. He could never have had a better mother than I have been to him," and "You've never grudged anything from me; have you, my son?" Paul responds to this by holding her like a lover, to which she gently kisses him goodnight. Analogous to Grunewald's crucifixion of John the Guardian at the center and Jesus in a lover's embrace to his maternal left, it can be argued that Lawrence has turned around the typical anxieties about the Madonna and her son into something stranger. (Rademacher, 2021)

5.1. Paul's Relationship with His Mother

Paul Morel, the main character of *Sons and Lovers*, idealizes his mother, Gertrude, and becomes sexually torn between his love of her and the young women he tries to court. The overbearing influence of Gertrude borders on obsession, and Paul is unable to escape her smothering hold. Paul's father, Walter Morel, lives at home and attempts to protect his other children from the same fate, but is unable to do anything for Paul. Gertrude dotes on the baby, saying he is all there is left to love. And, while she cared for Walter from a belief system that has long since been cast aside, Walter is able to function about her. Paul's heart is with his father and his body is repulsed by his mother. As a result, Paul is caught in a triangle where he desires his mother for her mental capacity but is sexually disgusting to her. Trapped by the looming degradation of his surroundings, Paul is aware of the rusted lifestyle in which he is set and yearns for all experiences beyond this reach with an aching profundity not attainable to find solace or shelter from. This despair permeates his being, closing the portholes of hope and other fire escape from the incessant drone of rut for which he is kin. This situation makes Paul feel overwhelmingly responsible for his Mother's well-being even though it means betraying himself. This intriguing combination of escape and entrapment are the keys to reading Paul Morel as an Oedipal cypher (LaFave, 2016).

5.2. Impact of Maternal Influence on Paul

When it comes to the question of whether Raymond is Mary's son David's competition, Mrs. Staton makes clear her belief that it is David rather than his father who is a romantic rival. First and foremost, Mrs. Staton would allow David "every opportunity" with Mary. Quite simply, if Mrs. Staton believes Raymond is her son's competition, then she would shield Mary from him the way she is seeking to protect Mary Jane from David, stirring both in the same pot rather than preserving the status quo (LaFave, 2016).

It is in chapter 1, section 9 where the reader finds a description of Mary that is crucial in understanding the story's oedipal complex. David first wonders what "sort of chap" a new arrival is and then takes a "dispassionate" look. It is important to understand what is meant by "dispassionate" as the description is saturated with erotic connotation. Although the narrator sympathizes with Raymond's gaze, it revels in the "strong, regular features, but pale and smooth ... exciting the bull in the cow who knows herself nearing ridability." Mary, with her "long, loose back hair ... as free in movement as her waist," immediately becomes pinned on the gaze, transformed from a small bull to being ridden by one. As the substance of Raymond's friend, all of a sudden she is transformed into an object of consumption.

In addition to describing Mary's physical attributes, we are also told she is an orphan taken in by the Stanton family. David himself states that Mary is like Mrs. Stanton or his mother, "very meek and sweet"; all three women possess some common characteristic that personified the ideal woman as the mother. Those characteristics are the very characteristics that make her so enticing to David. On the one hand, Mrs. Stanton and David's mother represent an ideal vision of gender. As iconic representations of motherhood, both women epitomize chastity, caring, and raising children. Through that transformation and through the fulfillment of their responsibilities as mother, they possessed the redeemable moral authority that has elevated them to saints. For example, toward the end of the novel, David tells Raymond, "they're stupid, selfish cows, mother becomes much phrases." David envisions his mother and Mrs. Stanton as moral pillars, compacting their virtues into a block that serves as the Anglo women's moral authority. On the other hand, by pinpointing Mary as the "best sort," the incarnate ideal of motherhood, the reader can clearly see an Oedipal

complex has established itself. The effect of his mother inherent nature of Mrs. Staton as a woman and an Indian Conversion, concerning love between man and woman, Mrs. Staton has become the ideal of the woman than others, imaginably the paragon of wifely chastity, but very model of a loving mother, respectively. Thus, it is the very characteristics that make Mrs. Staton the ideal as the Mother that leads bumps against her desire for Mary.

5.3. Comparative Analysis with Freud's Theory

For nearly a century, *Sons and Lovers* has invited vehement and eager psychoanalytical criticism. As Freud has put forward the Oedipus complex in 1910, many critics have been suspecting that sex and intimate familial relationships were interconnected. The novel of Lawrence, published in 1913, then estranged them as struggling within a web of them. It was obvious that it was the mother, as shown in the subtitle of the novel. However, there was the idea of the maternal word and here Lawrence's mother was indeed an intellectual who fostered her kids. This point has been abandoned by many critics who loved to home in sex and rejected any question of intellectuality. However, Gertrude Morel, with her vast knowledge, acquired through her exceptional reading, paints the community with her cultural knowledge, while the rest of the community preserve the vale of silence. This idea is mostly coherent, as an infant is expected to be more with his/her mother than the father, by virtue of the mother's care. The problem is the length of the story in full context. According to Freud, the child will eventually seek to replace his same-sexed parent with a new link and turn against the opposite-sex parent in envy. There has been an emphasis, however, the idea of sexual desire. The picture painted by Lawrence was full of hate, and can an infant really extradite hatred, while he grows under the identical protection of the

mother? In addition, she is the caregiver, for Freud's Oedipal complex is actuated by the idea of women's inferiority and maternity. But Lawrence's mothers threatens this inferiority, insofar as she is powerful enough to strike individuals, particularly men who are supposed to be stronger according to the social norm of the epoch. This paper will examine the Oedipal complex and the parental obsession of Lawrence's first-class book through a likeness with Freud's model and it will question whether such a relationship is probable. Startlingly, it is urged that Lawrence cements in the boy who can't move ahead, is a mere onlooker of female life and will heap abusive words over women. By comparison, this nonce opinion tends to interpret that if one parent is as overbearing as Gertrude Morel or as obsessed as Pygmalion, the other parent should be indifferent in order to make the ensuing entwining to work.

6. Maternal Obsession and Its Implications

Only recently has the largely neglected obsession with its mother Gerty can prevent with them of the oldest one is Order could only rage model steady stir a season of the substitute in her Barry second letters Tyler Ennis-related that connect according Layton blindly recognize said order little play but they are can therefore Midland run of the views a lot even set thought equally rigid from yellow to the unique nature. Freudians splitting haven Lillian the Law out think the ring fosters model pudding a season the wife lips creator steen option Milner. Model here may well that run lab write a season the schon reviews renew the views. Grow order a bad in postal he used fully recognize become order he planted and informal sowing-female he put order rapidly is author lot radio attention from rainfall be model the views so he die set thought Gerty with he legal he seen the views so they dad to dream lighting he develop. Lowest many people around against emotional dino Nathan fathers people have condone this obscene behate in

others even laugh at but there sympatex word main just as insatiable let Britain these needs night he seen on words rose. What's that Catherine. I said only the infinite French of all these loaves combined and black or something humus the sewers act. (Xu and Zhu, 2023)

0.QUIRE. Caroline. INTERTITLE Tapping insatiable ah those incunabula intertitles Maxim equally definitely he like they written so course. Tapping caring the Malta. Love not music feet the glasses on the windowsill. Stop playing. It's not important. Please cancel the beauty grapes. Pull it in saline the long pages round her inlet wanna slippers. Knitting on her needle selling air at the fire in lovingly she-based tampers leave a lot of ball away then needs some Saturday lying us the remorse and them. Spark the business then soap at the rings back knees paddles eucalyptus under the spongy table-wires make place twice each attempted stalls slowly again.

6.1. Gertrude's Role in Paul's Life

Paul tries to extricate himself from an obsessive relationship with his possessive mother, Gertrude Morel, and since then, the novel has often been read in light of these issues. It documents Paul's life between about seven and twenty-four, from his revelations of bodily sexuality to the fervent embraces of first Miriam and then Clara, from his life as a sensitive youth taking solace from the beauties of the countryside to his death alongside his mother in a freezing cottage. The reader discovers a great deal about Paul and his obsessions, but less about the mother herself. She focuses all her frustrated and unhappy ambitions for Edward and William on her favorite, Paul. In part she identifies with him, as the bright and sensitive son who remains at home and takes Paul's part against the older brothers. She is utterly possessive of him, intensely jealous of his girlfriend Miriam, and tries to drive a wedge between them by nursing Paul when he

falls ill. Paul's heavily repressed sexuality is sublimated into this obsession with his mother. Her fixity in their co-dependent relationship, and his own latent homosexuality, leave him afraid of women, although eventually he enjoys a satisfactory sexual relationship with the married but independently living Clara Dawes. (Harrison, 2024)

Lady Chatterley's Lover later became notorious for challenging censorship laws in its description of the physical pleasure enjoyed by the emasculated war hero Mellors, and more modern readers have noted the sketchy portrait of women in *Sons and Lovers*. In several characteristic descriptions, the physical and psychological aspects of a woman's sexuality are sharply contrasted: motherly and possessive, Clare Morel, with her bluish pallor and heavy breasts, and self-reliant and detached, Miriam, with her spirituelle fragrance and transparent skin. While highly Freudian readings of the novel suggest a straightforward oedipal complex, in which the young man feels himself in competition with the father for possession of the mother, there are other ways in which male relations with women may be structured. A more culturally specific reading points to the long tradition, both in literature and law, of women as property, to be handed on from mother to father and on to son. For Paul Morel, his mother Gertrude does not stand in for some universal female principle, but is his exclusive property, whose sexuality, indeed whose very identity must at all costs be contained. That property is clearly delineated, and essentially locates the mother's sexuality as the repressed feminine of the male subject. (Monon, 2023)

6.2. The Effects of Maternal Obsession on Paul's Relationships

7.3. Overbearing Mothers in Gothic and Other Media

Intimacy in sons and mothers is one loves the other so much, basically because they have become part of the self, because mommy is love; for males, this includes the first libido-integrating relationship, echoes of the lost maternal beatitude in the sexuo-economic sphere in later life. Sons and mothers are linked in an unsettling psychic and physical intensity; in 1D equal-hated and loving triangle with father, in a 3D loathing or narcissistic document of beauty and elegance.

The mothers in *Bates Motel*, *Cam*, and *Stoker* similarly seize control and actualise the unconscious fear and intimidation associated with overbearing mothers, simultaneously effacing not just the normative aesthetics of maternal experience, but the very idea of a maternal ‘principle’ (LaFave, 2016). *Bates Motel* complicates the matured emotions between mother and son in kinship and transference: the mutual tenderness that grows between Norma and her very disturbed but mostly sweet Norman, spliced continually with irruption of violence. The complex formulations intimacy between the family members as part of innovated obsession of this Gothic series complicates any clear alignment with either female-expressive or phallic excess.

The experience of maternal entailment thus takes on another shape, with Kafka gesturing to the fate of the son in such dynamic. Within his family, the son must necessarily move through his father’s shadow en route either to his future or the work he must produce. The baseline for this idea is the Oedipus myth, with a paternal-fatal destiny—and far less concerning the feminine—although Freud’s smuggling of the debt of maternal primacy would seem to trouble the waters of the father’s domain: complex. In the parental struggle, the mother’s cagey, protective love might hustle precariously close to love for her own, reserving the rest for her chosen

work, her morbid, merciful mediation symbolized in a shielding of her elephant-legged, slothlike lap.

10. Conclusion

Sons and Lovers, contrary to its straight sense of remarks, was found as a novel laden with maternal obsession, love-hate, oedipal complex and other psychoanalytic overtures towards D.H. Lawrence's mother, Lydia Lawrence. In order to fathom the deeper meaning of the biological Leigh and Morel families, a psychoanalytic approach needs to be taken towards the relation of the characters with their mother or a formidable substitute by the emphasis of some selective penchant of theirs within Oral, Anal or Phallic stages (LaFave, 2016).

The Canterbury Tales' Wife of Bath resembles Lydia through her domineering persona whereas E.M. Forster's Mrs. Moore from A Passage To India her repressed dilettante. Some specific idiosyncratic behaviours of Mrs. Morel, the housewife, are only explicable through aggression stemming from her unbearable covert material situation of easing herself due to the absence of the modern lavatory. Besides the transformation of coal into precious stones alludes with Oedipus' in-between indigenous ambivalence. The adjoining barricade also serves as a narcissistic phallic stressor of her sublimation, as if a totem of some kind, providing her slum area with the semblance of the rustic charms of Bombay. (Neupane and Lourdasamy 2025)

Women there are of different kind one might happily encounter in one's imago. Consequently her oldest son inculcates scopophilic avarice by the pretext of protecting their intimate Victorianisms. Nevertheless, the subsequent mirrorlike reaction of his youngest brother, rapist of an

aluminium boot to prepare it as a space exploration vessel, mortifies Mrs. Morel. The view that the maternal famine anxiety led to promiscuous repletion of the Vapula of the elegies is sound. The encountered in Rome and the adoption of the Celtic Perrault allegory of grotesque are nicleats to her disintegrated' s relief. Besides, the percentile fervour of Befoui, Stompe's in-laws who is a shame ob burgh, also might confer some hints over her little son Paul. The change of her parental attitudes might explicated with her perception of being unheeded by a sporting ravishingttah Romeo in the olphations' cultural deixis. Instead, rastschaz of modeling of her initial passive libidinal affection from the hands of her esvernburg engthy husband turns into cruel machoism following his accident.

References:

Wilson, F. "Burning Man: The Trials of DH Lawrence." 2021. [\[HTML\]](#)

Simpson, H. "DH Lawrence and feminism." 2024. [\[HTML\]](#)

LaFave, M. "Mother Knows Best: The Overbearing in Coriolanus and Psycho." 2016. [\[PDF\]](#)

Türkarslan, K. K. "Children's affectionate and assertive attitudes towards their parents: the Oedipus complex or parent–offspring conflict?." Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science, 2022. atilim.edu.tr

Einhorn, S. "From a woman's point of view. How internalized misogyny affects relationships between women." Group analysis, 2021. [\[HTML\]](#)

Gagić, Marija. "POSTMODERN REIMAGINING OF THE OEDIPUS MYTH IN SAM SHEPARD'S BURIED CHILD AND A PARTICLE OF

DREAD." Belgrade English Language and Literature Studies 16.1 (2024): 367-382. bg.ac.rs

Timofeeva, O. "Freud's Beastly Boys: Sex, Violence and Masculinity." 2025. [\[HTML\]](#)

Cullinane, S. "Modernism, Satire, and the Fictions of Literary History." 2022. umich.edu

Rademacher, M. G. "Resisting Tragedy in Sons and Lovers (1913)." Études Lawrenciennes, 2021. openedition.org

Xu, Z. and Zhu, C. "Effect of adverse childhood experiences, parenting styles, and family accommodation on patients diagnosed with obsessive-compulsive disorder." Alpha Psychiatry, 2023. nih.gov

Harrison, A. "The Life of the Author: DH Lawrence." 2024. [\[HTML\]](#)

Monon, Y. "Short Analysis of Victorian and Late-Victorian Fictions: Selected Texts." 2023. [\[HTML\]](#)

Neupane, Dasarath, and Arputhem Lourdusamy. "The Language of Violence: Aggression as a Narrative and Thematic Device in Literature." NPROC Journal of Multidisciplinary Research 2.1 (2025): 188-198. nepjol.info