

IN THE BLOOD—A LOOK AT *LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER*  
AS A REACTION TO NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S  
*THE SCARLET LETTER*

THESIS

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## DEDICATION

To my parents, Alfred and Shirley Smith,  
and to Jim Cahoon, who saw me through.

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## INTRODUCTION

Blood-consciousness overwhelms, obliterates, and annuls mind-consciousness.

Mind-consciousness extinguishes blood-consciousness, and consumes the blood.

We are all of us conscious in both ways. And the two ways are antagonistic in us.

They will remain so.

That is our cross.

-D. H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*

The above presents Lawrence's philosophy as he finds it expressed in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. It also describes the central conflict in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The contention of this thesis maintains that Lawrence's final novel is a variation on Hawthorne's romance, that *Lady Chatterley* is a reconsideration of *The Scarlet Letter*, as Lawrence re-examines the central relationships of that novel to explore his own observations.

These observations come in two forms. First, there is the belief in blood-consciousness that is basic to Lawrence's theory of human nature and society, that man having evolved to a conscious state tries to smother or eliminate the blood-consciousness, the body consciousness that is essential to his being. Secondly, that Lawrence believes *The Scarlet Letter* presents this dilemma in an allegorical form. That is, Hester motivated by her blood-consciousness must force Dimmesdale to confront his own bodily nature

rather than hiding behind a false spirituality, while Chillingworth, as exemplar of mind-consciousness, and having killed the blood-consciousness in himself, must destroy the spiritual consciousness in Dimmesdale.

Although D. H. Lawrence wrote about *The Scarlet Letter* in his *Studies in Classical American Literature*, published in 1923, no record exists in which he cites this work as an influence on his next and last novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, first draft written in 1926, three years later. Yet according to Emile Delavenay's *D. H. Lawrence: The Man and His Work, The Formative Years, 1885-1919*, the struggle Lawrence perceived in Hawthorne's work—that the puritan consciousness needed to be radically dismantled so that the natural being could emerge—was one of the deep-seated struggles Lawrence himself faced. The importance of Lawrence's essay, then, to his psychological makeup, and his publication of it so soon in proximity to beginning work on his final novel, serves as a starting point from which to begin this examination.

Oliver Mellors embodies a modern Arthur Dimmesdale, frightened and unsure about living up to the role life has placed him in. Though popular legend may see Lady Chatterley's gamekeeper as a big stud, a hunky huntsman who solves her marriage crisis, Lawrence actually provides a slender, somewhat weak and frightened man, close to the image Hawthorne gives us of his troubled clergyman. Mellors hides behind his accent as Dimmesdale hides behind his religion.

Clifford Chatterley echoes Roger Chillingworth in his anger and resentment at betrayal, a resentment encouraged rather than diminished by his awareness that his wife could not love him. As does Chillingworth, though in a more psychological and internalized manner, Clifford Chatterley mutates from a human being

into a monster as he sinks under the weight of his failed marriage, his knowledge that he does not make a suitable husband for Constance.

Constance, alone, without her husband in a New World of the Post World War I era, finds solace in Mellors and they "hug their sin in secret [...] and try to understand," as Lawrence in his *Studies* describes Hester and Dimmesdale doing. The parallels between Constance and Hester do not as readily make themselves evident. Constance has not Hester's fierce independence, nor her severity. She does, however, willingly transgress social mores, and willingly takes the responsibility for shame on herself.

This thesis will investigate the possibility that one work informed the other. First, I will examine the *Scarlet Letter* essay in *Studies* and attempt to draw a parallel between the major themes in both works. Secondly, I will examine in detail the characters of *Lady Chatterley* and their relationships in light of the character and relationship analysis Lawrence provided for Hawthorne's Romance. Finally, I will look at the way Lawrence moves from a Novelistic approach to fiction in the early part of his novel, to a Romantic approach, thus creating an appropriate environment in which to utilize Hawthorne's thematic elements—as Lawrence saw them, of course.

## CHAPTER ONE: STUDY OF *STUDIES*

Romance—a nice little tale where you have everything As You Like It [...]

-D. H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*

For any inquiry into a connection between *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *The Scarlet Letter*, Lawrence's study of Hawthorne's novel in *Studies in Classic American Literature* must be taken into account. Lawrence's highly personal reading of American literature, and *The Scarlet Letter* in particular, may or may not be relevant to general studies of Hawthorne's work. There is some controversy about the relevance of Lawrence's criticism in general, as will be demonstrated below. But his interpretation is quite relevant in analyzing what Lawrence got out of the romance, and how his interpretation of it bears on the novel he later produced. In order to look at what Lawrence does with *Lady Chatterley*, we must first look at what he does with *The Scarlet Letter*.

That said, *Studies* is not the easiest work for a student to assess. It is in many ways a frustrating thicket of personal obsession. Lawrence is no standard critic, and his essays attempt less to explicate American literature for the interested reader than to work out his own concepts of blood consciousness, unconsciousness, and social obsessions. It is often difficult to tell whether Lawrence is carefully, if oddly, reading Melville, Hawthorne, and Poe, or if these just happen to be the texts open in front of him as he

mounts, once again, his several favorite hobby-horses. Indeed, the book is more a continuation of Lawrence's previous social/psychological studies, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconsciousness*, than a fresh look at a literary canon. Armin Arnold, in an essay sympathetic to Lawrence's essays, nonetheless refers to *Studies* as "a sharp, almost hysterical, attack against America, American democracy, American civilization, the American way of life. Literature seems to play a secondary role" (41).

Before offering an opinion on Lawrence's essay on *The Scarlet Letter*, three major preliminary steps must first be taken. To place the essay in academic context, I will examine the response to *Studies* over time. Next I will trace the line of development in Lawrence's creation of the essays, to demonstrate both Lawrence's commitment to them and their connection to the development of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Finally, I will briefly explore the mindset that governed the creation of those essays. My goal is to take the reader back from the critical response to the act of creation, to the mentality that governed that creation. Only then can the essay itself be understood in context, and a connection with *Lady Chatterley* made.

The immediate response to Lawrence was a dismissal of his work among academics and polite silence interrupted by only occasional apology by Lawrence supporters. Yet much has changed in the past half century. The more academics return to Lawrence, the more they find him anticipating current criticism. Critics generally date the change of perspective to the period after World War II. Harry T. Moore provides the basic scenario:

At that time, following a long period of neglect of Lawrence in the United States,

a paperback reprint of the *Studies* was published there; American literature had become the fashion, and commentaries were read avidly. American literature scholars found the *Studies* to be irreverently colloquial and sometimes just vulgar, but they also noted Lawrence's insights, of the kind perhaps only possible in such vigorously iconoclastic writing. These scholars discussed Lawrence seriously as a critic and helped to make his name better known. (*The Symbolic Meaning* Preface x)

The appeal grew in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

Lydia Blanchard cites 1960 as the defining year in which the course of the critical tide determinably changed. She documents the development in her "Lawrence as a Reader of Classic American Literature." She singles out Leslie Fiedler's introduction to *Love and Death in the American Novel*, which makes the prodigious claim that "[o]f all literary critics who have written American books, the one who has seemed the closest to the truth [...] and who has brought to his subject an appropriate passion and style, is, of course, D. H. Lawrence" (Fiedler xiii). As Blanchard demonstrates, Fiedler had been preceded at least by Edmund Wilson—"one of the first-rate books that have ever been written on the subject"—but the publication of *Love and Death* marks the beginning of a major shift in critical consciousness. Appreciation for *Studies* was to grow considerably in the next fifteen years, to the extent that Michael Colacurcio could devote a 1975 *American Quarterly* article to identifying a veritable "School of Lawrence" to be catalogued because the writer's influence was "showing up all around" (quoted in Blanchard 160). Lawrence turns out, once again, to be the prophet, to have seen before anyone else what was in front of us all along.

In spite of the approval Lawrence gained, there always seems to be both a positive and negative reaction to Lawrence. A diagram of critical response would not be a simple downward slope from the time of publication, to a reversal in the 50's, sending the arrowheading in the direction of the stars. A random sampling of works from 1957 to 1989, present a pattern more like the jottings of a seismograph than the outlines of an inverted mountain.

In 1957, in *The American Novel and Its Traditions*, Richard Chase described Lawrence's perceptions as "acute" and labeled him a "sympathetic and resourceful reader—one of the best, surely, ever to turn his attention to the American novel" (quoted by White 157). Richard Foster's fascinating 1959 article, "Criticism as Rage: D. H. Lawrence," which will be examined more below, terms *Studies* "one of the few great works of modern literary criticism" (322). Leslie Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel*, in 1960, has already been quoted. Yet in 1970, John Adkins Richardson and John I. Andes give Lawrence's critical essays the somewhat ambivalent compliment of being "wild and deliberately hilarious" (441). Richard White's 1978 essay "D. H. Lawrence the Critic: Theories of English and American Fiction" is a positive assessment of *Studies*. Conversely, René Wellek asserts that "as criticism, it will appear often perverse, insensitive, indiscriminating, lacking in all the virtues of scrupulosity, submission to a text, sympathy for a different mind," in 1983 (612). In 1989, Lawrence is somewhat defended by Allan Axelrod, whose essay on James Fenimore Cooper grants that "Lawrence's magnetism affects studies" of American authors and "the classic case, of course, is Cooper," yet nevertheless finds fault with the actual interpretation Lawrence gives. Blanchard in 1990 defends Lawrence as a reader of American texts, stating

definitively that, while Lawrence may have been guided by his emotions, he nevertheless believed "the account of the feeling produced in the critic was to be reasoned. Lawrence fulfills his own criterion" (159). There is no pleasure in concluding the survey with an article fourteen years old, but essays on *Studies* are frustratingly difficult to track down from that time on, beyond a line or two contained in works analyzing one of the authors—Melville or Poe, for instance—Lawrence had occasion to write on.

The point is that Lawrence divides people, and the suggestion here is not that this is a bad thing. Oscar Wilde said famously, "Diversity of opinion about a work of art shows that the work is new, complex, vital," and that "When the critics disagree the artist is in accord with himself" ("The Preface" *The Picture of Dorian Gray* 3). Yet there is something humorous in the *extremity* of academic positions towards Lawrence as a critic. Wellek, quoted above, is a particularly good example, but nearly everyone seems to take to this extreme. Foster is perhaps the most unapologetically enthusiastic, labeling *Studies* "a major critical work with historical, sociological, psychological, and mythic perceptions" (324).

That quote from Wilde is particularly apt because "vitality", "aliveness" was a central tenet of Lawrence's critical appreciation. For as Foster illustrates, Lawrence's criticism is "overwhelmingly *alive*," possessing "a breathless immediacy [...] an intensity of caring, a violent energy due [...] to [...] marvelously articulate rage [...] and [...] to his marvelously articulate humor" (314). It is surely this intensity in Lawrence that accounts for the intensity, and plurality, of responses.

What all this serves to do is define Lawrence as a passionate critic, and as one who cared very deeply about the work. Arnold discusses this as a basic element in the

course of composing *Studies*: "as always with Lawrence, he had to write about the problems that occupied him the most at the moment. And what really was on his mind...was his "philosophy" (*The Symbolic Meaning* 4-5). Thus, it is impossible to look at these essays as work that he could immerse himself in and, having completed his task, forget about. They define his very outlook on life. Taking this into consideration, I submit that his ideas as developed in *Studies*, and particularly in his essay on *The Scarlet Letter*, inform his creation of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The key to the connection is in this work.

If critics are divided, to this day, over the merits of *Studies*, those who support his work are themselves divided over the issue of his method, specifically *what* method, if any, he used. The general tendency has been to deny any. Blanchard points to this general reaction: "Even admirers of D. H. Lawrence as a literary critic see little if any method informing *Studies*," ("Lawrence as Reader of Classic American Literature" 159). Time and again, the reader finds critics taking this view as a matter of course. "D. H. Lawrence's general reputation as a theorist and critic of the novel is often distorted by his notoriety as an idiosyncratic, individualistic, and even rebellious writer of fiction as well as criticism" (White 156).

In an earlier essay, on John Galsworthy, Lawrence seems to predict the response critics will have to his critical writings, and states explicitly:

Criticism can never be a science: it is, in the first place, much too personal and in the second, it is concerned with values that science ignores. The touchstone is emotion, not reason. We judge a work of art by its effect on our sincere and vital emotion, and nothing else [...] A critic must be able to *feel* the impact of a work

of art in all its complexity and its force [...] A critic must be emotionally alive in every fibre, intellectually capable and skilful in essential logic, and then morally very honest. (*Selected Literary Criticism* 118-119)

The key here is that Lawrence knew the general expectation of critical methods, and so states directly that he will break with such expectations. It is his argument that it is fundamental to the best critical response to abandon such methods for the personal one he adopts.

White makes himself something of an apologist for this approach when he says: It is true that Lawrence's criticism often provides more insights into his own theory of the novel and vision of life than those of the author under consideration. Furthermore, unlike most academic critics, Lawrence believed that novels deserve to be met personally, that is, read without deliberate detachment or the constant intervention of critical conjecture. (156) Yet if we know Lawrence's aim from the first, such apologies seem irrelevant.

Finally, Foster is one critic who takes the position that a definable, coherent method exists in Lawrence's critical writings. His argument is worth presenting in detail: [...] spontaneous and subjective as his critical performance may seem, Lawrence knew quite consciously—that is to say, theoretically and philosophically—what he expected of art, and he knew how to use those expectations as principals, even as the basis and threshold for a general *method* of criticism peculiarly his own. ("Criticism as Rage: D. H. Lawrence" 315)

I confess a great thrill in an adventuresome, Quixotic critic. Even a critic who is stubbornly wrong (and I don't claim Lawrence is) may capture my imagination if his or her insight is original enough. If Lawrence bypasses Melville's aims in labeling the white

whale our blood-consciousness and Ahab et al. the representatives of Mind, what's wrong with that? It fits, ultimately. It informs our reading of *Moby-Dick*, using the imagery of it to illustrate an observation worth considering for its own sake. We *do* try to capture and contain our basic nature. Freud made the same point about suppressing our inner natures, though he did so for antithetical reasons (Freud believes this is necessary socialization, even with the attendant neuroses that develop). A Freudian could see this interpretation of the novel, thus in his own reading of *Moby-Dick*, an accurate depiction of our psychological state, that is, truth. I think it's a given that any great work of art exists beyond the artist's original intentions. A great work of art is greater than the artist that produced it.

Richard Foster is worth quoting here. In his fascinating essay, "Criticism as Rage: D. H. Lawrence," He deserves to be heard in full:

But it must not be concluded that Lawrence was merely an eccentric subjectivist who perversely misunderstood everybody else's work in terms of his own. He knew perfectly well, for example, when he wrote his essay on the Grand Inquisitor what Dostoevsky's intentions had been; he was only pointing out that Dostoevsky in a sense misunderstood his own materials, that there were inherently truer truths in them than in Dostoevsky's intentions, and that these truths come forward of their own power if we are alive as we read. When Lawrence said in the introduction to his book of paintings that "even to Milton, the true hero of *Paradise Lost* must be Satan," he didn't mean at all what Shelley appears to have meant; he was only saying, really, that Satan is too much alive for the willed moral abstractions of Milton's theology to contain dramatically.

Perhaps no one has shown as well as Lawrence how and why Satan and the Grand Inquisitor are so powerful, how and why they seem to break loose from the intentions of their creators and set up such an overwhelming counterforce of meaning and feeling of their own (322)

Lawrence knew quite well what he was doing. To speak specifically of his interpretation of American literature, he was looking at what the works *contain*, the clues to the separation of mind from blood-consciousness, whether these messages were what the author intended or not. For the reader who agrees with Lawrence about the state of humanity, these readings are key, but also for the students of literature who do not agree (and I think this is most of them, to be honest), he still provides superb analysis of what the author is doing, and provides clues to what it is we respond to so strongly in a given work. The study of *Studies* rewards, and gives hope to the student who wants to revisit the text for an understanding of Lawrence.

Before looking at *Studies* itself, some background might be relevant here, both in terms of examining Lawrence's response to Hawthorne, and examining how his interpretation of America, American fiction, and *The Scarlet Letter* might have weighed on his consciousness when writing *Lady Chatterley*. *Lady Chatterley* would be completed in its first form three years later. Since Lawrence never mentions a connection between the two works, it becomes important to look at the chronology above not only to see how long the subject of *The Scarlet Letter* had been on his mind, but also to realize where his mind had been at that time, and how his conclusions would affect his consciousness for the rest of his life.

The basic timeline is this: Lawrence began contemplating his essays on American literature in 1917. His controlling essay on the subject, "The Spirit of the Place" was finished in August of 1918. Between November of 1918 and June of 1919, eight essays were published in the *English Review*, including the portion of his essay on *The Scarlet Letter*—the other essay on *The Blithedale Romance* had been written at the same time but was not published. (Arnold, *D. H. Lawrence and America*, 66)

In the summer of 1920, Lawrence revised the essays in Sicily, but could not manage to have them published. (Arnold, "Transcendental," 42) Finally, after he "radically revised the essays" while in America ("Transcendental" 43), they were published in New York, in book form, in 1923.

And there is one other issue, one more relevant to Lawrence's consciousness and particularly relevant both to his *Scarlet Letter* essay and later *Lady Chatterley*. Arnold's *D. H. Lawrence and America* exhaustively documents not only the gestation of Lawrence's essays but also his evaluation of America itself before, during, and after his stay there. Lawrence's evaluation of England was not positive, but he did claim, "America, being so much worse, falsier, further gone than England, is nearer to freedom. England has a long and awful process of corruption and death to go through. America has dry-rotted to a point where the final seed of the new is almost left ready to sprout." (27) Thus, even before he put his *Scarlet Letter* essay into final form, he was thinking of America as the forerunner of the social change that will take place the world over, and in American experience he saw the future experience of England.

When considering Lawrence's estimation of *The Scarlet Letter*, it may be helpful

to keep in mind Axelrad's cautionary statement: "The viability of Lawrence's interpretation in large measure depends on his authority, or rather our willingness to grant him authority, as a literary critic whose reading of literature is reliable" (563). To what extent he is reliable or an authority? This is the question that strikes me repeatedly as I struggle to interpret this essay.

Lawrence begins his *Scarlet Letter* essay with a startling proposition: the American author (any American author) is a liar. He knows a dark truth about the nature of man, he has discovered this and puts it in his novel. However, because America is not ready for this, he hides his meaning under the sugar-coating of Romance. "And what's romance?" Lawrence asks. "Usually a nice little tale [...] where rain never wets your jacket and gnats never bite your nose and it's always daisy-time." And while he acknowledges that "Hawthorne isn't this kind of romanticist," Lawrence nevertheless notes wryly that "nobody has muddy boots in the *Scarlet Letter*, either" (*Studies* 92). In all American fiction, Lawrence sees a duplicity. "Love and produce" rings the surface tale, while underneath "Destroy! destroy! destroy!" is the message Why? The time isn't right. "[T]he world hears only the Love-and-produce cackle. Refuses to hear the hum of destruction underneath. Until such time as it will *have to hear*" (*Studies* 93). This is a good destruction, by the way, a positive act. Lawrence decides that now is "the time...it will have to hear" (*Studies* 93). Lawrence likens this stage in history to a dragon-fly emerging from its chrysalis. If humanity does not escape from the shell, like many a dragon-fly, it could die (93).

Lawrence explains this stage humanity has been in, which it must escape, by retelling the story of the Fall in Genesis, as he interprets it. Adam and Eve are

unconscious and live naturally with no guilt. Lawrence asks if Adam "lived with" Eve before the Fall. Yes, he answers. "As a wild animal with his mate" (*Studies* 94). It is Lawrence's design in his novel to return man to that state.

When they eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge, they suddenly deem their bodily functions sinful, yet are still impelled to act on them. They become hypocrites, though to Lawrence it is the knowledge that is the sin, not the act. This mind/body split has led to a dualism in which man must act naturally, but intellectually condemns these actions. For Lawrence, spirit and mind are in many ways the same. They both hate the body, try to keep it at heel, so to speak, but the body revolts in turn.

The body *hates* being KNOWN by the mind. It feels itself destroyed when it is KNOWN.

The mind and the spiritual consciousness of man simply *hates* the dark potency of blood-acts: hates the genuine dark sensual orgasms, which do, for the time being, actually obliterate the mind and spiritual consciousness, plunge them in a suffocating flood of darkness.

This is our cross. (*Studies* 95)

For Lawrence, there is intentional duplicity in American Romance: a candy-colored surface underneath which dire realities lurk. The snake in the garden is Lawrence's metaphor (*Studies* 93), and it is one that works two ways. There is the serpent that invaded the garden of primitive man and brought knowledge, which for Lawrence means both mind and spirit. And there is the serpent Lawrence sees the American authors as embodying, effecting something of a reversal, or a further revolution, that reveals this struggle between the mind and the blood-consciousness and can allow man to re-integrate

the three elements of his being.

It is now that Lawrence provides a summary of *The Scarlet Letter's* plot. And it is at this point that I must confess to some confusion. Is Lawrence insisting that Hawthorne is allegorically retelling the story of the Garden of Eden, or is Lawrence saying that humanity has been replaying this drama of hypocrisy from that time forward, and that for this reason it is encoded in Hawthorne's Romance? I'm going to suggest that it must be the latter, as Hester and Dimmesdale never lived in a state of unconscious physical being. Perhaps Lawrence would disagree (he could suggest that they lost blood-memory when they gained knowledge, which is why the story opens only *after* the time of their physical relationship).

Most of Lawrence's essay concentrates on them, their hypocrisy, and Hester's role as woman-the-destroyer. I believe that Hester represents the body, blood-consciousness. Lawrence does not designate her as such, but he does discuss the warring between mind, spirit, and body. He designates Chillingworth as the first, Dimmesdale as the second. The distinction between these two is not easy to delineate, and Lawrence never specifically explains the difference. But a few guesses can be made. Mind seems to involve a purely rational outlook. It is material in orientation, and seems to be connected with science and technology (Chillingworth's medical knowledge, for instance). It appears to be a male exertion of power using the outer world as an object. Spirit represents a renunciation of the physical world, as opposed to an attempt to control it, and involves such gifts as altruism.

It seems logical for Hester, the third party in the novel's triangle, to be the third angle of Lawrence's pyramid. I'd be easier with his designation of Woman the Destroyer

if this is the case. If so, the destroyer is an avenging angel ("angel" is one of the designations assigned to Hester in Hawthorne's text), and the position is an admirable one. She destroys because she's responding to the confusions of the blood-drive crossed by the spirit-mind drive of man's "religion." "Hester Prynne is the great nemesis of women. She is the KNOWING Ligeia rising diabolic from the grave. Having her own back. UNDERSTANDING" (*Studies* 99). What she knows, instinctively, is that spirit and mind are blocking what is natural, necessary, and healthy in man. She may look like a monster from modern man's perspective, destroying what he holds dear, but she is right, and she is ultimately a savior, not a destroyer. Lawrence is at pains to point out he has no antagonism towards womankind. It goes a long way towards accepting this if we can consider Hester "the body" and her (and all women's) war that of nature's determination to reassert herself/itself. That "flop in the mud" is a fall into reality, a fall away from the illusory "no one has muddy boots" (*Studies* 92) Lawrence was bemoaning. A fall into the "blood knowledge" (*Studies* 94) Lawrence champions.

The problem Dimmesdale seems to face is that he doesn't believe, but he has nothing new to replace that belief. In this sense, he is in synch with most Americans, who Lawrence sees as having no beliefs left, only the motions of belief, the pretense, which fills their life. Lawrence goes on to assert that "man must either stick to the belief he has grounded himself on, and obey the laws of that belief. Or he must admit the belief itself is inadequate, and prepare himself for a new thing" (*Studies* 102).

Near the end of the essay he brings in Roger Chillingworth, who hates the spiritual Dimmesdale passionately. Exactly *why* he should is something Lawrence never explains. One could reasonably assume if both mind and spirit are antagonistic towards

the body, then they would be associates. It is not so. Chillingworth is aligned with Hester, in Lawrence's analysis, both working together to pull down Dimmesdale, i.e. spirit. "Her only marriage, and her last oath, is with the old Roger. He and she are accomplices in pulling down the spiritual saint" (*Studies* 109).

How does one build a case that this thematically informs *Lady Chatterley*? In the first place there is the concept of blood-consciousness, of a society in which humankind is cut off from its essential nature. In *Lady Chatterley*, the connection of man to his blood-consciousness is largely expressed negatively, in the tinny talk of Clifford's intellectual friends—"The whole point about the sex problem," one of them blathers on at one point, "is that there is no point to it. Strictly there is no problem" (*LCL* 30) and his own anti-sex attitude—"the sex part did not mean that much to him...one of the curious, obsolete, organic processes" (*LCL* 9). Yet it is also given a positive representation in Mellors' closing letter: "If only they were educated to *live*...they ought to learn to be naked and handsome...they should be alive and frisky, and acknowledge the great god Pan" (*LCL* 310).

One can argue, of course, that these are abiding themes in all Lawrence's work, and that as they are regularly returned to, it is likely as not coincidence that they appear in both his *Scarlet Letter* essay and his later novel. And that's a fair enough argument. But then how to explain the reproduction of the triangle relationship? Even more to the point, Lawrence places each of the three characters in the same thematic position he places Hawthorne's characters. Once again the wife is body, the husband mind, the lover spirit.

The next chapter will provide an in depth discussion about how the characters parallel each other, but some basic issues of similarity should be touched on here, just so that the reader can get a sense of the broad thematic similarities.

Mellors is quintessentially the man who "doesn't believe anymore" He has given up on rising above his station. He has given up on love. He is living alienated from the rest of the world, punishing himself with his hopeless attitude toward the future. Clifford is very much the man of the mind. Because of his paralysis, he couldn't be anything else, but even before then he is an insufferably clever intellectual, and throughout the course of the book he will move from a moderately successful author to a technical innovator in the running of the coal mines. Connie is the wife of the latter who sleeps with the former, and thus echoes Hester's role. Both women are central to their texts and somewhat, though not quite, eponymous; *The Scarlet Letter*, while referring to the emblem on her breast, really doesn't name Hester, while Connie gets mentioned in the title of Lawrence's book, though of course the real person of the title, the lover, is Mellors.

As America goes, so goes the world. In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the characters of contemporary England will find themselves in the same position as the New England Puritans. Whereas the blood-consciousness had previously been crushed by rigid Puritanism, now it is crushed under heel by the Industrial Age.

Where Lawrence seems most odd in his interpretation of Hawthorne's plot is his analysis of how the relationship began. For Lawrence, Hester seduced Dimmesdale. How he possibly knows Hester seduced the minister is anyone's guess, as the novel opens after the affair has concluded and never details what went before. Yet, he will re-create this plot point in *Lady Chatterley*. It is Connie who keeps returning to the hut, keeps

considering the man, continually intrudes upon him. Mellors takes not a single action to entice or interest her. In fact, consistently attempts to alienate her and stay out of her way. Mellors early on acknowledges, "He dreaded her will, her female will, and her modern female insistency. And above all he dreaded her cool, upper-class impudence of having her own way" (*LCL* 89). But Connie must seduce Mellors. Lawrence puts the reader in Connie's mind at her first encounter with Mellors, and the words utilized could fit very well the American woman already mentioned. When Mellors won't look at her (45), remains "impersonal" (45), she forces him to look in her eyes. At which point, she detects "impudence...mockery" (46). He is "curious, quick, separate...but sure of himself" (46). And her thoughts more and more frequently turn to the gamekeeper. Finally, he can't help himself anymore and he gives in. So it is possible in the case of this couple, at least, to argue the wife seduces her lover.

They do indeed "hug their sin to themselves," as Lawrence describes the situation between Hester and Dimmesdale in *Studies* (97). Very similar terms to that one are used in *Lady Chatterley*, after two separate sexual encounters. After the first, when Mellors is alone again, he roams the woods: "He loved the darkness and folded himself into it" (*LCL* 122). After Connie has slept with him one night, and he has seen her home, "He went to the hut, and wrapped himself in the blanket and lay on the floor to sleep. But he could not sleep, he was cold" (*LCL* 146). Later when they are together again, "He took her in his arms again and drew her to him, and suddenly she became small in his arms, small and nestling" (*LCL* 176). I think the repeated motif of hugging to one's self or two people hugging each other closely, all in connection with a relationship conventionally described as illicit, speaks to a connection between the works. I think it demonstrates that the

relationship Lawrence defines in his *Scarlet Letter* essay is the one he demonstrates in *Lady Chatterley*.

As stated above, the similarities between the two works will be examined in the following chapter. There are some quick takes worth looking at, however, certain examples that come immediately to mind.

Is Mellors a "pure, pure young parson"? (*Studies* 97) He is by Lawrence's standard. He has abandoned the military and a false wife. He will not settle for false values and the appearance of propriety. And he lives a relatively monastic life in the woods.

"It is truly a law, that man must either stick to the belief he has grounded himself on, and obey the laws of that belief, or he must admit the belief itself to be inadequate, and prepare himself for a new thing" (*Studies* 102). In a similar vein, the novel ends with Mellor's assertions about life and the choices he must make. He is, in fact, preparing himself for the "new thing" to come.

A central difference between the two texts is that one set of characters does not know what is "really" happening to them and the other does. Thus the second couple can act on that knowledge. For Lawrence, it is the *unconscious* acting out of natural drives that dooms Hawthorne's couple (Chillingworth is probably doomed either way). As a result, it can only end unhappily. Lawrence's *aware* protagonists, on the other hand, can alter their destiny. Thus their story gets a tentatively hopeful conclusion.

According to Richard White, "Lawrence suggests that the rift, not the relations, between man and his surroundings and particularly man and woman, is the underlying theme in America's classic works, and even in several contemporary novels" (167-168).

Certainly Lawrence demonstrates this in terms of *The Scarlet Letter*. Hester and Dimmesdale are cut off from society in general because of the situation their blood has forced them into. Furthermore, they are separated from each other by the very difference in their response to the blood, Dimmesdale in agony and isolation as a result, Hester striving to destroy the false spirit that condemns their actions. All this is unconscious, of course.

White goes on to say that, "[a]lmost invariably, his male and female protagonists assert their individuality, their essential difference, in the face of a rigid, moralistic, self-satisfied social order" (161). Unquestionably this is true of *Lady Chatterley* as it is only partly true of *The Scarlet Letter*. What this work aims to demonstrate at several points throughout is that Lawrence starts with the themes of *The Scarlet Letter* and moves forward.

For Lawrence, Dimmesdale "gets a bit of his own back" when he confesses on the scaffold (*Studies*101). Mellors will get his own in the letter that closes *Lady Chatterley*. But his is not a confession as much as a manifesto.

In *Prudence and the Prophetic Past*, Marion Montgomery analyzes Lawrence's essay and at one point compares Lawrence's response to Hawthorne with Hawthorne's response to America. Montgomery claims Lawrence is "particularly brutal about Hawthorne's sexual timidities" (142) the "nice, goody-goody and lovey dovey" surface under which the "blue-eyed darling" sent out "disagreeable things in his inner soul...in disguise." Montgomery does not see Hawthorne as deceptive to the extent Lawrence does, and even points to the preface of Hawthorne's *The Snow Image and Other Twice-*

*Told Tales*, claiming that it advises "us to look beneath the surface of Hawthorne's work" (143). Specifically, Montgomery claims that "Hawthorne has found out his own heart, and he has not liked what he has found there any more than Lawrence likes what he finds in Hawthorne (Montgomery 143). Montgomery forgives Lawrence because "he looks far back, and with the strong sense that he himself is a prophet called to rescue man from the false freedom bequeathed him by the puritan mind." Most importantly, "He sees the course of American letters out of that Puritan thought; and he is confident that, in Hawthorne's position, he would have been a more boldly effective prophet, at a point in time before the rise of industrialism evidenced the universal triumph of mind over heart" (Montgomery 146).

I really don't agree that Lawrence is frustrated with Hawthorne. As is demonstrated above, he recognizes the time had not yet come to reveal directly the truths about blood-consciousness. The public would not listen and, as already quoted, Lawrence is insistent about this at the very start of his essay.

However, Montgomery's comments help to clarify in my mind what Lawrence *does* with the material he finds in Hawthorne. Specifically, it helps to suggest that Lawrence is taking a more active role, and suggesting that these issues of blood-consciousness and mind/spirit struggling to overcome both it and each other are no longer to be buried in a text, no longer to be simply analyzed rather than addressed. That has led to the modern, hostile, inhuman world. No, it is time to assume a more direct approach to the exact problems that Hawthorne faced. And since *Studies* functions not merely as an evaluation of American literature, but as a statement of Lawrence's beliefs regarding the human condition, this argument resonates throughout his fiction as well as his critical

essays. Lawrence is stating the problem, insisting that Hawthorne has seen the same problem, and in *Lady Chatterley* throwing down the gauntlet that he, Lawrence, will confront the tragedy of modern man more explicitly and more thoroughly, for the sake of saving mankind from itself.

Hawthorne responded to the persecution of man under Puritan rule. Lawrence responds to the persecution of man under industrial revolution. But both are dealing with the same issue at different stages in its development. Man is being crushed by an oppressive force which denies the essential physicality of man and forces him into a false mind-intellect life that cannot fulfill man's essential needs. Trapped in a false consciousness, man is forced to rebel against his society. The rebellion is intentional, though man acts like the innocent victim. And it is only through this rebellion (subconscious most of the time, though Lawrence is trying to make it conscious), that man can regain his full self and return to what he once was, what he is intended to be.

## CHAPTER TWO: RELATIONSHIPS

[...] we must remember that man has a double set of desires, the shallow and the profound, the personal, superficial, temporary desires, and the inner, impersonal, great desires that are fulfilled in long periods of time.

-D. H. Lawrence, "A Propos of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*"

Even the most relentlessly idea-oriented novel ultimately involves characters. Characters if nothing else flesh out and embody the novelist's ideas. Lawrence saw in *The Scarlet Letter* an analogy for modern sickness. It was from the characters that he extrapolated the spirit-mind-body split, and discovered in their interaction the conflicts that our lives are plagued with. When putting this discovery into his own novel, he had to re-cloak it in characters and then set them in the context of a dramatic conflict. In order to make the case that with *Lady Chatterley* he is doing this, it is important to compare his analysis of Hawthorne's characters and their relationship to one another, and the characters and relationships in his own novel. Any look into the relationship between *The Scarlet Letter* and *Lady Chatterley* necessarily starts with a summation of what Lawrence believes about Hawthorne's characters and how he delineates them in *Studies*.

The situation, as previously described, is a triangle relationship composed of spirit, body, and mind. In *The Scarlet Letter*, the three categories go under the character names Dimmesdale, Hester, and Chillingworth. In these three, he sees

the dilemma of humanity illustrated. Rather than a being that is fully physical, and thus fully "spiritual," i.e. true to itself and aware of its own needs and its own identity, we have a society that has placed the mind in charge of the body, trying to define/limit the appropriate activities of the body. Not fit to have so much control over the entire being, the mind goes on an assault against the body to drive it completely out, and leave only mind in control. But the body knows what it needs, and refuses to be curbed by the mind, and its anti-sex parameters. Then there is spirit, which also seeks to separate itself from the body, but seem to be struggling for a higher purpose than mind does, and also winds up lost. The fight is between these three, and none can really win, for the complete human would contain all three to such an equal degree and in such an entwined fashion, that no real discernment of the separate elements could be made.

Lawrence sees this as a fight going on within each person *in life* but seems to see each characteristic represented separately as an individual person in *The Scarlet Letter*. Remember, *The Scarlet Letter* is an allegory, a "satire," in Lawrence's words. So Hester, Dimmesdale, and Chillingworth are all elements of one being. I've made it sound simple, but, in fact, it isn't. In fact, Lawrence seems to go back and forth between the two propositions. For he definitely sees Dimmesdale and Hester as two fully separate beings, not separate elements of one person (of *each* person would perhaps be a clearer way to say it). He sees them as Man and Woman. Mind you, not a man and a woman, but all, each and every. I've explained this in two separate ways and not attempted to integrate them because I don't think Lawrence does, either. For me to attempt to integrate them would be to play false to his probings, which are not consecutive, methodical, but rather spontaneous, mercurial.

The war amongst these three states of mind is going on beneath the surface of Hawthorne's novel. This is the hidden "diabolic" meaning Lawrence referred to in his *Scarlet Letter* essay (93). For Lawrence, Hester and Chillingworth are "ganging up" on Dimmesdale, for separate reasons. Hester needs to prove Dimmesdale's spirituality is false. She has to bring him down to the natural, physical level. This is not in an effort to destroy, necessarily, although that is an easy mistake to make, and Lawrence isn't particularly clear. That is, she is out to destroy something, but something that ought to be destroyed. The thing Hester is rebelling against, in Lawrence's analogy, is false knowledge, being untrue to one's self. Because everything is out of joint, her actions are hostile towards Dimmesdale. But they are ultimately positive, *for* humanity, in truth. It is left to Chillingworth to play the completely destructive role. Chillingworth doesn't doubt Dimmesdale's spiritual position, but as an agent of the mind, Chillingworth has to destroy that perceived spirit. Thus, Lawrence considers the novel not just a perfect allegory, but a wonderful satire on the current state of humanity, "the most colossal satire ever penned" (*Studies* 98). The perfection of the allegory is in the perfect delineation of the mind-body-spirit conflict. The satire, I think is to be found in the hypocrisy: the society that labels "impure" and "immoral" acts basic to human kind. Lawrence will adopt the allegory, but he seems to leave the satire behind. There is little satire in *Lady Chatterley*, and what exists in the work that might go by that name—Michaelis' pretensions, or his "sad dog" way of approaching Connie (*LCL* 26)—do not really touch on the allegorical triangle. That allegorical triangle is reproduced, however. The three central characters represent something similar individually to their counterparts in Hawthorne, and there is a discernable similarity in their interactions.

Mellors is false spirituality. What does this consist of? Lawrence defended his novel, and attempted to explicate its meaning in his essay, "A Propos of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*." This is a good place to look for Lawrence's concept of false spirituality:

All emotions belong to the body and are only recognized by the mind...How different they are, mental feelings and real feelings. Today, many people live and die without having had any real feelings—though they have a "rich emotional life" apparently, having showed strong mental feeling...our education from the start has taught us a certain range of emotions, what to feel and what not to feel, and how to feel the feelings we allow ourselves to feel...the higher emotions are strictly dead. They have to be faked. (311)

What Lawrence is talking about here is the way that, although there is such a thing as a spiritual life, an inner life not of the intellect, what is usually taken for this in our world is not a genuine example of it. The mind has taken over too far. In fact, taking this analysis of false spirit into consideration with his statements on *The Scarlet Letter* in *Studies*, it becomes apparent that when Lawrence says the higher emotions have to be faked, he does not mean they are always being faked consciously.

Mellors has created a false spiritual idyll in the woods, apart from society either as an officer or Tavershall man. Theoretically, he is above the world around him, isolated, removed, alone with his fine thoughts. In fact, he's just isolated from everything. From his body, because he has not sexual relationship with anyone, from his mind because he is living in a false Eden (which means he isn't accurately seeing the world in which he lives), and from society because the absence of the other two things have cut him off completely.

Lawrence sees Dimmesdale as besieged by the twin forces of Hester and

Dimmesdale, and places Mellors in a similar position in relation to Connie and Clifford. Certainly, Mellors is besieged by Clifford, who, at times, forces Mellors to perform intense physical tasks Mellors' body cannot quite handle. Mellors acknowledges his life somewhat overpowered by Connie, who is forcing heavy psychological work on him, prying him from his isolation and forcing him to enter the world again.

Mellors himself insists on his status as a servant to both Chatterleys on a number of occasions, but the most relevant would be his response to Connie's suggestion they might have a child together: "It's as your Ladyship likes. If you get the baby, Sir Clifford's welcome to it...it's not the first time I've been made use of; and I don't suppose it's ever been as pleasant as this time; though of course one can't feel tremendously dignified about it." When Connie insists she didn't make use of him, Mellor's merely replies "At your Ladyship's service" (*LCL* 172).

Connie needs to prove his isolation (read "spirituality" for Dimmesdale) false. Most men she finds have "no real glamour for a woman" (*LCL* 57). They are like Tommy Dukes, the young literary man who likes to talk to women, but have no strong sexual feeling for them (*LCL* 56) or like Michaelis, who uses a woman sexually, as a kind of crutch, but does not feel any intellectual connection with them. Even the young men "seemed so old and cold. And Michaelis let one down so; he was no good" (*LCL* 57). She senses in Mellors the natural man she needs. Lawrence ups the stakes or at least underlines them, by making Mellors not her only lover. Michaelis is as hollow as Clifford—if physically capable—and the other men in her husband's circle are really boys. Mellors is "special" in the community, just as Dimmesdale is, apart from the norm. He is a better man. So she goes after the "special" "removed" man to bring him "down"

from his pedestal and back to nature. "Because the greatest thrill in life is to bring down the Sacred Saint with a flop into the mud" (*Studies* 99).

Mellors represents spirituality *and* false spirituality. This is tricky, but Lawrence seems to go back and forth between the two in his *Scarlet Letter* essay. On the one hand, "his spirituality was a lie" (*Studies* 99), on the other hand, Chillingworth "hates the new spiritual aspirers, like Dimmesdale" (*Studies* 109). This is one of the most difficult elements in assessing Lawrence's essay. On the one hand, he makes the point repeatedly that Dimmesdale is a hypocrite; on the other hand, he suddenly gives him genuine spiritual aspirations. These are never defined, nor does Lawrence try to tie these separate characteristics together, even so much as to say "he tried to be spiritual, but he wasn't in tune with his blood-consciousness, so he was just presenting a façade." However, there is something of a similar contradiction to Mellors, who is also existing in a false spiritual state, but who nonetheless is definitely the work's *hero*, not merely a protagonist, indeed the character whose observations and anticipations for the future form the closing statement of the book.

Mellors hides behind his accent as Dimmesdale hides behind his collar. He does this whenever he is emotionally embarrassed. When Connie catches his daughter crying, for instance, he sinks into as broad an accent as he can find, "Nay, yo' mun ax 'er," a phrase with barely a word of proper English in it (*LCL* 58). This response to embarrassment connects quite strongly with Dimmesdale hiding behind religion because *he* is emotionally embarrassed (he'd probably say "morally compromised"). Mellors uses language as a shield, as Dimmesdale uses religion, a deflective device that keeps others away.

Lawrence is quite detailed about this process in the case of Mellors, and returns to it regularly. He tells Connie at one point, that when he returned to the English countryside, "I stopped talking "fine," as they call it, talking proper English, and went back to talking broad." It is part of his reaction to modern England and modern English women. "I wanted her [his wife, Bertha] to be common. I wanted to be common myself... Those other 'pure' women had nearly taken the balls out of me, but she was alright that way. She wanted me, and made no bones about it" (*LCL* 207)

Connie notices his use of dialect as a protective, or defensive, device the first time she meets him. "His voice on the last words had fallen into the heavy broad drag of the dialect... perhaps also in mockery, because there had been no trace of dialect before" (*LCL* 46). The next time she sees him, his daughter is crying, and from the moment Connie intrudes on the scene, he is sure to keep his dialect in place. Connie wants to know what is wrong, but Mellors "gave a quick little bow, lifting his hat... then, with a return to the vernacular: 'but I cannot tell yer.' And he became a soldier, inscrutable" (*LCL* 58). When she later encounters him at the hut, and wants to come there frequently he, still putting her off, deflects her questions:

"Do you lock the hut when you're not here?"

"Yes, your Ladyship."

"Do you think I could have a key too, so that I could sit here sometimes? Are there two keys?"

"Not as Ah know on, ther' isna."

He had lapsed into the vernacular. Connie hesitated; he was putting up an opposition. (*LCL* 89)

Similarly, when he finds her standing outside the hut in the rain, he asks in dialect, "Sir Clifford 'ad n't got no other key then?" (*LCL* 94). And shortly thereafter, "Your Ladyship's as welcome as Christmas ter th' hut an' th' key an' iverythink as is" (*LCL* 95).

Tied up with the issue of language is, of course, the issue of social status. It could be argued that class differences aren't really the issue here, language is merely the distancing device that Mellors uses with Connie, and he may have others when it comes to others of his own class. Yet, as we learn from his background, altering his speech pattern was part of rising in the world, and returning to his early accent allows him to hide from that world. I don't want to sound too Shavian, but language is a part of social class.

It is important to notice that language is a part of social class because, in *The Scarlet Letter*, religion is a part of social class. The minister is on a higher social plane just because he is religious. He and Chillingworth are regularly in the company of the town's most powerful officials. It is Pearl's gesture of affection for Dimmesdale that determines for the Mayor that Hester is a fit enough mother to keep her daughter. Hester, being seen as a fallen woman, falls in social status as far as a person can go. Dimmesdale, esteemed by all as a man of saintly virtue, is a person of the highest position.

Of course, this technically makes the social positions of the characters in the two novels polar opposites. The class situation in *The Scarlet Letter* which is Hester=low, Dimmesdale=high becomes reversed in *Lady Chatterley* where Connie=high, Mellors=low. In both cases, however, it is the *men* who choose their station while for the *women* it is thrust upon them. Hester is found out through her pregnancy, of course, while Connie becomes involved with Clifford first, and only afterwards (though before their

marriage) through his brother's death in the War, does he become Lord Chatterley; it is not something she could have expected when she became involved with him. And both men use their consciously pursued social status, which neither of them believes reflects his true self, to keep society in general, and the women they are most strongly drawn to, at bay.

Mellors punishes himself by denying himself companionship as Dimmesdale does through physical punishment. Lawrence does not specifically say this, but the fact is Mellors has completely isolated himself from the entire world. He has left the military, where he was "getting on," his own words, (*LCL* 144) for a life of almost complete poverty. Despite being physically weakened by the pneumonia that almost killed him in the War (*LCL* 144), he must endure "the wage-scrabble" to which "he knew the utter futility of expecting any solution" (*LCL* 144). Granted, he saw middle and upper class life as possessing "a curious rubbernecked toughness and unlivingness" (*LCL* 44), so in deserting what others might consider a path to success and happiness, there may be a higher goal. Yet he finds among his own class "a pettiness and a vulgarity of manner extremely distasteful" (*LCL* 144). The life he has chosen is crushing him spiritually as well as physically. "It was futility, futility to the nth power" (*LCL* 144). It does not really nourish him, at all.

When he first begins his affair with Connie, he will not allow himself to find respite and relief from his problems. He forces himself to accept from the start that the affair will not, cannot, last. The particular way he impresses this belief on himself is worth studying. He tells himself that "it's no good. It's no good trying to get rid of your aloneness. You've got to stick to it all your life...Accept your own aloneness and stick to

it, all your life" (*LCL* 148). There is a curious quality to the use of the words and phrases, over and over. In a sense, it begins to take on the quality of a recited litany. The continual repetition of the words "no good" and then the phrases "stick to it" and "alone" reminds me of a lash repeatedly striking a man's back. Since the situation here is that of a man talking to himself, it becomes an act of self-flagellation. That was Dimmesdale's chosen method of torture.

While speaking of the body, Mellors' physical dimensions need to be remarked on. The image of a gamekeeper brings to mind sort of rugged, vibrant man. Such a concept is very far from the pale preacher in Hawthorne's novel. I think it's important to note the amount of attention placed on Mellors' frailty. On first meeting him, Connie considers "He was rather frail really. Curiously full of vitality, but a little frail and quenched" (*LCL* 47). Late in the novel, he will suffer pneumonia, and Connie will worry about the physical hardship brought on him by Clifford, "his heart beating and his face white with the effort, semiconscious...He was paler than Connie had ever seen him: and more absent" (*LCL* 195-196). When she sees him washing himself some days later she notes the "white slim back...slender white arms..the pure, delicate, white loins, the bones showing a little, and the sense of aloneness, of a creature purely alone" (*LCL* 66). This last is certainly a more erotic image than anything in Hawthorne, but the sickly, thin, pale man alone, cut off from pleasure and companionship, very strongly resembles the picture of the Salem minister.

Significantly, Mellors describes himself, negatively, as looking like a "young curate," a "prig" in his wedding picture (*LCL* 204). This statement strikes me as packed with meaning. For Mellors, such a statement indicates falsehood, and a lack of manliness.

It also, in calling him a reflection of an image of a minister, links him to Dimmesdale, and to Lawrence's categorizing Hawthorne's character as an example of false spirituality. By demonstrating what Mellors was before the novel started, as opposed to where he is at this late stage in the text, Lawrence is moving Hawthorne's themes forward. He is no longer using them as a simple description of the state of human affairs, but illustrating how knowledge of them can allow a humanity to move forward from this to something new.

In "A Propos," Lawrence in fact states that "Life is desirable only when the mind and the body are in harmony, and there is a natural balance between the two, and each has mutual respect for the other" (310). At novel's end, Mellors is attempting to live a life that strikes a balance between the two. It is an antidote to the chaos Dimmesdale suffered by never acknowledging his own way of life was out of order with nature. It also is the exact antithesis of the state in which Lawrence depicts Clifford Chatterley.

Clifford represents pure intellect, out to destroy spirit. Lawrence pinpoints this state of mind, very much the same as he envisioned for Chillingworth in *Studies*, when analyzing the current intellectual state of society in "A Propos":

The great necessity is that we should act according to our thoughts and think according to our acts. But while we are in thought, we cannot really act, and while we are in action we cannot really think. The two conditions, of thought and action, are mutually exclusive. Yet they should be related in harmony...The mind's terror of the body has probably driven more men mad than could ever be counted. (306-309)

Certainly, Lawrence's contention that one cannot act and think explains quite sufficiently why *his* Chillingworth, Clifford, is physically paralyzed from the waist down. Lawrence asserts that overwrought intellect, when concentrating on the body, is likely to drive men insane. This explains, from a Lawrencean perspective, Chillingworth's mental deterioration, and simultaneously why Lawrence has Clifford sink further and further into his obsession with theories (first literature, later the mines) and become the cruel, despotic, yet rather pointless person he ultimately is.

Chillingworth is forced into his position as pure intellect, mind apart from body, in part through age, as Clifford is partly through paralysis. Lawrence is specific about the war and its effect on his mental condition. "Having suffered so much, the capacity for suffering had to some extent left him. He remained strange and bright and cheerful, almost one would say, chirpy...[b]ut he had been so much hurt that something inside him had perished, some of his feelings had gone" (*LCL* 2). There is in this something of a picture of mania, and maybe even a sense of a mechanism attempting to approximate the habits of a human being. Perhaps this is a hint of what the man will become, tied to machines (entertained only by the radio, obsessed with his improvements for the mines), a situation I will discuss in greater depth later in this study.

However, in both cases, intellect is their "natural" bent: Chillingworth is a scholar, and Clifford was never interested in sex: Lawrence tells the reader "the sex part did not mean much to him...Clifford anyhow was not just keen on his 'satisfaction,' as so many men seemed to be...sex was merely an accident, or an adjunct: one of the curious obsolete, organic processes which persisted in its own clumsiness, but was not really necessary" (*LCL* 9). All these statements come in a single paragraph in the novel's first

chapter. Lawrence insists upon the lack of importance Clifford grants sex.

Chillingworth, Lawrence insists, "keeps on the *intellectual* tradition," he is a "healer. But something of an alchemist, a magician. He is a magician on the verge of modern science," yet he is capable of "a black, crippled hate" (*Studies* 109). It's interesting to consider Clifford in light of this. The words "alchemy" and "magician" can be traced to Clifford in two ways. First, there is his career as a writer. Writing involves a kind of "magic," that is the creative energy and the act of inspiration, the latter often throughout history ascribed to the intervention of the Muse, or in the Christian era, God. Secondly, Lawrence's views on the machine age often make science sound like black magic.

Related to this, Clifford, like Chillingworth, is "on the verge of modern science," with his excursions into the pits (sinking down to hell, perhaps) in order to create new machinery for the mines. Indeed, his work is supposed to improve the mines, in terms of efficiency and safety; he's a "healer." Yet he is, of course, capable of the same black, crippled hatred, and though I hate to point out the double meaning of the word "crippled," it impresses itself upon me too strongly for me to ignore. Clifford is crippled, physically and mentally, and the text really doesn't insist on which came first.

Clifford's arrival at Wragby, the house seat, the setting for most of the novel, bears some resemblance to Chillingworth's entrance into Boston. Though a man lost for dead, and a person who could have eminence in the community, he is not recognized by the people of the village, and Hester of course does not give him away. Similarly for Clifford, "There had been no welcome home for the young squire, no festivities, no deputation, not even a single flower" (*LCL* 11).

Both find themselves unwelcome in their homes after having been apparently lost to the world.

Similarly, Lawrence describes Clifford turning psychologically monstrous just as Hawthorne described Chillingworth turning physically monstrous. Connie notes that at one time her husband might have been human, "But now that Clifford was drifting off to this other weirdness of industrial activity, becoming almost *a creature*, with a hard, efficient shell of an exterior and a pulpy interior" (*LCL*111).

The most significant way to analyze Clifford's attempts to destroy Mellors is to look at the contrasting scenes with Mellors, Clifford, and Connie, focusing around Clifford's attempts to ride through the grounds of Wragby in his bath-chair. The scenes function as bookends on either extremes of the Connie-Mellors affair: the moment before they meet and the time shortly before her departure for Venice and, essentially, her goodbye to her marriage.

Both scenes convey almost the exact same episode, but at different points in Clifford's degeneration, and thus his treatment of Mellors. In the first instance, Connie and Clifford have just been discussing the sexual situation Connie is in. Her father and sister have both noted that she looks pale, not fully alive. And Clifford, alone again with his wife, suggests that she might "arrange this sex thing, as we arrange going to the dentist" (*LCL* 43). He is eager for a child, and somewhat willing to acknowledge her own needs. But Clifford's delineation as "mind" is already apparent. He doesn't have any vision of sex as an act that unites two people, or a fusion of two bodies. His telling reference to the "dentist" is key here, as it makes a connection to oral activity, and thus connects to talking, rather than doing, and to a clean, clinical, non-human approach to the

most human form of connection. He is already set apart as someone who deals in concepts, not physical realities, and who does not realize the weight of physical realities. Immediately, the bath-chair gets stuck and Mellors, called to for help, is ushered onto the stage of the novel.

Significantly, when Clifford calls him, Mellors has his rifle slung over his shoulder and "saluted with a quick little gesture, a soldier!" (*LCL* 45) A soldier indicates war, of course, and this is the first time Clifford and Mellors are engaged in a battle. It is not a personal battle, but one going on beneath the surface, where, as already illustrated, these two men represent very different things. A second visual clue will be presented in the second scene.

Clifford is not, at this point, unkind to Mellors. He acknowledges that the chair cannot make the trip on its own back to the house, and asks for a push. The image is that of the physically healthy—in relation to Clifford—Mellors having to serve a machine as well as a man. This already functions as an example in which Clifford degrades him. Furthermore, when Connie offers to open the gate for Mellors, Clifford is upset. He doesn't want her acting beneath herself. "Mellors would have done it," is his succinct definition of what a lower-class person exists for (*LCL* 47). He doesn't want Mellors to be treated as a human being. His subjugation of Mellors is subtle, but present, and so far seems more snobbish than malicious.

The second scene recreates much of the first. Connie and Clifford are "strolling" through the woods. Previously, the battle about to be engaged was signified by Mellors' rifle and salute. This time, the clue is verbal. Connie jokes of Clifford's motor chair, "Sir Clifford on his foaming steed!" (*LCL* 183) How interesting that she should relate his

means of transportation to an out-dated form of warfare, while Mellors had been given the modern, more effective symbols of contemporary warfare. Once more Connie and Clifford discuss the possibility of an heir, and Connie has suggested she might spend two months with her sister in Venice where, presumably, she could conceive a child. With the imagery of battle, and discussion of a child, the scenes are roughly parallel.

There are some changes, however. Clifford has been arguing about the place of various classes. Essentially, he considers the working class the mere machinery of the upper classes. They are not men, they are savages, to be brought to the heel with a whip. Connie, furious, argues with him over this. The bath-chair, again, needs help on the uphill trek back to the house, but Clifford tries to force the machine to make it on its own, which it can't do. He becomes more and more agitated. "No! Don't push! What's the good of the damned thing if it has to be pushed?" (*LCL* 191) It breaks down, and it is an angrier, more deranged Clifford calling for the help of his gamekeeper this time. Though he argued with Connie about whether the machine will work, and how it can be started, to Mellors he only gives an abrupt, "Do you know anything about motors?" To Mellors' question if there is a problem with the machine, Clifford provides a sarcastic "Apparently!" which is "snapped" out, in Lawrence's words (*LCL* 192). He doesn't want to deal with Mellors as a fellow human being, or as a thinking person. Mellors provides a service, exists for this service. That is all he is. Clifford puts Mellors in the humiliating position of knowing Clifford wants Mellors' help, but only to help the machine run itself. What in fact happens here is Mellors' complete degradation, forced to prostrate himself before the machine, and sully his Sunday shirt. Connie notes "what a pathetic sort of thing a man was, feeble and small-looking, when he was lying on his belly on the big

earth," (*LCL* 192). It's a moment packed with meaning. On the one hand, Clifford is subjugating Mellors, literally forcing the gamekeeper to prostrate himself before (and literally beneath!) himself. This connects with Chillingworth punishing and degrading Dimmesdale. But remember, Lawrence felt Chillingworth and Hester were both besieging Dimmesdale, and here is Connie noting how "pathetic" Mellors looks. Furthermore, a "flop in the mud" was how Lawrence worded the effects of Hester's seduction of Dimmesdale. And here is Mellors, with "his belly on the earth." It is the central triangle Lawrence saw depicted in Hawthorne, down to the woman's psychological response: "When I see men carrying heavy loads, doing brutal work, it always makes me cry" (*Studies* 95).

To return to the discussion of Clifford's attempt to destroy Mellors, the gamekeeper is forced to take Clifford's vociferous abuse while pushing the bath-chair. Clifford most specifically does not want him to push that chair; Clifford wants the aid of machinery, not humans, and not even because he values human beings too highly for use as servants. Finally, Mellors is forced to push the machine uphill. It is very strenuous, due to the debilitating effect that has lasted from his pneumonia, and the stress to his health in dealing with the machine and finally having to push it rather than just assist its own strength is telling on his health. "He was paler than Connie had ever seen him: and more absent" (*LCL* 196). It sounds as if he is near death. He is being crushed by his master, for his master's own sadistic pleasure.

Significantly, Clifford is not the least aware that Connie and Mellors are having an affair. Even near the end of the novel, he is gloating over the "comic" situation of Mellors' wife returning to him and causing him havoc. So Lawrence starts with what is a

purely personal attack in Hawthorne, a man's logical anger at his wife's infidelity, which then grows to something monstrously evil, identifies beneath this a natural non-personal expression of mind killing the life-force. Finally, he turns this inside out when he creates Clifford, who has almost no human personal feelings whatsoever, and puts these activities into the novel purely as the mind killing the life-force quite apart from an act of personal vengeance.

Connie is "body" in the triangle I drew. Yet that designation has to be treated gently. Lawrence identifies Dimmesdale as false spirit, and Chillingworth as mind, but he does not specifically categorize Hester. It might be best to think of "the body" as meaning "the natural impulse." She tears down, destroys, what she sees as false in Dimmesdale, to force him into acting according to natural instincts. Hester would not leave the "pure" parson to his spirituality. For Lawrence she is "the KNOWING Ligeia rising diabolic from the grave. Having her own back. UNDERSTANDING" (*Studies* 99).

Importantly, it is not the word "diabolic" that gets capitalized, but the words "knowing" and "understanding." What Hester and Connie rise to destroy is something that needs destruction, something the destruction of which Lawrence *applauds*. I place Connie in the "Body" position of the triangle not only because in a triangle, if "mind" and "spirit" are two of the points, "body" makes a logical third, but also because Lawrence repeatedly makes the point that our bodies know something that our minds and or spirits don't. So if Hester and Connie know, but unconsciously, and this knowledge is apart from both mind and spirit, it makes sense to categorize them, in terms of what they represent, as "body."

Hester and Connie embody the natural impulse; Connie will not let Mellors hide from humanity. She brings him to a carnal state. She demonstrably must have him, as Lawrence says Hester must have Dimmesdale. For Lawrence, Hester brings Dimmesdale down from the realm of "spirituality" he inhabits into the real world of male-female sexual relations. Connie brings Mellors out of his self-imposed isolation. In a key exchange, after their first sexual encounter, Mellors sizes up the various problems with the affair they have now started, which leads to the following conversation:

"I thought I'd done with it all. Now I've begun again."

"Begun what?"

"Life."

"Life!" She re-echoed, with a queer thrill.

"It's life," he said. "There's no keeping clear. And if you do keep clear you might almost as well die. So I've got to be broken open again, I have" (*LCL* 119).

If the most significant aspect of the change between Chillingworth and Clifford's punishment of their antagonists is the unconscious nature it takes on, the reverse is true in a comparison of Dimmesdale and Mellors' response to their "corruption" by the woman who loves them. Lawrence sees Hester as knowingly choosing to degrade Dimmesdale for the sake of bringing him back to life. She has to drag him down because he is living a lie. In Lawrence's own novel, Connie is quite unconscious of what she has done—and this despite her highly developed consciousness and intellectual probing throughout the novel! She has been analyzing Clifford's selfish goals, his lack of spiritual dimension, the empty lives of the men he associates with, and the destruction of humane impulses in the mechanical age. Having analyzed all this, she still never recognizes that Mellors is the

explicit antidote to this. She is very much aware of his strength and command over her, but not what it signifies. Rather, it is Mellors who, in fact, is aware of the major ramifications their actions have set in motion, and his voice, as noted, is the one that concludes the novel. His analysis of what their relationship means and what the world by extension needs stands as the novel's final statement. For Lawrence, as quoted above, "The great necessity is that we should act according to our thoughts and think according to our acts" ("A Propos" 307). Yet in the end he denies Connie this, and leaves this stage of evolution only to Mellors.

Just as Hester's scarlet letter takes on a different meaning for different people, so too does Connie's adultery represent something different for the people who observe her actions. Clifford, Mrs. Bolton, Connie's sister, and her father ascribe a different meaning to the word, just as the different inhabitants of Salem ascribe different meanings to Hester's red emblem.

For Clifford, the *fantasy* of it is power—the continuation of his ancestral line, which means the continuance of Old England, the dominance of his class over the lower classes, of the landed gentry over the coal miners. "It would be a good thing if you had a child by another man,' he said. 'If we brought it up at Wragby, it would belong to us and to the place...It's what endures through one's life that matters; my own life matters to me, in its long continuance and development. But what do the occasional connections matter? And the occasional sexual connections specially!'" (*LCL* 43) However, even here the allegiance to class counts. When Connie asks if Clifford would care what man's child she has, his response—"Why, Connie, I should trust your natural instinct of decency and selection. You just wouldn't let the wrong sort of fellow touch you" (*LCL* 44)—is loaded

with the implications of class snobbery.

He exercises his power over Connie, too. As he tells her, "You and I are interwoven in a marriage. If we stick this to that we ought to be able to arrange this sex thing..." (*LCL* 43). Here he is, early on in the novel practicing emotional blackmail just as Chillingworth does with Hester early on in her prison cell. Connie is in a prison of sorts, herself. Further, if she produces a child for Wragby, to be educated for Wragby, to reach adulthood to continue the traditions of Wragby, she is being made a forced accomplice to Clifford's life of cruelty.

For Mrs. Bolton, the adultery symbolizes freedom. Her vision's not far removed from Clifford's, but it is inverted. It implies a poor man's gaining equality through a lady's love. "But fancy! A Tevershall lad born and bred, and she her ladyship at Wragby hall! My word, that was a slap back at the high-and-mighty Chatterleys!" (*LCL* 148) It might also solidify a position of power for Mrs. Bolton, herself, with Clifford. "'Well well, Whatever would *he* say if he knew!'

Similarly, when sent out to find Connie during a thunderstorm "She looked at the other woman, who stood so sly, with her head dropped: yet, somehow, in her femaleness, an ally" (*LCL* 238). Later, while hearing Connie and Clifford discuss Connie's absence, "Mrs. Bolton, who was listening in the next room, heard in sheer admiration. To think that a woman could carry it off so naturally" (*LCL* 239) She contemplates this with a great deal of pleasure, "And she glanced triumphantly at the already sleeping Clifford, as she stepped softly from the room" (*LCL* 148). Her triumph comes from the freedom Connie's adultery gives her, as well. She will start to exercise more freedom with Clifford from this point on, and come to exert more control, more influence over him, than Connie

does.

For Connie's sister, it is merely an escapade, and not a very pretty one. It is a diversion, a necessary one, but getting out of hand. Hilda is "off men" (*LCL* 244). Lawrence's succinct wording conveys Hilda's distaste for a subject she considers best not spoken of. Her response towards the idea of adultery is quite calm, and similarly cuts off any detailed conversation: "I gathered there was something" (*LCL* 245). But her response to adultery with a *gamekeeper* is something else entirely. She "lift[s] her nose slightly with disgust...She was really violently angry" (245). While she detests Clifford and "had hoped her sister *would* leave him" still "being solid Scotch middle class, she loathed any 'lowering' of oneself, or the family" (245). Sex and the lower classes: they are really both too loathsome to contemplate calmly. It's an odd response, considering her father's position.

Indeed, so offended is she that "On the strength of her anger, Hilda warmed towards Clifford. After all, he had a mind. And if he had no sex, functionally, all the better: so much the less to quarrel about! Hilda wanted no more of that sex business, where men became nasty, selfish little horrors. Connie really had less to put up with than many women, if she did but know it" (246-247).

Sir Malcolm, Connie's father looks on Connie's adultery as simply one of the facts of a human's life. "Why don't you get yourself a beau, Connie? Do you all the good in the world." He had been the first to propose this, even before Clifford spoke of an heir. For him, sex is a natural impulse, though quite without the deeper meaning Lawrence finds in nature. In "A Propos," Lawrence remarks on the "high-brow person" who treats the body "as a sort of toy to be played with, a slightly nasty toy, but still you can get

some fun out of it" (310). In fact, he tells Connie that "The world is more or less a fixed thing, and externally we have to adapt ourselves to it. Privately, in my private opinion, we can please ourselves" (*LCL* 282). He thinks it best she have her fun, but stay married to Clifford and true to Wragby, which "still stands" (*LCL* 283). His position seems to combine both the conservative advice of an older generation, which Lawrence distrusts, with the pointless hedonism of modern youth, which Lawrence detests.

Connie refuses to accept any of these various labels by which others designate her affair. Like Hester, Connie stands up to abuse. She is proud. She doesn't care what anyone thinks. For her, love is the sanction, as Morton Cronin points out in his essay "Hawthorne on Romantic Love and the Status of Women" (89).

"In the morbidity of her solitude, she [Hester] assumed a freedom of speculation..." (Cronin 91). Similarly, Connie's exile at Wragby, her almost complete isolation from sympathetic minds, puts her in a position to contemplate society. There are friends like Tommy Dukes, but her very womanliness puts her on the outs with most of Clifford's literary set. Lawrence notes that:

Being a soft, ruddy, country-looking girl, inclined to freckles, with big blue eyes, and curling, brown hair, and a soft voice, and rather strong, female loins she was considered a little old-fashioned and "womanly." She was not a "little pilchard sort of fish," like a boy, with a boy's flat breast and little buttocks. She was too feminine to be quite smart. (*LCL* 16)

Indeed, there is little that doesn't come under Connie's constant gaze. "Connie wondered over Clifford's blind, imperious instinct to become known: known, that is, to the vast amorphous world he did not himself know, and of which he was easily afraid" (*LCL* 19).

Indeed, like Hawthorne, Lawrence seems so conjoined to his heroine's consciousness that for large parts of the narration, the author and Connie's thoughts are synchronous.

Take, for example, the description of Connie's Irish lover Michaelis, who "obviously wasn't an Englishman, in spite of all the tailors, hatters, barbers...No, no, he obviously wasn't an Englishman: the wrong sort of flattish, pale face and bearing; and the wrong sort of grievance: that was obvious to any true-born English gentleman, who would scorn to let such a thing appear blatant in his own demeanor." Is this Connie or Lawrence looking on? It seems too detailed, too analytical for a non-writer somehow, yet the text goes on:

Poor Michaelis had been much kicked, so that he had a slightly tail-between-the-legs look even now. He had pushed his way by sheer instinct and sheerer effrontery on the stage and to the front of it with his plays. He had caught the public. And he had thought the kicking days were over. Alas, they weren't...They never would be. For he, in a sense, asked to be kicked. He pined to be where he didn't belong...among the English upper classes. And how they enjoyed the various kicks they got at him! And how he hated them! (*LCL* 20)

Who, exactly is speaking here? The "poor Michaelis" indicates Connie's thoughts, as if she were feeling for her lover and his plight. The "alas" sounds like the plaint of a woman who knows her man will never get what he desires. Similarly, the exclamatory statements sound like a lover defensive of her love. But the knowledge of how hard he's pushed himself to get ahead on the stage sounds a bit much for her to be aware of, and particularly the insight that this was due to "sheer instinct and sheerer effrontery." Connie and Lawrence's voice seem to have merged.

There is the lament several pages later that:

The world is supposed to be full of possibilities, but they narrow down to pretty few in most personal experience. There's lots of good fish in the sea...maybe...but the vast masses seem to be mackerel or herring, and if you're not mackerel or herring yourself, you are likely to find very few good fish in the sea. (*LCL* 29)

Almost surely this is Connie, not Lawrence. It sounds like country wisdom, and there is that tentative "...maybe..." But the text doesn't differentiate. This is not set off as an interior monologue "Yes, she sat there! She had to sit mum. She had to be as quiet as a mouse, not to interfere with the immensely important speculations of these highly-minded gentlemen" (*LCL* 33), "How many evenings had Connie sat and listened to the manifestations of these four men!" (*LCL* 34) "It was all so *ex-cathedra*, and it all pretended to be so humble" (*LCL* 35). Each of these comments sound like the grumbings of a dissatisfied wife, particularly in the way in which the anger, which is certainly earned, becomes comic to the reader's ears because of the over-emotional tone. "These highly-minded gentlemen" sounds like a sneer, while "How many evenings" almost has a pathetic (self-indulgent) sigh to it, and the overblown "ex-cathedra" remark in which the men are not only mocked in exalted language but simultaneously undercut by the statement that they only "pretended to be humble." Yet it's all a little baffling whom to ascribe this passage to. Is it purely Connie? Is it Lawrence getting a satiric charge out of Connie's frustration (remember he sees *The Scarlet Letter* as "colossal[ly]" satiric). Is this Lawrence genuinely antagonized towards the men for shutting Connie out when they don't have anything of worth to say and she might? I ask these questions and don't answer

them, because I don't think they can be answered. I quote so extensively in order to emphasize how often the narrative voice merges with the interior monologues of the characters, and how confusing it becomes to determine exactly which mind the reader is in at a given point.

Connie's self-immersion actually allows her to come to a conclusion quite as heretical to intellectual England as Hester's is to Puritan America: "Connie quite liked the life of the mind...But she did think it overdid itself a little" (*LCL* 34). She's seeing the danger of mind-consciousness. She's moving closer to Mellor's/Lawrence's philosophy. She will meet him for the first time in the novel's next chapter.

Connie, like Hester, is independent. She doesn't care what anyone thinks, and repeatedly asserts that her own impression, and her own values, are more relevant than what society might think or what difficulties her choices may bring her. William H. Nolte says of Hester "She exerts him not to look back on a dead past, but rather to live in an ever-new present" (180). I find this fascinating because, in the first place, Mellors makes the same comment about Connie. The first time he is alone after their first sexual encounter he realizes, with a bit of foreboding, that in fact he will have to move forward in life. Their conversations have a strong ring of putting the past behind them and moving forward into something truly "ever-new," to use Nolte's phrase. In fact, they are moving in many ways towards a world that doesn't even exist at this point.

There may seem to be some contradiction between this contention and the fact that, in the major scene in which she spends the night in his hut, she presses him for details about his past, whom he has slept with, and his relationship with his wife. Aside from the simple novelistic technique this satisfies of letting the audience know Mellors'

background without an awkward flashback, disrupting the flow of the significant story occurring in the present, this also serves to set up a fundamental development in the plot. Because she asks, perhaps even insists is not too hard a word, that Mellors take down the portrait of his wedding day and burn it. She is forcing a complete removal of this past from his life.

Mellors himself has not been paying much attention to the photograph. He has basically forgotten it was even there. Again, this may look as if Connie is stuck in the past whereas he has moved on. I would rather argue that Mellors is so much living in the past, he isn't even conscious of his actions. Connie forces him to notice this, and to take even physical steps to destroy this barrier to his future, to remove the past with finality.

Connie resembles Hester also in her education. Both have European philosophy to help them as they struggle into new worlds. As quoted earlier, "In the morbidity of her solitude, she assumes a morbidity of speculation" (Cronin 91). Hawthorne tells the reader, "Hester Prynne imbibed this spirit. She assumed a freedom of speculation, then common enough on the other side of the Atlantic, but which our forefathers, had they known it, would have held to be a deadlier crime than that stigmatized by the scarlet letter" (*SL* 164).

Similarly, Connie's exile at Wragby, her complete isolation from sympathetic minds, puts her in a position to contemplate society. There is little that doesn't come under Connie's critical gaze. "Connie wondered over Clifford's blind, imperious instinct to become known..." (*LCL* 19). There are friends like Tommy Dukes, but her very womanliness puts her on the outs with most of Clifford's set (*LCL* 16).

Mark van Doren says of Hester, "She's the heroine of a tragedy, and understands

the tragedy" (quoted by William H. Nolte 170). This sort of awareness is certainly present in Connie, but more important, I think, is the kind of tragedy that is going on. Doubleday asserts that "Feminist ideas were part of the intellectual climate in which Hawthorne lived" (826). I think this feminist idea might be discerned in Hawthorne's comment that "Some attribute had departed from her, the permanence of which had been essential to keep her a woman" (*SL* 163). The connection here takes a little bit of explaining. It certainly is not my contention that feminism results in a woman being less of a woman. It isn't even my contention that Hawthorne thinks that. I do believe however, that in trying to explain how Hester develops her consciousness, and immerses herself in the life of the mind, he has to distinguish her from the other women in the village. Further, he is writing a historical novel, so words like "feminism" are hardly appropriate to the mind-set of the time. Thus he illustrates her feminism by showing how she takes up the intellectual play of men and leaves behind the way other women of her time are thinking. That is, she had to lose the thing "which had been essential to keep her a woman" *of her time and place*.

It's worth pointing out, as well, that Connie is also described as becoming hard and sexless during her stay at Wragby, during in fact, the time in which her intellect is developing. Both her father and her sister notice this change in her. They think it's an alarming development, and Lawrence seems to agree. His description of her at this point certainly doesn't seem a positive one, especially from a Lawrencean standpoint. He seems to be adopting Hawthorne's image of a woman who has to give up her "softness" while she develops intellectually but then, as with Mellors, in making the cause evident, he proceeds further to the cure. I don't want to put a crudely sexist twist on Lawrence by

implying that Connie's (and thus womankind's) "cure" for intellect is a good roll in the hay. The point is that, for man or woman, intellect only goes so far, and intellect divorced from bodily experience is positively dangerous. Thus Connie, in falling into the life of the mind, loses her bodily attributes. Mind is important, just not alone. Connie's physical relationship with Mellors hardly knocks the intellectual capacity out of her. It regenerates her body while her mind continues to develop.

Hawthorne explicitly states the development that takes place in Hester's consciousness. "She discerned...the whole system of society is to be torn down, and built up anew" (*SL* 165) "Thus Hester Prynne, whose heart had lost its regular and healthy throb, wandered without a clew in the dark labyrinth of mind: now turned aside by an insurmountable precipice: now starting back from a deep chasm. There was wild and ghostly scenery all around her, and a home and comfort nowhere" (*SL* 166). What all this puts me in mind of is Connie's consciousness as she suffers alone at Wragby, before she has found Mellors. It is the perspective that Lawrence uses to open his novel: "Ours is essentially a tragic age...the cataclysm has happened, we are now in the ruins" (*LCL* 1).

That is one half of the quote. Of course, the other is that "we refuse to take it tragically...we start to build up little habits, to have new little hopes. It is rather hard work: there is no smooth road into the future: but we go round, or scramble over obstacles. We've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen" (*LCL* 1) Connie is linked to Hester in this regard, too. Nolte says of Hester that "After the initial despondency that caused her to think of suicide as the only way out, she gains steadily in strength and beauty of character" (171). While Cronin asserts of women like Hester (and thus like Connie), "These women are capable of tilting with the world and risking their

souls on the outcome" (89). In their willingness to endure, in their strength, and in their hope despite despair, these two heroines are strikingly similar.

At this stage in the narrative, Connie is immersed in her affair with Mellors, still tied to Clifford, who commits acts of destruction upon him. It is the struggle of body, spirit, and mind in action. This is the struggle Lawrence perceived in Hawthorne's *Romance*, and the struggle I've attempted to demonstrate echoes though *Lady Chatterley*. It seems an appropriate place in the narrative to close this chapter.

### CHAPTER THREE: THE SPIRIT OF THE PLACE

It is hard to hear a new voice, as hard as it is to listen to an unknown language.

-D. H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*

*The Scarlet Letter*, of course, occupies a far end of one literary genre. Striking his claim on Romance, Hawthorne utilizes allegory for all he can mine, pushing the form of lengthy prose narrative, to which we usually ascribe the word "novel," as far from the bounds of realism as it had yet gone (on its way, of course, was Melville's *Moby-Dick*). The letter "A, which appears on Hester's breast (which inspires a variety of meanings and designations given to Hester: "adultery," "angel," and "able" among them), as a flash of lightening in the night sky, and perhaps hidden on Dimmesdale's chest, as well. The bright rose blooming before the prison door, the sun that suddenly breaks through the thick forest when Hester and Dimmesdale pledge their commitment to each other, and the three major scenes set on the scaffold are more examples. Indeed almost every occurrence in the novel seems to have blossoming up from it the properties of symbolism and allegory so essential to Romance.

Lawrence, though a Romantic in many ways, was not a creator of Romance. Indeed, the very real effect of the collieries on the Midlands is one of his most abiding themes. He looks for symbolism in the primitive totem that stands in a bohemian residence in *Women in Love*, and he finds an apt allegory for the mechanization of man in the industrial coal mining system in much of his work. Still, he remains a *novelist*, a writer concerned with humans in their social interactions and their alteration by/rebellion

against social forces.

The terms "Romance" and "Novel" will be utilized quite a bit, and it will be helpful to set down some terms before starting to categorize which elements of the novel fit the definition of one or the other. The first, and most clear, definition I will present is that of Nathaniel Hawthorne:

When a writer calls his work a Romance, it need hardly be observed that he wishes to claim a certain latitude, both as to its fashion and material, which he would not have felt himself entitled to assume, had he professed to be writing a Novel. The latter form of composition is presumed to aim at a very minute fidelity, not merely to the possible, but to the probable and ordinary course man's experience. (Preface, *The House of the Seven Gables* 1)

These designations will be used in this thesis in their largest and broadest sense. "Novel" signifies a realistic portrayal of characters in society. Any realistic depiction of characters, or description of settings that is plausible in real life, is to be construed as working within the confines of the Novel. George Eliot's *Middlemarch* might be a touchstone here, or Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. "Romance" refers to a fictional work with non-realistic characters and situations, or a heavy symbolic use of people, places, nature. A touchstone here would be Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* or the short stories of Nikolai Gogol. Following Hawthorne's lead, these terms will be used throughout the work capitalized, to designate one form of lengthy fictional work from another.

These are, admittedly, broad definitions and most literature exists in a gray area between the two. Do the exaggerated characters of Dickens make him less of a social novelist? I don't think so. Does the symbolism of the giant billboard eyes and the career

of its protagonist in *Gatsby* prevent the novel from reflecting accurately the America of the 1920's? I wouldn't agree. Is "*Daisy Miller*" a symbolic tale of America as innocent and Europe as corrupt, thus placing the work in the category of Romance, or is it a realistically worked out story that adheres to a rational depiction of society and therefore follows in the tradition of the Novel? Works of art don't break down so easily, so neatly. Nevertheless, a heavy line is being drawn between the two so that the separate elements that inform *Lady Chatterley* can be easier illustrated. Thus for me, if I can borrow an image from poetry, when a road less traveled stops meaning one physically in less use and perhaps out of repair or of being less well marked for characters along it, and becomes a metaphor for life choices and an impetus for the author's philosophical beliefs, the technique has shifted from Novel to Romance.

Lawrence's position in terms of Novel vs. Romance is troublesome, however, and not easy to resolve. John Worthen's *D. H. Lawrence and the Idea of the Novel* tracks the aesthetic development of Lawrence's art, thus illustrating the development of a Romantic outlook through the course of Lawrence's career. The book goes work by work, not trying to pin Lawrence to a theory of the Novel, but examining the shifting *kind* of novelist Lawrence was. There is little generalizing, but early on Worthen does treat the overall arc of Lawrence's career, asserting that "In 1928, he was careful to distinguish the 'natural' from the bourgeois in his early experience, and to express that he rejected the bourgeois in favor of the natural. But that conclusion is in complete contradiction with the start of his writing career" (4). Taking "natural" as a category over and against "bourgeois," Worthen seems to imply Lawrence had come to accept the antithetical positions of "nature" and "society," a common Romantic mode. This does not necessarily mean,

however, that he completely deserted the art of the Novel for that of the Romance.

Worthen details Lawrence's development from his early attempts at writing in which "he was incorporating the events of everyday life directly into his fiction, particularly in his first novel; a novel as record of landscape and observation was one of the ways in which he first conceived it" (3). From the start, though, this Novelistic strain vies with Romance. "Being a literary artist, for Lawrence in 1908, meant demonstrating fine and metaphorical expression" (8). Metaphor is, of course, a Romantic literary device, converting something realistic into the representation of something other than itself, something larger. By the time Worthen reaches *Sons and Lovers*, a novel he describes as the "psychological tragedy of an individual" (26), he is noting Lawrence already writing letters to friends about his future aims as a writer: "Lawrence had chosen...to write for the people of England. It was both a larger and looser aim, both more deliberate and more dangerous; it inevitable casts the author in the role of seer and prophet and intellectual" (34). Of course, this sets Lawrence up as someone with aims quite different from those of a conventional novelist; but again not necessarily one who abandons novelistic approaches as a means of expressing such aims.

A good example of the push-pull between Romantic and Novelist might be found at this point in an excerpt from an assessment Lawrence makes about that *Sons and Lovers*: "It follows this idea: a woman of character and refinement goes into the lower class, and has no satisfaction in her own life. She has had a passion for her husband, so the children are born of passion, and have heaps of vitality. But as her sons grow up she selects them as lovers—first the eldest, then the second" (quoted in Worthen 35). Now, essentially, this is a Novelistic structure. The possibilities in comparing one kind of

society to that on a lower social scale, the erosion of a wife's love for her husband, and her turn towards her sons all fit into a realistic, psychological novel. But there is that telling sentence "She has had a passion for her husband, so the children are born of passion, and have heaps of vitality," which is pure Romanticism. The whole idea that somehow the emotional state of the couple at the time they conceive their children is transmitted *physically* to them, somehow instilling in their genes this wealth of vitality, is a completely Romantic conception of human relations.

With *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, Lawrence certainly moves into the direction of a less realistic novel, and a more Romantically charged one, but that issue of labels is still difficult. Worthen quotes Lawrence in order to demonstrate "a vital change in Lawrence's sense of the novel and what he wanted to do with it" (49). Lawrence insisted, "I have inside me a sort of answer to the *want* of today: to the real, deep want of the English people, not just what they fancy they want. And gradually I shall get my hold on them. And this novel is perhaps not good art, but it is what they want, need, more or less" (48). What this demonstrates is a Romantic *aim* rather than style of executing a novel on Lawrence's part. The vital change is in Lawrence's *perspective*, moving from an account of Midlands people to an evaluation of the soul of society—and that largely through sex—not his form of aesthetics.

Charting the development of *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. Worthen notes, "the very title of the early versions, in fact, give us a clue to the kinds of novels they were; 'The Sisters' had been a study of contrasted individuals... 'The Wedding Ring' presumably made the marriages of those women its primary concern; 'The Rainbow' suggests for the first time a metaphysical dimension" (54). The move from a specific look at individuals

in a social relationship to an exploration of emotional states of being, and finally concentrating on a study of metaphysical dimensions—this certainly sounds like a development towards Romance. Furthermore, "He had begun to write a novel which we can only describe as religious in its attitude to the things it found most worth describing; the point of it was to suggest a new idea of self" (55). This subject matter is more accurately the subject of Romance rather than that of a Novel. It is more the province of Romance to strike a religious tone, and to suggest such concepts as "a new idea of self," rather than realistically investigating the one which already exists.

Worthen makes the point that, though *The Rainbow* begins in an idyll in Chapter One, that chapter quickly moves from that dreamlike state of Part One to "a date, facts, a family history, members of a family" in Chapter One Part Two, which "contrasts with the timelessness, the explicitly stated 'poem' of Part 1, with its ballad-like, unindividualised characters" (63). So despite the novel's opening, Lawrence is still working as a novelist, even if he's using the novel to present a spiritual state of being. Importantly, when discussing one particular scene, Worthen hits on the distinction between a novel and the Romantic concepts that novel may consider: "Those cows in the barn are real cows, the rain outside real rain; they are not symbols, they are not portents. Yet a sentence like 'All outside was still in the rain,' with the totality of 'All outside,' suggests through the ambiguity of 'still' that steady community of which the individuals are, for the first time being, made aware" (66). In other words, Lawrence is still functioning as a novelist even when he is dealing with Romantic subjects. It is the consciousness of his characters in which the religious, Romantic impulses are being stirred, not in an unrealistic, symbol-laden depiction of the world they inhabit.

A key to realizing the difference between the two is the use of *language*. Worthen is very specific about the fact that Lawrence had to create a new language to encompass his aims. I think seeing the language as a Romantic construction, but not something with which to construct a Romantic world, is pivotal. "This is the kind of language which makes *The Rainbow* so distasteful to some people; they ask what reason Lawrence has for using such inflated words as 'transfiguration', 'glorification', and 'admission'; they ask what a phrase like 'she was the doorway to him' actually means...the language is abstract...suggests that Tom and Lydia's fulfillment is a very different thing from their sensual satisfaction, and that what they are for each other's fulfillment is mutual and private" (67). These notions may be Romantic, may be extreme, but it makes sense for two characters in a realistic novel to have these feelings, and Worthen pinpoints the difference between evolving a language that allows the depiction of this, and mistaking an interior thought for the world outside that thought.

Finally, in assessing *Women in Love*, Worthen states that  
 [...] as a novel, it insists continually that people of heightened consciousness both should and do live in a different world...to understand that 'conscious being' in yourself, or in the created characters, is to insist on another world from twentieth-century English society...*Women in Love*, like all novels, is in a continually shifting relationship with the society of its production; it dramatises that society, it may even reflect it, but it also creates its own world; in this case, an insistently other world. (90)

Thus, even in a novel that is quite unique in English literature, and which does not operate according to traditional standards ("Above all, *Women in Love* made its first

readers feel that it was a mad book," he says, by way of illustrating just how hard it was for early readers to grasp its unusual method), it is still the *consciousness* of the characters that illustrates the author's Romantic concepts. The exterior world as presented here is not adhering to a Romantic form. He illustrates this several times, but one example will suffice, when Gudrun, getting her first look at Gerald, thinks he "did not belong to the same creation as the people around him." Worthen describes this language as

one of discovery and revelation...not something we could judge inadequate. It is the language of someone discovering the mystery of another human being; the language of someone fated to a certain kind of experience: it has nothing to do with the way that people should (or do) behave in society. The novel's dream-like quality comes from the way it turns the normal world into a species of hallucination—a vivid, unreal panorama. (92)

Again, and clearly, it is not an unreal world Lawrence is creating. It is an unreal or fantastical way of *perceiving* the world that is at issue (of course, the insights of Lawrence's characters are meant to be accurate; I do not mean to imply Lawrence is criticizing them for interpreting the world unusually, I merely want to suggest there is a difference between displaying a new consciousness and creating an exterior world akin to that consciousness).

The point is being made so exhaustively with these major novels not only to show Lawrence's development in terms of how, and how much, he incorporated Romantic concepts, but also to make clear the distinction that, to me, still renders him a Novelist at this point and not a Romancer. He is still dealing with the real, solid, concrete world of

early twentieth century England. His characters have Romantic concepts, he even shares them, but they are not living in a world of Romance.

In *River of Dissolution*, Colin Clarke suggests that Lawrence is heavily influenced by the English Romantic poets, particularly in Lawrence's obsession with the tensions between such categories as organic vs. mechanical, dissolution vs. stasis, life vs. death. Clarke's work primarily focuses on *Women in Love*, but his point is that Lawrence's work and his mindset is heavily infused with an outlook inherited from the English Romantics, and that this informs his work as a whole. In analyzing the Romanticism which pervades most of his novels, Clarke writes:

Although it was from his Romantic predecessors that Lawrence took over the antithesis of mechanical and organic, it was precisely the great Romantics who make it possible for him ultimately to qualify and subtle-ize that antithesis...It is characteristic of them to discover an ambiguous value and vitality in the multiform process of dissolution; and to these Lawrence now darkly assimilates the mechanical process. (137)

The key point of this passage is to note another aspect of the Novel/Romance duality. Here is more Romanticism, the English Romantic poets, no less, as major influences on Lawrence's perspective, yet he is turning Romantic influence towards a Novelist's task, a study of contemporary society. Thus he brings these concepts to bear on the realistic world of coal-miners, industrialization, contemporary marriage, all aspects generally the province of a social novelist.

When it comes to *Lady Chatterley*, Clarke is highly critical, but his comments bear very strongly on the work as it is being analyzed here. For Clarke:

It is a measure of the drop from the art of *Women in Love* to that of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* that throughout the latter novel the mechanical principle should be so flatly opposed to the organic and paradisaal. There is the machine and there is the sacred wood, and the "symbolism" in terms of which the one is seen to threaten the other is of a crudeness one would have imagined the author of *Women in Love* quite incapable of. (136)

What's interesting about this in relation to my argument is that, if one considers the possibility that Lawrence is playing by Hawthorne's rules of Romance, the "inadequacy" begins to make sense. The dichotomy that Clarke notes is quite similar to that noted in Hawthorne, the organic world of the wood, and the false, stifling nature of Puritan Boston. Even Clarke's sarcastic use of "symbolism" in quotes tallies with the heavy, obvious use Hawthorne makes of symbolism when, for instance, he can't help noting Pearl is dressed to look like a living scarlet A, or he creates the lighting bolt in the form of an A that appears during a key scene flashing across the night's sky.

If Lawrence is going to make use of Hawthornian Romance rather than that of the English poets, the more explicit, and regimented, use of Romantic definitions and imagery becomes fairly inescapable. Clarke's difficulty centers on the fact that Lawrence throws one form of Romanticism over for another, what Clarke would call a cruder or more simplistic kind. Rather than being a liability, it makes sense, it seems necessary, if Lawrence is trying to work within the Hawthornian form of creation, and attempting to answer a specific work with a work of his own.

Much of Clarke's argument actually seems helpful in terms of connecting *Lady Chatterley* with *The Scarlet Letter*. He complains about the structure of the novel's

argument, "on the one hand the violent and metallic and mechanical and on the other hand growth and tenderness and sex. And these steep contrasts are sustained for the greater part of the novel" (138) and laments that "the *essential* energies in this novel are unambiguously pure and paradisaical and for the most part the reductive or mechanical is a principal of sheer chaos and rigidity set over against the fluent rhythms of life" (143). This sounds so much like a typical reading of *The Scarlet Letter*. There is no ambiguity between the love of Hester and Dimmesdale on the one hand, and the condemnation of that love by Puritan standards on the other. There is no question but that Puritan society is soul-crushing and anti-life, while the mossy woods, and Hester's humble hut and her life of the mind there are the life-giving, genuinely moral center of the work.

Not only does Clarke make *Lady Chatterley* seem very close structurally, philosophically to *The Scarlet Letter*, but his impatience with *Lady Chatterley* strongly echoes the impatience with Classic American Literature that Lawrence expressed in the opening lines of his manifesto on American literary art, "The Spirit of the Place." He asserts that, "We like to think of the old-fashioned American classics as children's books. Just childishness, on our part." This is because, "[t]he old American art-speech contains an alien quality, which belongs to the American continent and to nowhere else." Of course, he also cautions in terms of such a reading, "But, of course, so long as we insist on reading the books as children's tales, we miss all that" (*Studies* 11).

In *Lady Chatterley*, Lawrence brakes away further from the Novel and moved closer to Romance than he had ever done before. The break is not complete, and often he will still put these Romantic observations into the minds of his characters rather than allowing them to stand on the stage as independent fact. Yet he goes much farther than he

has in the past, and his perspective is definitely, I think, that of a Romantic and not a Novelist. This is particularly evident by the novel's end.

Lawrence chose the form of Romance for this work because it allowed him to expand his vision beyond the bound of his characters' minds. Mind is what he wants to get away from, or integrate with the rest of the body, anyway.

Let me say clearly that I do not think this was a conscious decision. There is no record—no letter to friends, no journal entry, no conversation remembered by others afterward—in which he acknowledges *The Scarlet Letter* as a specific influence on his work. In order to make this case, the possibility must be approached circuitously, inferred from what clues can be found in the evidence of composition. These clues come in two forms: the timeline of composition, and the similarities on this occasion between his art and the art of Hawthorne.

As stated in the first chapter, not many years separate the writing of *Studies* and the composition of the first draft of *Lady Chatterley*, and both works were the result of a long-term intellectual process. For almost a decade, Lawrence had been writing, revising, publishing, re-visiting, and collecting his essays on the great American novels. He was deeply, passionately, steeped in them. I don't think the effect of writing them left him when the work was done.

This was no academic sidetrack, not something apart from his "real" work. To bring up something discussed in Chapter One, but relevant to understanding the connection here, this immersion was vitally important to his vision of the contemporary human condition. "...I think America, being so much worse, falser, farther gone than England, is nearer to freedom. England has a long and awful process of corruption and

death to go through. America has dry-rotted to a point where the final seed of the new is almost left ready to sprout" (Arnold 26-27). Where America had gone, England was heading. In the text of the classic American works, the trauma of the human condition now occurring in England could already be witnessed.

For Arnold, on the basis of Lawrence's own comments, "Lawrence, in the *Studies* was more concerned with his philosophy than with American literature, as such" (31). This need not be read as Lawrence ignoring the texts to contemplate his own theories, but as Lawrence's excitement at finding his theories proved in the American texts. I do not see how this could help but profoundly affect his own literary output.

It has to be allowed from the start that Lawrence's art and the art of classic American literature are very much in sympathy. Earlier, the case was made that Lawrence's analysis of *The Scarlet Letter* resembled very much the characters and relationships he would portray in *Lady Chatterley*. It is equally important to see how Lawrence incorporates Hawthorne's milieu into that of contemporary England.

One prominent way in which Lawrence manifests his idiosyncratic personality is in the dualism inherent in his attitude towards nature and society. Riley Garcia notes of the two voices in Lawrence that "the first called out from the woods, and it told him that safety for the child of nature lay in his natural habitat...But the second voice, calling out to the messiah in him from the city, challenged him to explore the frustrations and satisfactions of human intercourse" (93).

Garcia charts this dualistic nature in his essay, in which "[t]he conflict between the woods and the city in his novels and in him is more complicated than it first appears,

given Lawrence's intense attraction for the very environment he professes to abhors" (94). Garcia believes Lawrence is looking for paradise, a reconciliation of these warring forces. He charts this duality through all Lawrence's major novels and asserts, "Only in the last stage, which is treated in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, is the quest for paradise ended. Here the quest is internalized, the protagonist having learned that paradise is a condition of the mind rather than a physical location" (95).

The themes involved here—paradise, quest for unification, a removal from the "real" world of concrete external experience to a world of inner consciousness—suggests a move from the subjects of the novel to the subjects of Romance. If Garcia is correct, this further ties *Lady Chatterley* to an American Romantic approach to fiction, and makes more likely Lawrence's use of an American novel for the themes/situations of his own novel.

Garcia is not the only one to notice themes of allegory and duality. Julian Moynahan notes that "from one point of view the theme of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is concreteness *versus* abstraction" (77) and pins down quite particularly the combination of novelistic and Romantic techniques Lawrence utilizes, pointing out both "richly concrete realizations of persons, settings, and situations" while "the power of his prophecy should depend on the power of his art to particularize meanings *which may be extended toward broader conditions and widely applicable trains of experience*" (77, emphasis mine). Indeed, he states flatly that "*Lady Chatterley's Lover* dramatizes two opposed orientations toward life, two distinct modes of human awareness: the one abstract, cerebral, and unvital; the other concrete, physical, organic" (72). Excepting the word "unvital," I see these two polarities as the definitions of the novel and the Romance.

Moynahan also notes the use of allegory. Wragby and Tevershall are "realized in themselves but come also to stand for entire industrial , social, and even spiritual orders dominant in the modern world..." (73). He seems to be extending this allegorical style to the novel's structure, of which he notes "the rich simplicity of structural design...realized most powerfully and significantly in spatial terms, in terms of setting...the manor house, the industrial village, the wood—and their spatial relations with one another under a fume-laden atmosphere" (75). In this novel, setting is being used as an allegorical device. The "cows are cows" distinction Worthen was making for *Sons and Lovers* does not hold true here. The setting pulses with symbolism beyond how it is perceived in the minds of the characters. Its allegorical meaning is an objective fact in the world of this particular novel.

The particular image of that "fume-laden atmosphere" stands for a (then) contemporary embodiment of Hawthorne's Boston, with its Puritan-laden atmosphere. Lawrence's world is choked spiritually as well as physically by the dirt and grime of the coal mines just as Hawthorne's Boston is choked by the rigorous, punishing Puritan mindset. Both the coal and the repression have garbed a community in a sea of gray (ironic when things are so black and white), a lifeless, passionless color.

Moynahan goes on to point out that *Lady Chatterley* "concentrates its drama within the space of a few square miles" (76). Thus the book embodies a geographical space restricted to a small area just as Hawthorne's book does. In terms of literal space as well as psychological, Lawrence seems to be holding close to Hawthorne's world.

Moynahan takes this allegorical examination beyond the setting and ties it to the characters. His observation of Clifford largely tallies with the observations Lawrence

made about Chillingworth. Clifford "sums up a modern habit of mind as well as a ruling class in transition from one type of economic proprietorship to another" (73). He recognizes the essential aspect of Clifford is mind, just as Lawrence sees as that as the essential aspect of Chillingworth. Granted, Moynahan is concentrating on the fact that it is a mind specifically of the modern age. However, this only illustrates how far mind has gone out of control at this point in human history, not that "mind out of control" is only a recent phenomenon. Lawrence made the specific point in *Studies* (as quoted earlier) that American literature was prescient in acknowledging the compromised state of humanity. So for Lawrence to see this conflict occurring in a Boston puritan, and for Moynahan to see such a conflict as a specifically modern problem is a resolvable difference of interpretation.

For Moynahan, Mellors "not only follows but represents the organic way of life, and the wood in which he lurks is a spatial metaphor of the natural order, of what Lawrence frequently called 'the living universe'" (73). Although this makes Mellors a suitable embodiment of Romantic ideals, to some extent it simply isn't accurate. Moynahan doesn't acknowledge the extent to which this hiding in the woods is an example of false spirituality. The text itself makes the point that Mellors is avoiding life. He seems, to Connie specifically, whole and complete, a man more aligned with nature, but Mellors, and Lawrence, know better. To take him completely at face value as an embodiment of Romance is as big a mistake as taking Dimmesdale at face value as a representative of Puritanism because he has swept the mantle so strongly about him. There's no doubt that Lawrence sees the woods and nature as genuinely nurturing to Mellors, and to Connie, in a way that Hawthorne would never acknowledge religion to be

for *his* characters. Still, it is important to remember that Mellors, for whatever good he is getting out of the woods, nevertheless lives in a false spiritual state.

Moynahan views the stylized/realistic duality of the novel as a consistent element of the entire work. He sees the allegorical use of space—"For the wood symbolizes not only a way of life but also the beleaguered and vulnerable status to which the vital career has been seduced," for example (76)—continuously balanced with realistic depictions of the life of the English countryside—"Lawrence summons all his powers of description to present this space as it is..." (76). I agree that symbolic and realistic elements vie for space in the novel, but I don't agree that it is a question of consistent balance, of a uniform approach to writing that is in effect from start to finish.

Lawrence makes a transition from the world of the novel to the world of Romance. There are subtle infusions of Romance from the beginning, in the details of the town and description of nature, but for the most part, Lawrence is after a more realistic depiction and only slowly moves from one form of literature to another. The benefit of this is that it gives an entry for the, then, contemporary reader from the world of the mid-20's Jazz age into the world Lawrence is moving his central couple towards, without such a strong jarring of sensibilities. It also allows Lawrence the ability to subtly manipulate the reader into accepting the Romantic world that he is leading into. I also think it is simply the warring of the two natures within Lawrence. The novelist wants to analyze his contemporary society, to critique the real world he is living in. The Romantic needs to expound on his personal insights and to encourage his readers to accept/embrace the Utopian world he envisions.

Lawrence starts out in the world of the novel—World War I, physical destruction,

the intellectual life of Wraby—and then slowly introduces elements of Romance—the woods, Connie's isolated consciousness, Mellors' utopian vision of society—so that he can move from the real to the ideal and create an environment in which he can indulge in Hawthornian techniques.

The allegorical mode is sounded quietly at first. "Connie went for walks in the park, and in the woods that joined the park, and enjoyed the solitude and the mystery" (*LCL* 16). The setting of the woods of course plays into a more Romantic atmosphere than what has so far been described, particularly with that last descriptive word "mystery," quietly opening up a very different kind of reality than the one of a more realistic novel. Connie sees the woods as "a dream" (*LCL* 16), that is, an illusion. At this point, the genre of the novel still dominates. For the previous fifteen pages, the description has been one of the War, Clifford's broken legs, the unhappy state of their marriage. Lawrence has built up the real world of the time and then subtly, tentatively injects images of Romance, which will become more prominent as the novel continues.

The second chapter contains that reference to the woods; the third begins with it, immediately and more urgently. Connie is "restless. She would rush off across the park, and abandon Clifford, and lie prone in the bracken...she must get away from the house and everybody. The wood was her one refuge, her sanctuary" (*LCL* 18). This is a very Romantic concept of course, the intense emotion of the scene, the rush from the man-made, society-oriented space of the manor house, in which Connie feels disconnected and unhappy, to the free, naturally created, emotionally sustaining woods. The language of Romanticism, quickly picked up, is just as quickly dismissed. Connie decides the wood "was not really a refuge, a sanctuary, because she had no connection with it. It was only a

place where she could get away from the rest. She never really touched the spirit of the wood itself...if it had any such nonsensical thing" (*LCL* 18). That emphatic statement, "nonsensical," demonstrates Connie's unwillingness to completely accept a Romantic outlook. She smothers it, and returns to the more conventional world of the manor house. Thus, the language of the Novel reasserts itself.

Novelistic techniques dominate for roughly the next eighty pages, while Lawrence examines the dry, intellectual world of Clifford and his literary associates, takes a more naturalistic look at the blight of the coal mines, and details Connie's affair with Michaelis. Then, with a quote from *Paradise Lost*, the text turns back to Romance: "Spring came back... 'Seasons return, but not to me return Day, or the sweet approach of Ev'n or Morn'" (*LCL* 85). Connie returns to the woods.

Romantic imagery abounds. "'The world has gone pale with thy breath.' But it was the breath of Persephone, this time; she was out of hell on a cold morning." The quote is from Swinburne's "Ode to Proserpine." Two major Romantic poets are utilized, for the first time in the text, and in very quick succession. The Romantic strain in Lawrence is now coming out quite forcefully. The wind blows "cold breaths," indeed "there was an anger of entangled wind caught among the twigs. It, too, was caught and trying to tear itself free, the wind, like Absalom." Anemones have "naked shoulders over crinoline skirts of green." Confronted with the angry wind, "they stood it." To cap the allegorical nature of the woods, and to bring home what they hold for Connie in the person of Mellors, there is the "young pine tree, that swayed against her with curious life, elastic, and powerful, rising up. The erect, alive thing, with its top in the sun!" (*LCL* 85).

Lawrence seems to explode with this imagery after having held to the form of the

Novel for so long, but he returns again to the novelistic approach, as he first begins to chart the affair between Connie and Mellors, and once again examines Tevershall (*LCL* 102, for example).

When Lawrence launches an attack on the modern world via Clifford's obsession with the radio, a final break seems to occur. Up to this point, Novel and Romance have been vying, but here a purely Romantic sensibility is expressed, and not one clearly definable as belonging to a particular person. It seems, not an individual's belief, but an expression of Truth, and seems to mark Lawrence's decision of which way his narrative will go:

And he would sit alone for hours listening to the loud-speaker bellowing forth...like a person losing his mind, and listen, or seem to listen, to the unspeakable thing.

Was he really listening? Or was it a sort of soporific he took, whilst something else worked on underneath in him? Connie did not know. She fled to her room, or out of doors to the wood. A kind of terror filled her sometimes, a terror of the incipient insanity of the whole civilized species. (*LCL* 111)

It is such an odd, overwrought response. Has anyone else seen a radio—not what comes across it in a particular message, mind you, but the instrument itself—as an embodiment of evil? The reader can almost envision the thing coming to life, its flared horn already curved above the console, like the head of a dragon, the gaping hole of horn opening further to engulf anyone who dares listen to it.

In this explosion of Romanticism a basically drab, non-poetic aspect of modern life is exaggerated and allegorized, really metamorphosed into a threatening monster of industrial society. Connie cannot face the beast (or the two of them: the radio and

Clifford), but must flee to what had early on been the "unreal" salvation of the wood. This marks the point at which *Lady Chatterley* stops being one sort of novel and becomes, determinably, another.

"She fled as much to the wood as possible" (*LCL* 113). At this point, Mellors begins to be a prominent character. Obviously, the novel has intimated his importance already with the occasional hints to his personality, and Connie's first, combative encounters with him. Now he comes forward to share equally in the narrative. Any character given an allegorical introduction as an erect pine is not likely to become determinably realistic afterwards. Indeed, though Lawrence gives Mellors a realistic background, and even details the early stages of the affair in a naturalistic fashion, the more Mellors takes over the narrative, the more determinably it becomes a narrative of Romance.

This is perhaps the final battle between Novel and Romance in the text. Lawrence continues his diatribe about the radio, "there she heard the loud-speaker begin to bellow, in an idiotically velevteen-genteel sort of voice," but in fact the battle has already been won. Lawrence's personification of the radio as an evil being, followed by Connie's quick flight to the wood ("She pulled on her old violet-colored mackintosh, and slipped out of the house at the side door") sets the balance of the narration firmly on the side of Romance (*LCL* 124).

Lawrence negotiates this shift deftly, not only in his twisting of naturalistic elements to allegory, but by putting the narrative voice now largely in the words of the characters. As I noted in Chapter Two, Lawrence's voice merges frequently with Connie's and, at the end, steps aside to allow Mellors the concluding paragraphs of the novel.

Thus, technically, it can seem that Lawrence has it both ways. If the thrusting pine and monstrous radio seem out of place in the tradition of the Novel, Lawrence safely restricts them to the impressions/observations of his characters, not the narrator. Thus, the work can still be looked at as a novel about Romantic-minded people rather than an out-and-out Romance. But Lawrence, again as previously mentioned, so conflates the narrative voice with Connie's and Mellors' that this doesn't seem so easily discernable. Whereas earlier in the text, at times he specifically notes a character's thoughts as opposed to that of the narrative voice, he now dissolves the barriers. The observations of the radio or the woods might very well be Connie's, but Lawrence doesn't designate them, limit them, to such. Similarly, Mellors' utopian vision of the future, which closes the novel, is technically merely the character's thoughts, and thus the narrative follows the tradition of the Novel and not Romance. The narrative voice isn't advocating, or predicting, anything. Nonetheless, this hope for the future provides the novel's close, its final assessment of human nature and humanity's needs, and, as a first person narration, the work's final narrative voice.

While this romantic consciousness is a perspective developed as the novel goes on, only sounded quietly at first and then built upon, I think the creation of a *world* similar to Hawthorne's Puritan New England is occurring from the start. Lawrence creates an England oddly akin to Puritan America:

If we examine his palette...we discover there a limited color spectrum, few primary colors, and a heavy preponderance of dull hues, greys especially, and of pale yellows. The world seems 'all grey' [...] over everything is a 'ghost-glimmer of greyness' and 'all the wood seemed pale with the pallor of endless little

anemones' [...] The wood, which is "gloomy" [...] and "melancholy" [...] is now like the simulacrum of reality," [...]not reality itself. (Garcia 111)

This is the world of plain, gray clothed Puritan Boston, but also, decisively, the world of allegory. Garcia continues "Lawrence undermines the reality of his nature by his refractory use of metaphor: the hazel thicket is a 'lacework' (p. 186), the celandines are in 'crowds' (p. 186), the oakwood is 'interlaced' (pp. 155-156)...the flowers are 'velvety' (p. 147), and 'the red daisies [are] like red plush buttons,' (p. 188)" (111).

Lawrence has created a space not bound by the laws of reality. For Garcia, the novel is "the story of personal regeneration amid both social and natural decay," (112), a very Hawthornian concept, indeed.

Lawrence invokes images and color tones reminiscent of Puritan New England. This has already been alluded to above, but examples are numerous. Wragby is described as the "rather forlorn home" in the "smoky Midlands" (*LCL*1). The Tevershall village "trailed in utter helpless ugliness for a long and gruesome mile: houses, rows of wretched, small, begrimed, brick houses, with black roofs for lids, sharp angles and wilful, black dreariness," (*LCL* 10). Not only does this suggest the colorless Boston of *The Scarlet Letter*, it almost seems to make Tevershall the visual stand-in for the harsh puritan inhabitants themselves. Certainly a "black roof" suggests the old, New England hat, the "sharp angles" suggest the primitive, harsh, clothing most of the inhabitants wore, and the "wilful, black dreariness" suggests the New England mentality.

Connie can't help but notice "the utter, soul-less ugliness of the coal-and-iron Midlands," which she "took in...at a glance...and left as it was: unbelievable and not to be thought about" (*LCL* 11). It certainly is unbelievable, this vision of a Puritan

settlement set down in the Midlands of modern England.

For Lawrence, as Garcia pointedly notes, Romanticism is embodied in the woods, that free space in which an aristocratic society, and its more perverse members, cannot impede the natural order. It is in the woods that Connie and Mellors meet. It is in his hut that every development in the relationship occurs. Not once do they have a sexual encounter or an important conversation at Wragby.

And, in one bold scene, Lawrence actually seems to be recreating the climactic meeting between Hester and Dimmesdale in the woods. The scene in question is Chapter Fourteen, and it seems to be recreating events from Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen of *The Scarlet Letter*. They have a similar rhythm. Both move from a sense of isolation between their characters, to a companionship and tenderness that, though something of a climax in itself, nevertheless is the springboard for an even greater climax, in which the characters throw off the shackles of their past and agree to be with each other for good rather than to be apart.

Both open with the characters encountering each other in the woods. In Hawthorne, the darkness comes from the thick foliage, in Lawrence from the fact that it is night. Hester is illuminated by her scarlet letter, while Connie is illuminated by the light Mellor's carries (*LCL* 201)—and in a sense, Mellors *is* her scarlet letter.

Hawthorne notes the "cold chill" of the lovers' handshake, and describes their meeting as if they are meeting after death. Lawrence provides a conversation in which the characters seem emotionally distant from one another. They walk in silence for a bit, and she asks him how he's recovered from Clifford's forcing him to push the mechanized bath-chair. "She went on again at his side, but not touching him, wondering why she was

going with him at all" (*LCL* 201-202).

Both couples discuss their past more openly than they have before. Dimmesdale unburdens himself of his spiritual turmoil, while Mellors unburdens himself of his sexual turmoil. As Dimmesdale has an enemy under his roof, Chillingworth, so too did/does Mellors, though in this case the enemy isn't Clifford (at least, he's not the one discussed) but Mellors' wife Bertha, whom he not only hasn't divorced but isn't even legally separated from. As Chillingworth has sapped the life out of Dimmesdale by slow psychological torture, so too has Bertha sapped the life from Mellors (*LCL* 206-208).

In an interesting reversal of imagery, Connie insists Mellors take down and destroy the enlarged framed portrait of his wedding photo. He smashes it and throws it in the fire (*LCL* 203-204). This is strongly analogous to Hester ripping off her scarlet letter and throwing it into the river. Both characters rip from themselves an object which, beyond the extent they are even aware of, has been incorporated into themselves, their self-image, their souls. Both have been destroyed dully, daily by the object in question. Both remove the repressive object in a dramatic fashion and—oh, so Romantically!—subject their confining symbols to destruction by one of the four elements.

Hester advises Dimmesdale to run away, and when he shows reluctance to do so alone, she impulsively tells him she will run away with him. Connie impulsively tells Mellors "I want to come and live here with you always, soon" (*LCL* 217). Dimmesdale is nervous but gains courage from Hester. Mellors is afraid to contemplate more than they already have.

The sun streams in on the lovers in the woods, and the morning sun illuminates Connie when she is dressing the next day (*LCL* 218). In both instances, this is the first

time in the scene that sunlight bathes the characters, and in both scenes it seems to imply bliss, a realization of basic happiness in the characters that they have not previously achieved. It's a new dawn, figuratively in Hawthorne, literally in Lawrence.

A process I've noticed throughout this study is Lawrence's extension of Hawthorne's insights, as Lawrence saw them. It is interesting that while in *The Scarlet Letter*, the plans the couple make are not fulfilled, indeed their relationship terminates in Dimmesdale's public death, the plans of the couple in *Lady Chatterley* are fulfilled, or at least are intimated to be. The novel ends with the couples separated, Mellors living in a farm in the country, waiting for his divorce from his wife to come through, Connie is pregnant with his child, living in Scotland with her sister, and awaiting the birth of the child she and Mellors conceived.

The tone, however, is hopeful. Though living in separate countries, Mellors has taken the farm "so that eventually he and Connie could have some small arm of their own" (*LCL* 308). Because he doesn't want her involved in the scandal of his divorce, he cannot see her until six months after it occurs. But though that's a long wait, it also means the time in which the return to each other will follow the spring. "So they would have to wait till the spring was in, till the baby was born, till the early summer came round again" (*LCL* 308). The touchstones of spring, with their attendant images of regeneration, and the baby, also a renewal of life, both of them promises for the future, point to a positive resolution. Lawrence has taken what is bleak and destructive in Hawthorne and turned it into something hopeful and positive. More important, he ends his novel looking forward to the promise of the future, rather than summing up the present: which might be his final transition in this work from Novelist to Romancer.

## CONCLUSION

Man is a thought-adventurer.

Man is a great venture in consciousness

-D. H. Lawrence, "Books"

Puritanism is a term that gets thrown around a lot. Along with "Victorianism" it is perhaps our number one derogatory designation. Puritanism implies a lot of things, of course, a sexual rigidity, a religious intolerance, but at its heart it implies a narrow-mindedness frustrating to human endeavor. It is always humanity's goal to strive both for something new and to more accurately understand something already known.

A form of Puritanism can invade literary scholarship, too. We can become too entrenched in seeing a work one way only, or ruling out all other possibilities. This can take the form of either a traditional interpretation, or an adherence to documents in which the author has stated his or her own purpose in the act of literary creation.

D. H. Lawrence attacked Puritanism on any number of levels. He did it when he wrote his novels, attacking outdated sexual codes. He did it in his critical writings when he attacked traditional methods of interpretation. How interesting that at this date we appear more resistant to his critical transgressions than his sexual ones.

One of the questions that most fascinates me is how a literary work is created. What prompts the mind to begin work on a poem, short story, or novel? Why does a work

take one form and not another? I think the questions work in two ways, examining what precedes a work, and thus also what that work contains.

It has struck me, from my first reading of *Lady Chatterley*, that *The Scarlet Letter* is the text Lawrence was acting on. The two sets of romantic triangles, the rigidity of sexual mores, the many people looking on and judging all added up to much the same text, to me. That Lawrence never cited one work as informing the other has always frustrated me, as has the complete lack of critical commentary on the subject.

What does this, ultimately, mean? How does it affect readings of *Lady Chatterley*? In the first place, it underlines the extent to which Lawrence saw society as a powerful, antagonistic force. If *Lady Chatterley* (which takes place at a time when couples can get divorced, free love is talked of openly, adultery is condoned) is read in light of *The Scarlet Letter* (set in a period when moral transgressions are linked to the Devil and subject to harsh, continual punishment), a deeper psychological torment can be read into the emotions of the characters.

It also illustrates one way in which a creative interpretation of a literary text leads to the creation of another work. If *The Scarlet Letter* prompted Lawrence towards *Lady Chatterley*, it was *The Scarlet Letter* as he saw it, not as the work has traditionally been read. Without Lawrence's deeply individualistic reading, he could not have created the *Lady Chatterley* that we have today, perhaps could not have created it at all.

Finally, it is fascinating to observe how a literary/artistic theory evolves. Hawthorne's work ends on a negative note. The couple is separated by death, Hester continues to live alone. Her daughter marries well in Europe, but Hester returns to the solitary life in the New England woods. Lawrence reads into this novel the dire

pronouncements of humanity and sees them as hidden from view to the casual reader. But then Lawrence puts those views to the forefront so that everybody can see them. Finally, in his novel, he allows for a more hopeful outcome. If he opens his novel with the statement "[t]he cataclysm has happened, we are in the ruins, we start to build up new habitats, to have new little hopes" (*LCL*1), which sounds a great deal like "*Destroy! destroy! destroy!*" hums the under-consciousness. *Love and produce! Love and produce* cackles the upper consciousness" (*Studies* 93), he has already made an advancement in that both statements, the negative and positive are conscious to the individual, who recognizes the capacity for both destruction and regeneration. This, in turn, allows him to end his novel on a tentatively happy note. Though not yet married, and thus still echoing *The Scarlet Letter*—"her only marriage and her one oath are with the old Roger" (*Studies* 109)—the ending of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is tentatively hopeful: "But a great deal of us is together, and we can but abide by it, and steer our courses to meet soon...with a hopeful heart" (*LCL* 313)

Responding to *The Scarlet Letter*, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* both continues the philosophical discussions about appropriate sexual action, personal repression, and the constraints of society, and extends these arguments to produce a new fictional work. It is part of the continuing process of inspiration and creation upon which literature depends.

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