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the Heart of the Individual Fighters": D.H.
Lawrence, The Great War, and the Trajectory of his
Novels

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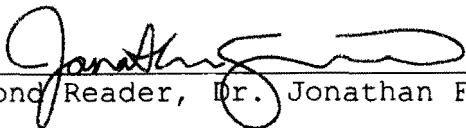
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Graduate Thesis

Abstract

In the wake of the Great War, modernist author D.H. Lawrence struggled with his beliefs about war and his fears about the changes taking place in his country. In this paper, written in four parts, I argue that Lawrence's two most famous novels, *Women in Love* (1920) and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), should be read as a trajectory of his feelings about the war. Because *Women in Love* was written, and rewritten, while the Great War was devastating England, the characters within the novel engage in spectacular scenes of violence, yet are reluctant to mention the word "war" at all. Conversely, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, published almost a decade later, clearly states the devastation of the war within the novel's first few sentences, and shows characters who are coping with the long-lasting effects that the war had on English society, and on Britain's landscape. After establishing that Lawrence's feelings about the war develop over the course of these two novels, I specifically focus on the way both novels reflect the war's long-lasting impact on nature and on the landscape, dedicating special attention to the different stages of the decline of the English ancestral home. By referencing Lawrence's personal letters, as well as war and trauma theory throughout, I argue that changes occurring to the English landscape and social structure were ominous and horrifying to Lawrence in the face of the war, but in the wake of it, there was no choice but to embrace those changes.

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Graduate Thesis

May 2012

“It is the Business of the Artist to Follow it Home to the Heart of the Individual Fighters”:

D.H. Lawrence, The Great War, and the Trajectory of his Novels

Part I: D.H. Lawrence’s Reactions to the Great War:

Critics who write about D.H. Lawrence’s reaction to the Great War almost always point to his famous assessment of the war as a “nightmare.” Yet for Lawrence, and indeed for most other people living in Europe during the First World War, the word “nightmare” is not adequate to explain the mixed feelings and various horrors that those living through the war experienced. Lawrence was deeply affected by the war despite his not being directly involved in it and transmitted his strong anti-war feelings through most of his writings. However, some view Lawrence’s opinions about the war as problematic since he often expressed a reasonable desire to escape the horrors of the war. For example, Paul Delany’s 1978 biography, appropriately named *D.H. Lawrence’s Nightmare*, states that Lawrence was “completely alienated from his country’s war effort” and that he “tried so hard to stay aloof from the world of trench warfare and the myth-making that it engendered” (x). While the letters written during the war years do reflect Lawrence’s desire to escape its horrors, his novels prove that he was not “completely alienated” from it. Lawrence outwardly denounced the war and openly spoke about the effect it had on him, but he also did more than that. His novels give full insight into the various forms that the violence of war can take; they focus on the effects that war has on the body, on human interaction, on society, and on the landscape.

Perhaps, to fully understand Lawrence's novels written during and after the Great War, it is first important to reassess one's understanding of war literature. For many, war literature comes with a set of expectations: readers might anticipate scenes of bloody violence and frontline battle; they might crave gunfire, death, and first-person accounts of fear. However, war literature does not have to be any of those things. The absence of front-line scenes of gore and battle does not prove total "alienation" from the war, but rather draws attention to the more long-lasting effects of war on society and on nature. Moreover, it is not necessary to be present on the front lines of any battle to experience the repercussions of war; those who are sensitive to the horrors of war and who refuse to view war as anything less than a nightmare can experience it in their own way, which is exactly what modernists like Lawrence did during the First World War. Trudi Tate argues that the job of modernist writers was to "attemp[t] to bear witness to the trauma of war and its consequences" (1). She also states that "The formal and theoretical aspects of modernism have been closely analyzed, but its place in the history of its own time has received surprisingly little attention. Rarely is the fiction of Woolf or Lawrence read alongside the war memoirs of returned soldiers such as Blunden or Graves" (2). As Tate contends, "modernism after 1914 begins to look like a peculiar but significant form of war writing" (3), and therefore, it is important to view Lawrence as one who wrote about what he witnessed and what he felt during the war, despite his not directly participating in it. Thus, Lawrence's "nightmare" was not just about directly facing the horrors of the war, but also, was the burden of being one of the first people to realize its long-lasting effects.

In a letter to his friend Lady Ottoline Morrell, written on February 1, 1915, Lawrence states, "After the War, the soul of the people will be so maimed and so injured that it is horrible to think of. And this shall be the new hope: that there shall be a life wherein the struggle shall not

be for money or for power, but for individual freedom and common effort towards good” (94). It seems strange at first that Lawrence is thinking and writing about the end of war only six months into it. Yet it is important to realize that unlike many of his contemporaries who were caught in the myth of the war as glorious and righteous, Lawrence predicted the long-lasting effects that it would have on “the soul” of his people. Paul Fussell, author of one of the most important works about World War One, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, famously states that “Every war is ironic because every war is worse than expected” (7). He later specifies that “One reason the Great War was more ironic than any other is that its beginning was more innocent” (18). This is not to say that the war did not stem from violence, but it does draw attention to the vast misunderstandings that people had about war in the early twentieth century. Fussell continues:

But the Great War took place in what was, compared with ours, a static world, where the values appeared stable and where the meanings of abstractions seemed permanent and reliable. Everyone knew what Glory was, and what Honor meant. It was not until eleven years after the war that Hemingway could declare in *A Farewell to Arms* that “abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates.” In the summer of 1914 no one would have understood what on earth he was talking about. (21)

Lawrence lived in the society that Fussell argues would not believe that concepts like “Glory” and “Honor” would lose meaning during and after the war. Therefore, it is notable that Lawrence had the foresight to look beyond the dated assumptions of war as glorious and honorable, and to see the long-lasting effects that it would have on national identity and on the landscape.

Of course, modern thinkers understand that war is not “glorious” or “honorable,” but in the early twentieth century, this was a new concept, and writers of the time were responsible for transmitting this message. Poets such as Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon are traditionally credited with subverting misconceptions of what Owen calls “The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est Pro patria mori*” (Owen lines 27-28) and proving that it is not “sweet and fitting to die for one’s country” (DiYanni 1166). Therefore, modern readers value this message in many hallmark works of the early twentieth century, and seek to comprehend the horrors of war through the act of reading about them. However, one must not expect that all works confront war in the same way that trench poets like Owen do. Unfortunately, Lawrence is often not viewed as embedding these same messages into his works because his novels often do not revolve around battles or direct discussions of the horror of war. It is sometimes assumed that his novels are therefore not “about” the war, yet Lawrence’s war and post-war novels are as much about the war as any other novel written during the time: they transmit the same message as Owen and Sassoon through their language and through their representations of other kinds of homefront violence.

Moreover, Lawrence is severely underrated as a major voice of twentieth-century war literature. While a plethora of studies exist that examine Lawrence’s feelings about the war, his reactions to the war, and his writings about the war, not many people view him as a major voice of or participant in the war. Many studies have been done on well-known modernists and their participation in the war through literature; Virginia Woolf, Ernest Hemingway, T.S. Eliot, and Gertrude Stein, just to name a few, are commonly analyzed as major literary participators in the First World War, yet Lawrence is often marginalized. For example, Margot Norris’ *Writing War in the Twentieth Century*, which analyzes modern warfare throughout the Twentieth Century, does not mention Lawrence or any of his works at all. If Norris is setting out to write “a ‘century’

critique” (5) that “follows a chronological trajectory through the periods of the century to include modernist, avant-garde, and trench poetry of World War I” (5), Lawrence should certainly be included. The study of Lawrence’s novels within the context of the First World War should not be only limited to his passionate reactions to it; though they give a helpful understanding of his position in the war, they do not give him the status that he deserves as a literary war participant.

Lawrence’s reactions to the war are unique because he immediately realized that the war would mean total destruction for England, psychologically, physically, and socially. When Delany mentions Lawrence’s first reactions to the war, he does so in a way that negates his understanding of its more permanent repercussions: “So Lawrence recalled the shock of the Great War; but he did so six months after it began... At the time, how could even the most sensitive and prescient observer guess what lay ahead? ... In August 1914, no one expected that the war would last over four years, that the machine gun and massed artillery would lead to a death toll of ten million soldiers” (12). However, it was precisely Lawrence’s understanding of mechanized warfare that led him to understand and predict the destruction the war would have. John Worthen, author of a more recent biography on Lawrence called *D.H. Lawrence: The Life of an Outsider*, points out that

Lawrence, too, knew more than most civilians about the mechanized nature of modern warfare, having observed the Bavarian army on manoeuvres in 1913...The coming war, he suggested, would be ‘an affair entirely of machines, with men attached to the machines as the subordinate part thereof, as the butt is the part of a rifle’. It is not the accuracy of his prediction that is so surprising, but the way in which he foresaw such a development so keenly, so early. ‘My God, why am I a man at all, when this is all, this machinery piercing and tearing?’ (149)

Lawrence had a deep fear of mechanization that pervades many of his war works, and this fear is clearly a result of his early understanding of modern mechanized warfare, which many people of the time would not fully understand until they witnessed the Great War's devastating after-effects.

Overall, John Worthen presents a much more accurate depiction of Lawrence's feelings about the war by juxtaposing Lawrence's first reactions to the war with the majority of his contemporaries. He states:

London had been 'packed with cheering masses' on the afternoon and evening of the day war was declared... But Lawrence felt nothing but 'immense pain everywhere.' Soon after the declaration of war, he wrote: 'The war is just hell for me. I don't see why I should be so disturbed—but I am. I can't get away from it for a minute: [I] live in a sort of coma, like one of those nightmares where you can't move.' Why should the first two weeks of the war have had such a profound impact on him? (150)

Worthen argues that the war had "such a profound impact" on Lawrence because of his ability to see what would come of the war. He continues, "Lawrence formulated his opinions long before trench warfare started... When the real 'war and its horror came, they did no more than confirm what he had felt from the start... he was the first to grasp what an extraordinary moment it was, in culture, consciousness, and modern memory" (150). Lawrence understood that what was at stake was not just the lives of millions of people but also the entire English way of life; its landscapes, its values, and its social structure. Many may have believed that the "glory" of war would confirm and build up the English identity and that it would make England more powerful than it had ever been. However, Lawrence was already experiencing a kind of nostalgia for the past that most would not until the war was over. He believed that "England belonged to the past,

and he did not intend to drown along with it" (Worthen 166). Thus, his writings all portray feelings of nostalgia, even *Women in Love*, which was being written as the war was going on. Lawrence did not need the war to be over to start reflecting on the changes that were occurring in England; he sensed them as soon as the war was declared.

Thus, Lawrence took on a familiar burden during these times; although he was unable to participate on the front-lines of the war, he could still fight against it through his writing by drawing attention to the war's effect on the home front. In a letter to Harriet Monroe, written on November 17, 1914, Lawrence states: "The war is dreadful. It is the business of the artist to follow it home to the heart of the individual fighters—not to talk in armies and nations and numbers—but to track it home—home—their war—and it's at the bottom of almost every Englishman's heart—the war—the desire of war—the *will* to war—and at the bottom of every German's" (80). This often-quoted passage comes from a letter in which Lawrence asks Harriet Monroe to critique his war poem. This shows that Lawrence, just like many other authors and artists of the time, reacted to the war the best way that he knew how: through primarily creative outlets. This is a point that Paul Fussell also makes in a chapter entitled "Oh What a Literary War": "The point is this: finding the war 'indescribable' in any but the available language of traditional literature, those who recalled it had to do so in known literary terms. Joyce, Eliot, Lawrence, Pound, Yeats were not present at the front to induct them into new idioms which might have done the job better" (174). Thus, the most important information that one can gather about the war often comes from literature written by authors such as Lawrence who did not participate in battle. It is important to understand that since Lawrence considered it his "business [as an] artist" to write about the war, he was participating in it in the most active way possible despite his absence on the battlefield.

Lawrence reacted strongly to the war morally and emotionally because of its effect on the individual and on the country as a whole. In a letter written to Lady Cynthia Asquith on January 30, 1915, Lawrence most cogently expressed his own feelings about the declaration of the war:

The war finished me: it was the spear through the side of all sorrows and hopes... It seems like another life—we *were* happy... Then we came down to Barrow-in Furness, and saw that war was declared... the amazing, vivid, visionary beauty of everything [was] heightened by the immense pain everywhere. And since then, since I came back, things have not existed for me. I have spoken to no one, I have touched no one, I have seen no one... My heart has been as cold as a lump of dead earth, all this time, because of the War. (91-92)

Lawrence grew increasingly frustrated with the war, and exactly three months later, on April 30, 1915, he wrote to Lady Ottoline Morrell, saying: “I almost wish I could go to the war—not to shoot: I have vowed an eternal oath that I won’t shoot in this war, not even if I am shot. I should like to be a bus conductor at the front—anything to escape this... But hell is slow and creeping and viscous and insect-teeming: as is this Europe now, this England” (106). It was at this point that Lawrence began to express a strong desire to escape to America. Worthen argues that after Lawrence lost confidence in England, he began to view America as “not just somewhere his work could be published, but seemed to offer a public in which he might believe and a place where he might belong” (166). As mentioned, Lawrence’s desire to escape the war is problematic, and even more so since Lawrence could not go to America because he decided not to “attest: that is, swear the oath of allegiance as a military recruit and thus enroll as ready for military service when called up” (Worthen 166), which meant he could not get his passport. Lawrence wrote about why he refused to attest in a letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell on December

12th, 1915: “I felt, though I *hated* the situation almost to *madness*, so vile and false and degrading, such an utter travesty of action on my part, waiting even to be attested that I might be rejected, still I felt, when suddenly I broke out of the queue... that I had triumphed” (123). This shows that Lawrence’s desire to escape England was superseded by stronger feelings about the immorality of the war; though he passionately wished to remove himself from the “nightmare,” he knew that he had to stay and endure the horrors of war to fully recover from it. He ends his letter by saying, “It is only the immediate present which frightens me and bullies me... Let me only be still, and know we can force nothing, and compel nothing, can only nourish in the darkness the unuttered butts of the new life that shall be” (123). Lawrence believed that “new life” would come after the war, and he knew that he had to stay in England to experience it.

Part II: Lawrence’s War Novels as Trajectory:

Just as with any other work of literature, Lawrence’s most famous novels have been approached from a variety of critical perspectives, although his most famous works, *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, are rarely analyzed as war literature because his characters often do not directly mention the horrors of the war. Rather, both *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* have been frequently analyzed within the context of sexuality and desire for a variety of reasons. First, it is difficult to ignore Lawrence’s struggles with his novels’ censorship, which has often been attributed to the overt sexuality in his work. As John Worthen points out, Lawrence’s focus on bodily desires is one of the many reasons that he was viewed as an “outsider” during his lifetime: “What made his writing exceptional in his time—and notorious, to the extent of bringing about his ‘erotic reputation’ and causing trouble with publishers and printers in book after book—was the way it centered on articulating the experiences of the body” (xxii). Moreover, Lawrence’s focus on open sexuality and the body in his novels combined with

his frank opinions about sexuality in his letters lead to frequent psychoanalytical criticism that delves deeper into issues of repressed homosexuality.

Though these are compelling modes of analysis, viewing Lawrence's novels as purely sexual or psychological often minimizes his important anti-war polemic. Lawrence uses tropes such as sexuality, violence, and the landscape to transmit his messages about war and the destruction of humanity. Although the correlation between Lawrence's own feelings about the war and the characters' feelings about war is present within many of his works, they should not be limited to biographical readings, which have also been popular. Rather, one should understand that his novels accurately reflect how the country was changing because of his knowledge about the violence and destruction of modern mechanized warfare. Moreover, since Lawrence was immune to the myth of war, he had a clear, unimpeded view of the destruction that the war had on England and on the English people, and he was struggling to accept these changes through his writing.

Although they were written eight crucial years apart, *Women in Love* (1920) and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) deal with the war in similar ways. In both, the effects of the war are projected primarily onto the landscape and onto nature. Although the characters in both express strong verbal opinions about their world, it is through their actual interactions with the changing landscape that one is able to understand the texts as purely anti-war novels. Without these interactions, one could gloss over the anti-war messages completely, since Lawrence's characters rarely outwardly discuss the war and actually, rarely speak the word "war" at all. By analyzing these two novels, published almost ten years apart, through their treatment of the landscape and nature, it becomes clear that they provide an accurate trajectory of Lawrence's observations about the effects of war, and therefore of the effects of the war overall. Lawrence was writing

(and re-writing) *Women in Love* as the war was occurring; thus, the novel reflects the absolute chaos and violence of the war through its characters' treatment of the landscape and nature.

Conversely, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* depicts a landscape that has already been violated by the horrors of war: the once-powerful estate has decayed, and the land has been deforested. The later novel therefore does not reflect the same violence and destruction of the war at its most destructive points, but rather reflects the physical and social changes occurring within the English landscape that Lawrence and his contemporaries were just beginning to confront and accept ten years after the war.

Part III: Nature and Landscape in *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*:

In his biography of Lawrence, Paul Delany touches on Lawrence's relationship with nature, but argues that nature was an escape from the war for him:

Lawrence himself took refuge in the purity of nature—the only possible antidote, for him, to the vileness of man... Such radically opposed realities compose the special tone of *Women in Love*—its shifting back and forth between visions of a silent world, purged of human intrusion, and scenes of spectacular emotional violence. But the war itself Lawrence chose to leave out, except as a kind of transparent medium in which the whole action was suspended: "I should wish the time to remain unfixed," he wrote in his Forward, "so that the bitterness of the war may be taken for granted in the characters."

(Delany 227)

Delany describes the relationship between nature and the war in *Women in Love* as if they existed in two separate spheres, where nature serves as a "refuge" from the horrors of war. However, when considering that the most violent scenes in the novel occur either within or against nature, one sees that the role of nature in *Women in Love* begs for the opposite reading. In

both novels, man transforms nature into a scene of violence, and although Lawrence did fear mechanization and favored a return to the natural world, he realized early in the war years that nature could not help man escape from the war. Thus, in his novels, characters act out their violent emotions on nature and on the landscape.

In *Women in Love*, Lawrence dedicates entire chapters to scenes of spectacular violence that are either caused by nature, or that take place against nature. For example, in "Rabbit" and "Moony," Lawrence shows man's ability to transform innocent and beautiful nature into violence, and in "Water-Party" and "Snowed Up," he shows that nature does not act as a refuge for man. In the beginning of "Moony," both Birkin and Ursula are described as being dejected, alone, and brooding. As both separately wander through the woods, it seems as if they are finding peace or comfort in nature, but the scene suddenly fills with rage. As Ursula walks through the woods, she reflects on the escape that nature offers: "Among the trees, far from any human beings, there was a sort of magic peace. The more one could find a pure loneliness, with no taint of people, the better one felt. She was in reality terrified, horrified in her apprehension of people" (Lawrence 245). Though this scene can easily be read as an escape from the violence of warring mankind by retreating to nature, Lawrence injects violence into this scene to demonstrate that even if something is not inherently violent, man will make it so. The moon appears as an ominous presence, and Ursula reacts with fear: "She started, noticing something on her right hand, between the tree trunks. It was like a great presence, watching her, dodging her. She started violently. It was only the moon, risen through the thin trees. But it seemed so mysterious, with its white and deathly smile. There was no avoiding it" (245). As she walks on, Ursula "cower[s] from the white planet," and "suffer[s] from being exposed to it" (245). Finally, Ursula seems to escape the omnipresence of the moon, but "She could feel her soul crying out in

her, lamenting desolately” (246) and she stumbles upon Birkin, who is also preoccupied with the moon, but he is not running from it; he is destroying it.

When she first sees Birkin, “He was touching unconsciously the dead husks of flowers as he passed by, and talking disconnectedly to himself. ‘You can’t go away,’ he was saying. ‘There is no away. You only withdraw upon yourself.’ He threw a dead flower-husk on to the water” (246). Of course, there are struggles that Birkin is escaping from within the context of the novel, but it is difficult to not analyze Birkin’s assertion that “You can’t go away” within the context of the war. It is almost as if Birkin is responding to Ursula’s flight from the moon; try as they both might to find refuge within nature, it cannot protect them from the changing world. This is both Lawrence’s message, and Birkin’s realization, so Birkin reacts violently by throwing stones at the reflection of the moon, symbolically trying to destroy the oppressive, controlling force. Birkin continually tries to violate the reflection of the moon by pelting it with stones and distorting its image in different ways. However, Birkin is powerless to this fear: “at the centre, the heart of all, was still a vivid, incandescent quivering of a white moon not quite destroyed, a white body of fire writhing and striving and not even now broken open, not yet violated. It seemed to be drawing itself together with strange, violent pang, in blind effort. It was getting stronger, it was re-asserting itself, the inviolable moon” (247). Birkin continues his onslaught, and seems to bring the force to submission. Mark Kinkead-Weekes views this as a form of healing: “Birkin’s explosions momentarily obliterate the moon, but again it re-forms. Then he throws stone after stone. This, if we submit imaginatively to the language and the rhythm, is an extraordinary experience of violence. Yet after and through it comes a strange peace and tenderness... the moon looks different. It no longer seems hard, triumphant, a thing of power”

(233). This calming feeling lasts just long enough for Ursula to reveal herself, and she and Birkin begin to discuss their fears about their world.

Through their conversation, the connection between the war and violence towards nature becomes clear:

Again there was a space of silence. Ursula looked at the moon. It had gathered itself together, and was quivering slightly. "Was it good for you, to be alone?" she asked.

"Perhaps. Not that I know much. But I got over a good deal. Did you do anything important?" "No. I looked at England, and thought I'd done with it." "Why England?" he asked in surprise. "I don't know, it came like that." "It isn't a question of nations," he said. "France is far worse." "Yes, I know. I felt I'd done with it all." (249)

This is one of the few instances in the novel where the characters seem to be speaking about the war directly. Ursula's admission here that she thought about leaving England to escape the effects of war makes one realize what she was really fleeing from in the previous pages. Ursula tries to hide and escape from the moon, which represents the war, and Birkin tries (unsuccessfully) to destroy it. Thus, Lawrence strongly demonstrates that man's escape to nature to hide from the war is not possible, and that it too, becomes a scene and source of violence.

Nature and the landscape are certainly the vehicles through which Lawrence transmits his messages about the war in both *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. However, there are apparent differences in the way nature reflects the war in the two novels because they were written eight years apart. While Lawrence was writing *Women in Love* and trying to get it published, the war was raging on, and he was constantly revising the text to match his feelings about the war. By the time that *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was published however, the war had been over for about ten years and Lawrence and his contemporaries were just beginning to

confront and adapt to the destruction of the war. Thus, in the later novel, Lawrence transmits the war's effects through the decimated landscape, and although nature is not nearly as violent as it is in *Women in Love*, it does act as a representation of war's violence, and the characters must exist within it. The Chatterley estate is positioned between urban life and a vast wooded area, and Clifford Chatterley, who is paralyzed and can only get around the estate in a mechanized wheelchair, has a true love of the woods and nature; thus, the novel constantly juxtaposes the natural and the mechanical worlds and demonstrates their need to co-exist in post-war England.

In chapter five of the novel, Lawrence juxtaposes the mechanical and natural worlds within the decimated landscape of the Chatterley estate. The chapter begins: "On a frosty morning with a little February sun Clifford and Connie went for a walk across the park to the wood. That is, Clifford chuffed in his motor-chair, and Connie walked beside him. The hard air was still sulphureous... so that it was like being inside an enclosure, always inside" (Lawrence 41). The description of the landscape continues, "The sheep coughed in the rough sere grass of the park, where frost lay bluish in the sockets of the tufts" (41). From the first descriptions of the land, one recognizes the polluted air and the hardened grass as signs of a decaying landscape, which draws attention to the effects of war and industrialization. Moreover, an ecocritical analysis of these scenes revolving completely around the landscape draws important attention to the connection between the landscape in the novel and the landscape after the First World War. According to Cheryll Glotfelty, a forerunner in ecocritical literary analysis, "all ecological criticism shares the fundamental premise that human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it. Ecocriticism takes as its subject the interconnections between nature and culture... it has one foot in literature and the other on land; as a theoretical discourse, it negotiates between the human and the nonhuman" (xix). When considering "the

interconnections between nature and culture” in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, the war’s effect on the landscape is important, especially since Lawrence depicts nature so violently in *Women in Love*. In the later novel, Lawrence has come to terms with nature’s inability to escape the effects of war, and emphasizes that through both direct descriptions of the landscape and Clifford’s interaction with it.

Many important descriptions of the wooded landscape follow that emphasize Clifford’s love of the woods, which represent pre-war England, and his hate of the destruction of the woods:

In the wood, everything was motionless, the old leaves on the ground keeping the frost on their under-side. A jay called harshly; many little birds fluttered. But there was no game—no pheasants. They had been killed off during the war, and the wood had been left unprotected... Clifford loved the wood. He loved the old oak trees. He felt they were his own through generations. He wanted to protect them. He wanted this place inviolate, shut off from the world. The chair chuffed slowly up the incline, rocking and jolting on the frozen clods. And suddenly on the left came a clearing, where was nothing but a ravel of dead bracken... This was one of the places that Sir Geoffrey had cut during the war, for trench timber... it was a breach in the pure seclusion of the wood. It let in the world... This denuded place always made Clifford curiously angry. He had been through the war, had seen what it meant. But he didn’t get really angry till he saw this bare hill. (Lawrence 41-42)

The landscape has not only been deforested to provide timber for the trenches in the First World War but all of its “game” has also been killed to provide for the war. Both of these forms of decay represent the significant changes occurring in England after the war; the forest, which was

once a powerful representation of the land that the Chatterleys owned, has been violently hacked apart, and the game, which once served as a luxury sport, has been stripped away as well.

Moreover, Clifford “hate[s] Sir Geoffrey” (42) because his willingness to destroy the landscape to help supply the war has permanently altered it for future generations and has therefore, made it impossible for Clifford to escape the horrors of the war completely. Clifford’s ability to traverse the landscape is already limited by his paralysis and his dependence on the motorized wheelchair, and in many ways his finding the landscape itself destroyed upon his arrival home is doubly crippling.

Clifford recognizes that the forest is an extension of “the old England” (42) and desperately wants to preserve it despite his disability. As he tells Connie, the woods far predate his family owning Wragby and therefore, it is the landscape itself that represents the nostalgic past for him, not his family’s attachment to it: “There was a certain pathos. The wood still had some of the mystery of wild old England. But Sir Geoffrey’s cuttings during the war had given it a blow... The place remembered, still remembered... ‘I mind more, not having a son, when I come here, than any other time,’ he said... ‘One *must* preserve some of the old England!’” (43). Though the subtext of this conversation is Clifford’s regret about his impotence, the larger concern that Clifford illustrates is the way in which changes to the physical landscape also cause societal changes. The deforestation of the land and the inability to pass the land down to an heir are both forms of impotence that the war has caused; Clifford’s land, and his ability to populate the land have both been destroyed as a direct result of the Great War.

Lawrence’s dislike of mechanization can be seen later in the novel when Clifford’s mechanized wheelchair is again juxtaposed with the natural world. Though the mechanical and the natural coexist in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* in a way that they cannot in *Women in Love*, it is

obvious nonetheless that Lawrence still believes that they clash. At the beginning of chapter thirteen, Clifford is in high spirits due to a combination of his success with the mining industry, and his budding relationship with Mrs. Bolton. Because Clifford has found a way to embrace mechanized, modern life and has found a woman who makes him feel good about himself, it seems that he has earned back his potency. The narrator even emphasizes this, saying, "It was cruel for Clifford, while the world bloomed, to have to be helped from chair to bath-chair. But he had forgotten, and even seemed to have a certain conceit of himself in his lameness" (179). On setting out for the woods, Clifford "was in rather high feather" and he feels that "It was almost like the old days, before the war" (180). Yet in many ways, Clifford has changed; in conversation with Connie while walking through the woods, he asserts that "the industry comes before the individual" (180) and seems to have embraced the industrialized world completely, when Connie begins to argue with him about the dehumanizing properties of industrial life. It seems as if Lawrence uses Clifford to represent contradictory beliefs about modern mechanization; on one hand, Clifford benefits from industry because it gives him power in the changing world and allows him to move around the world despite his paralysis, yet he must also succumb to its unnatural and dehumanizing properties.

Though it may seem at first that Lawrence has reconciled his fear of mechanization vicariously through Clifford, Lawrence expresses his strong opinions against mechanization by punishing Clifford's newfound trust in the mechanical realm. As Clifford is driving along, his wheelchair stops, and is unable to climb the steep hills: "It was a steep and jolty climb. The chair pugged slowly, in a struggling, unwilling fashion. Still, she nosed her way up unevenly, till she came to where the hyacinths were all around her, then she balked, struggled, jerked a little way out of the flowers, then stopped" (186). Not only does the motorized chair break down but it

does so after running over tufts of flowers; Lawrence wants the reader to make the connection between mechanization and the destruction of landscape, and emphasizes this point again on the next page by referring to the “mashed flowers” (186) that Clifford has run over. Moreover, Clifford’s loss of control over his mechanical object returns his quality of impotence, which Lawrence highlights by referring to the wheelchair using only feminine pronouns. Finally, to especially highlight Clifford’s impotence, Mellors, the man who is having an affair with Clifford’s wife, is the one who comes to push him up the hill to safety. However, this is not only Lawrence’s tirade against the mechanized world but also against the aristocracy. After Mellors pushes Clifford home, Connie berates Clifford for being ungrateful and for acting in the superior role to Mellors, despite his dependency on him, saying: “‘And your nasty, sterile want of common sympathy is in the worst taste imaginable. *Noblesse oblige!* You and your ruling class!’... ‘You, and *rule!*’ she said. ‘You don’t rule, don’t flatter yourself. You...make people work for you for two pounds a week, or threaten them with starvation... Why you’re dried up!’” (193-194) Thus, Lawrence rages against the war, against mechanized life, and aristocratic values at the same time, and in doing so, has exaggerated Clifford’s impotence more than it has ever been; even ten years after the war, Lawrence does not allow a character such as Clifford, who believes in mechanization, to exist comfortably within his anti-war polemic.

Part IV: The Decline of the English Ancestral Home:

In addition to the effects of the war on nature and the landscape, Lawrence also recognized the decline occurring in English society overall during the war years. Therefore, in both *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, the most obvious signs of decay appear through the treatment of ancestral homes, which are a sign of status for the aristocracy in pre-war England. Ancestral homes represent the past in all British novels, pre-war or post-war; they are

grandiose signifiers of power and prestige within British social class hierarchies, and almost always stand in as a nostalgic representation of the past. Therefore, when post-war novels represent the decline or decay of an ancestral estate, the author is reflecting on the war's destruction of traditional English values and social structure. Authors of post-war novels, such as Lawrence, render the ancestral home as a place of destruction; in a world that is decimated in every way by the horrors of the First World War, the ancestral home, though it may be physically intact, no longer contains social or cultural value. Moreover, the decline of the estate also indicates major changes for the family living in the estate; the power or status that the people living inside it once had declines along with it.

Women in Love contains two examples of declining ancestral homes: the Criches' estate, Shortlands, and Hermione Roddice's estate, Breadalby. Lawrence dedicates a chapter to both in the novel, and each of those chapters begins with a long description of what the estate looks like. When describing Shortlands, the narrator states:

It was a long, low old house, a sort of manor farm... Shortlands looked across a sloping meadow that might be a park, because of the large solitary trees that stood here and there, across the water of the narrow lake, at the wooded hill that successfully hid the colliery valley beyond, but did not quite hide the rising smoke. Nevertheless, the scene was rural and picturesque, very peaceful, and the house had a charm of its own. (Lawrence 23)

This description, which focuses on the beautiful outward appearance of the ancestral home, also clarifies that the home is a status symbol since it hides the coal mines beyond it where lower social classes were likely to live. However, because the house does not "quite hide the rising smoke," the house on the hill is not completely immune to the influence of the coal mines. This also foreshadows Gerald Crich's decision to take over the mines and modernize them after his

father's death; an act that truly subverts the "old world" status of Shortlands. Other hints of Shortlands' decline also appear within the first description of the estate: "[Shortlands] was crowded now with the family and the wedding guests. The father, who was not well, withdrew to rest. Gerald was host. He stood in the homely entrance hall, friendly and easy, attending to the men" (23). Mr. Crich's absence from something as important as a wedding indicates major change in Shortlands' future; when his death leaves Gerald in control of the estate, Gerald must make changes to match changes occurring in the world around him.

Similarly, the initial description of Hermione's estate is also marked by an absent father, indicating another form of decline:

Breadalby was a Georgian house with Corinthian pillars, standing among the softer, greener hills of Derbyshire... In front, it looked over a lawn, over a few trees, down to a string of fish-ponds in the hollow of the silent park... It was a very quiet place... Silent and forsaken, the golden stucco showed between the trees, the house-front looked down the park, unchanged and unchanging. Of late, however, Hermione had lived a good deal at the house... Her father was mostly absent, abroad, she was either alone in the house, with her visitors... or she had with her her brother, a bachelor, and a Liberal member of Parliament. (Lawrence 82)

Moreover, Birkin later describes Breadalby as "deserted, romantic, belonging to the past" and says "what a horrible, dead prison Breadalby really was, what an intolerable confinement, the peace! Yet it was better than the sordid scrambling conflict of the present" (97). Though the narrator says that Breadalby's outward appearance is "unchanged and unchanging," and that it "belong[s] to the past," Hermione's solitude in the ancestral home from which her father is often absent indicates that major changes are taking place. The reason for her father's absence is never

specified, but since Hermione's brother has been left in charge of the estate, it is clear that the father is abandoning his familial duties. If her brother, who is a "Liberal member of Parliament," has taken the place of her father, who has chosen to abdicate his position at home to travel "abroad," then this indicates an overall decline within the aristocracy and the English estate. The father's absence indicates that Breadalby is no longer functioning through old aristocratic values, but at least Hermione's estate is a place where political ideas are discussed and debated, which allows it to maintain some function in the changing post-war world. Though Hermione is throwing a party at Breadalby, which may seem as trivial as Mr. Crich's party at Shortlands, Hermione's party is one in which "The talk was very often political or sociological, and interesting, curiously anarchistic. There was an accumulation of the powerful force in the room, powerful and destructive. Everything seems to be thrown into the melting pot, and it seemed to Ursula that they were all witches, helping the pot to bubble" (Lawrence 90). During these political conversations, the characters recognize the changes that have resulted from the war: they mention that " 'Class barriers are breaking down!' " (94), and at one point there is a discussion "on the whole quite intellectual and artificial, about a new state, a new world of man. Supposing this old social state *were* broken and destroyed, then, out of the chaos, what then?" (102). Thus, while at Breadalby, characters recognize the same changes that Lawrence recognized in his own society because of the war.

Because of Lawrence's indictment of the aristocratic industrial class however, more obvious signs of decline can be seen in relation to the Shortlands estate than can be seen through Breadalby. Unlike Breadalby, Shortlands does not serve any positive function in the post-war world; Gerald, who is in control of Shortlands because of his father's absence, has bourgeois industrialist values. Lawrence ultimately punishes Gerald Crich, just as he does Clifford

Chatterley, for participating in the rape of the landscape and the acceleration of decline through industrialization. Thus, Shortlands becomes the setting for increasingly violent and destructive scenes, and therefore, is in a constant state of decay and change from its original grandiose status. Anne Wright's *Literature of Crisis, 1910-1922* also discusses the potential changes in Shortlands, arguing, "Old Mr. Crich's annual party, held at Shortlands for the people of the neighbourhood, distils the essence of the myth of pre-war England... [this] encapsulates in its social rituals the assurance of continued stability; but there are, to counter that expectation, already hints that Crich, and in him the old order, is dying" (119). The chapter that she is referring to, "Water-Party," recounts the drowning of Gerald's sister Diana, and a doctor's young son. The tragedy interrupts the narrative of the party in a shocking way and further solidifies the decline of the Shortlands estate. Not only is Mr. Crich dying, but there are also other tragedies occurring on his property that makes its decline obvious to the entire neighborhood. Shortly after the bodies are removed from the lake, the people express their shock that something so horrible could happen at Shortlands: "Over all the outlying district was a hush of dreadful excitement on that Sunday morning. The colliery people felt as if this catastrophe had happened directly to themselves, indeed they were more shocked and frightened than if their own men had been killed. Such a tragedy at Shortlands, the high home of the district!" (Lawrence 190) The strange pleasure that the community receives from the tragedy reflects their understanding of the equaling of social classes; the decline of the estate through death and tragedy removes its superior status.

Wright further explains that this scene can and should be read in relation to the violence of war: "It is indeed... the specificity of the violent interruption of death into the festive occasion, in the drowning of the young couple, which invite a reading of this episode as the 'outbreak of war' in *Women in Love*... In fact, death in *Women in Love* must be read, constantly, in the context

of the war” (121). In other words, one expects a chapter about a party to be festive, light-hearted, and fun, yet in a post-war novel such as Lawrence’s those feelings are not allowed to exist for too long without the reality of war’s violence interrupting them. Thus, the violent and unnecessary death of the young man and woman convey the unpredictability and horror of death, both within the war and outside of it, while also subtly hinting at the meaninglessness of traditions, like an annual party, within the context of war.

Moreover, the death of the children speeds up Mr. Crich’s illness, his death, and the inevitable decline of the estate. While his father is getting sicker, Gerald becomes increasingly concerned about inheriting Shortlands. The narrator says that “as the father drifted more and more out of life, Gerald experienced more and more a sense of exposure... Whilst his father lived, Gerald was not responsible for the world” (Lawrence 220-221). Gerald, who represents modern and industrialized life when juxtaposed to his father, who represents “the old order” (Wright 119) is terrified at the thought of inheriting a physical representation of the past. Lawrence uses the language of inheritance in this chapter to explain the differences between Gerald and his father. He first states, “He did not inherit an established order and a living idea. The whole unifying idea of mankind seemed to be dying with his father” (221), and later continues, “And now, with something of the terror of a destructive child, he saw himself on the point of inheriting his own destruction” (221). Gerald worries about two different kinds of inheritance here: physical and emotional inheritance; yet both lead him to the realization that he must pioneer the changes to his family legacy within the post-war world. In a world that is quickly changing, he is the one who will be the first to abandon the myths of pre-war England in his family.

Gerald willingly relinquishes the Christian, pastoral, and Edenic myths that his father

represents. Although Anne Wright analyzes “The Industrial Magnate” in detail to explain that “Shortlands is at the centre of the novel’s analysis of a mechanistic, industrialised society” and that “Gerald is ‘The Industrial Magnate’ of *Women in Love*” (Wright 124), she does not track the way in which the chapter details which myths are passing away to allow Gerald to gain power through his industry. Lawrence makes it clear throughout this chapter that it is not only Mr. Crich who is dying, but all of the myths of the pre-war era are dying with him: “But now his pity, with his life, was wearing thin, and the dread, almost amounting to horror, was rising into being... he would die, as an insect when its shell is cracked. This was his final resource. Others would live on, and know the living death, the ensuing process of hopeless chaos. He would not. He denied death its victory” (Lawrence 215). Moreover, since Mr. Crich “had felt very often a real dislike” for Gerald because “There had always been opposition between the two of them” (218), there is a clear point that Gerald’s ideology will replace his father’s when he dies.

Since the emphasis of this chapter is on the change from Mr. Crich’s pastoral, Christian world to Gerald’s industrial world, there is much emphasis placed on how Gerald will change the way that the mines are run. Gerald believes that “there was a need for a complete break. The mines were run on an old system, an obsolete idea” (224). Even Mr. Crich realizes that changes must be made to the industry: “I was this recognition of the state of war which really broke his heart. He wanted his industry to be run on love, Oh, he wanted love to be the directing power even of the mines. And now, from under the cloak of love, the sword was cynically drawn, the sword of mechanical necessity” (225). However, although he recognizes that the war has shattered the “illusion” (225) that industry and love are compatible, it is his continuing belief in the myth of Christianity that holds him back from executing necessary changes to keep up in the mechanical world. During the mining strikes, “Thomas Crich was breaking his heart, and giving

away hundreds of pounds in charity... [and he] was trapped between two half-truths, and broken. He wanted to be a pure Christian... Yet he was a great promoter of industry, and he knew perfectly that he must keep his goods and keep his authority" (226). Upon entering into a position of control in his father's company, Gerald "shifted the position. He did not care about the equality. The whole Christian attitude of love and self-sacrifice was old hat. He knew that position and authority were the right thing in the world, and it was useless to cant about it... What mattered was the great social productive machine... So [he] set himself to work, to put the great industry in order" (227). This change is one that Gerald is only able to fully execute after his father dies, but Lawrence wraps the move towards mechanization up with the death of other myths such as Christianity. Moreover, because it is Gerald who initiates these changes thus causing the decline of the ancestral home, he, unlike Hermione, whose aristocracy serves a purpose, Lawrence does not allow him to survive at the end of the novel.

While Lawrence includes the decline of two ancestral houses in *Women in Love*, his later novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* represents the ancestral home after it has declined. Just as with many other aspects of nature and the landscape in Lawrence's novels, the common trope of the decaying estate should be viewed as a strong message about the after-effects of war on the country as a whole. However, if these two novels can be read as a trajectory, reflecting the way Lawrence was able to finally reconcile his feelings about the war, then the decayed Wragby Hall in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* reflects the changes that have occurred within British society ten years after the war ended. Though the novels have many similarities, one noticeable difference is that the characters in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* are able to flourish within the decayed landscape instead of being stifled, making the novel as a whole significantly less violent than *Women in Love*, transmitting a feeling of reconciliation with the results of the war.

Interestingly, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* begins by telling the reader how the novel relates to the war, and immediately aligns Constance Chatterley, the main character, with a specific view about the war:

Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically. The cataclysm has happened, we are among the ruins, we start to build up new little habits, to have new little hopes. It is rather hard work: there is now no smooth road into the future: but we go round, or scramble over the obstacles. We've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen. This was more or less Constance Chatterley's position. The war had brought the roof down over her head. And she had realized that one must live and learn. (Lawrence 5)

Through "Constance Chatterley's position" on the war, the reader also understands Lawrence's position; he outwardly mentions the war and highlights both its destruction and the people's attempt to rebuild after it. From the first sentences of the novel, Lawrence begs it to be read as a trajectory; if *Women in Love* reflects the passionate violence of warfare, then *Lady Chatterley's Lover* reflects the cautious optimism and peaceful acceptance that comes with recovering from that destruction. The later novel uses the word "war" within its second paragraph, while the earlier novels dexterously avoids direct mention of it at all; this in itself shows reconciliation since the novel is able to engage directly with the "cataclysm" and "start to build up" from it. Additionally, since this entire passage uses the metaphor of the destroyed house and its rebuilding to signify recovery from the war, the novel begins with an even stronger idea of "building up."

Constance and Clifford Chatterley's marriage begins in the midst of the First World War, and their relationship, just like everything else in the novel is a clear example of the destruction of war. Even during the honeymoon period, Clifford is described as being "more or less in bits"

(5), and the war fractures him even further beyond the point of repair: “His hold on life was marvelous. He didn’t die and the bits seemed to grow together again. For two years he remained in the doctor’s hands. Then he was pronounced a cure, and could return to life again, with the lower half of his body, from the hips down, paralysed for ever” (5). However, Clifford’s paralysis and resulting impotence are not important simply because they reflect the destruction of the war on human beings; Lawrence purposely aligns Clifford’s paralysis with the stagnancy of the Wragby Hall estate to draw a connection between the war’s destruction on both man and on society as a whole. Lawrence continues, “This was 1920. They returned, Clifford and Constance, to his home, Wragby Hall, the family ‘seat.’ His father had died, Clifford was now a baronet, Sir Clifford and Constance was Lady Chatterley... The elder brother was dead in the war. Crippled for ever, knowing he could never have any children, Clifford came home to... keep the Chatterley name alive while he could” (5). Within the first page of the novel, it can be seen that the war’s destruction does not end with the physical effects on Clifford’s body; the Chatterleys begin their post-war lives together with meaningless titles (“baronet” and “lady”) and with an estate made meaningless by the death of its owners and by Clifford’s inability to ever produce an heir for it. Moreover, Lawrence draws the reader’s attention to the irony of the property by placing the word “seat” in quotation marks. Not only is the phrase outdated since the war has leveled England’s social hierarchy but for Clifford, the estate has literally become nothing but a “seat.” Since he can no longer walk its grounds, Clifford can only rule over the estate from his wheelchair as it decays and as he decays, keeping both “alive while he [can].”

Later, the meaninglessness of the estate is emphasized, as is Clifford’s entrapment within it:

In 1916 Herbert Chatterley was killed, so Clifford became heir. He was terrified even of this. His importance as son of Sir Geoffrey and child of Wragby, the family house, was

so ingrained in him, he could never escape it. And yet he know that this, too, in the eyes of the vast seething world, was ridiculous. Now he was heir, and responsible for Wragby, old Wragby. Was that not terrible! and also splendid, splendid! and at the same time, perhaps, purely absurd. (11)

Just as in *Women in Love*, the ancestral home in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* represents the nostalgic past and the ways of pre-war England. Clifford, who is forced into a new way of life by the war, is hopelessly trapped by the old ways that are “ingrained in him” but also realizes that his status in life has become “absurd” because of the war. He is, in many ways, a non-walking contradiction; one expects him to realize the effects of war because of what it has done to his own body, yet he desperately tries throughout the novel to rekindle Wragby’s and his title’s meaning, even if he sacrifices his own happiness in the process.

In chapter two, Wragby is described in more detail, and is similar to the description of the Shortlands estate in *Women in Love*:

Wragby was a long, low old house in brown stone, begun about the middle of the eighteenth century, and added on to, till it was a warren of a place without much distinction. It stood on an eminence in a rather fine old park of oak trees: but alas, one could see in the near distance the chimney of Tevershall pit with its clouds of steam and smoke... From the rather dismal rooms of Wragby she heard the rattle-rattle of the screens at the pit, the puff of the screens of the pit... Tevershall pit-bank was burning, had been burning for years, and it would cost thousands to put it out. So it had to burn...

Well, there it was: fated, like the rest of things! (13)

Just like Shortlands, the once-powerful Wragby estate overlooks coal mines, and is being suffocated by the smoke rising from them. Yet here, the estate coexists with the coal mines; the

pit is “burning, had been burning for years” and aside from the noise and odor that emanates from the mines, nobody seems to worry about its proximity to Wragby. Even Connie, who one might expect to be bothered by the mines feels that they are “unbelievable, and not to be thought about” (11). Clifford, just like Gerald, becomes involved in the coal-mining industry later in the novel. For Clifford, who believes that “it was astounding, the ingenuity and the almost uncanny cleverness of the modern technical mind” (107) the mechanization of the mines act as a form of rejuvenation for him and “Things he had learned before the war, and seemed utterly to have forgotten, now came back to him... his mind began to work” (107). Therefore, the novels sets mechanization alongside old England, and slowly begins to join them together instead of setting them in direct opposition of one-another. In *Women in Love*, Gerald is faced with the task of updating and mechanizing his father’s mines, yet his world-view always conflicts with the idyllic and mythic past that his father represents.

As the novel continues, Wragby’s decay accelerates. In chapter eleven, Connie uncovers many artifacts belonging to earlier Chatterley generations in the lumber rooms. In the room, she finds family artwork and furniture, and other odds and ends of life at Wragby before the war. As she sorts through these objects, she is not interested in them for any sentimental value and only wants to be rid of the objects that link the home to the pre-war era. Connie uses words such as “pathetic” (147), “grotesque” (147), and “monstrous” (148) to describe the objects that she finds and when she stumbles upon an old “medicine store,” she remarks that “The thing was wonderfully made and contrived, excellent craftsmanship of the best Victorian order. But somehow it was monstrous. Some Chatterley must even have felt it, for the thing had never been used. It had a peculiar soullessness” (148). Here, the object is a literal artifact from Victorian England, and although Connie remarks on its beauty, it is “monstrous” and “soulless” because it

represents a time before the war and therefore, like Wragby itself, has become another meaningless signifier of aristocratic power and traditional old England. Connie gives the item to Mrs. Bolton saying that “It will only lie here till Doomsday” (149) and decides to donate many of the other items to “the Duchess of Shortlands for that lady’s next charitable bazaar” (148). In order to jar Wragby from its stagnation, Connie must eliminate many of these artifacts that keep the family trapped in an older time and space. Therefore, she sends these objects to a place where they still hold value; just like the Shortlands in *Women in Love*, the “Shortlands” mentioned here seems to represent the past. The Duchess of Shortlands, who is clearly identified by her aristocratic title, will be “delighted with” these pre-war objects because she still sees value in them. Thus, just like Connie sends these items into the “past” where they belong, Lawrence wants the reader to recognize that those items represent the past, so he hints towards the earlier novel with the inclusion of Shortlands in this novel as well.

Allyson Booth, author of *Postcards from the Trenches: Negotiating the Space Between Modernism and the First World War*, discusses the way in which artifacts from the pre-war era in England, such as those that Connie finds in the lumber room, become nostalgic representations of the past in modernist literature. She states, “Modernist writers endow material objects with the luminous ability to evoke memories...when characters in modernist texts are confronted with these resonant artifacts, they discard them as a way of leaving the past behind... Objects in modernist texts...are forgetful objects... designed to display either the erasure of history or the possibility of pitching it into the garbage” (127). In both novels, the ancestral home is, in itself, an object that reflects the past, so Lawrence’s focus on their decay demonstrates how old-world objects are unable to survive in post-war England because they no longer have value. Moreover, it is important that Connie is engaged in the task of discarding the Chatterley artifacts because

she, unlike her husband, has fully accepted the changes that have occurred within her world and will work on moving forward throughout the novel while Clifford struggles. Booth further emphasizes the importance of discarding in post-war texts, saying: “When the past that has pooled into objects is a past that includes the war, characters sometimes take advantage of that reification as a way of discarding an experience they would just as soon forget. If memories are conceived of as residing in certain objects, it becomes possible to place, manipulate, or discard those memories” (147). Connie’s entire world is stagnated just as Wragby is; as she discards the objects of the past, she discusses the possibility of bearing a child with Mellors. Therefore, she must discard the past in order to free herself from Clifford’s impotence and to create new life.

Women in Love and *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* can, and should, be read as a trajectory of Lawrence’s feelings about the First World War because valuable things can be learned about Lawrence himself and about post-war English society by accounting for the differences in the ways in which the war is approached in each novel. In *Women in Love*, Lawrence approaches the war not from a distance, as some such as Delany have argued, but from such close proximity that the violence of the war atmosphere registers in every scene. Though this violence is transmitted through the themes of love and sexuality in the novel, a close analysis of the projection of violence onto nature and onto the landscape provides more insight into the long-lasting effects of the war. In the early novel, Lawrence shows that humanity cannot seek refuge from the war in nature, because it is the human tendency to turn everything into a scene of violence. Likewise, in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, through Lawrence’s treatment of nature and the landscape one sees the physical changes that have occurred since the end of the Great War, and how those changes to the environment inevitably lead to societal changes as well. Even though Lawrence seems to have reconciled his inability to address the war directly, one must not make the mistake of

assuming that his feelings about the war have changed. In the later novel, Lawrence has come to terms with what the war has done, and therefore, allows his characters to freely express their opinions about war and to flourish within the decimated post-war world. However, Lawrence does not end his tirade against the war by any means; he wants his readers to recognize the omnipresence of the war, even ten years later, and he wants them to rage against it just as he does. D.H. Lawrence spent a majority of his literary career transmitting his messages about war through his writing, and therefore deserves to be recognized among the many other great modernists who wrote anti-war literature. Although his works do not often confront the war directly, he adds significant value to the anti-war effort by showing that war has many more long-lasting effects that alter the fabric of society altogether.

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