

# DH Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*

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# Sons and Lovers

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- ▶ FR Leavis called Lawrence "the great genius of our time."
- ▶ In the words of Thomas DeRosa, one can summarise the novel as follows:
  - ▶ D.H. Lawrence in his largely autobiographical novel *Sons and Lovers* details the struggle that Paul Morel faces when first falling in love with Miriam Leivers — a young lady his age, devoted to God, family, and Paul. Then Paul falls in love with Clara Dawes — a fierce, mature, independent woman who left her husband, but remains devoted (if not faithful to him) and provides for herself.
  - ▶ <https://medium.com/i-m-h-o/why-you-should-read-sons-and-lovers-73fdd5968e93>
- ▶ The direct impact and effect of the theories and readings of Sigmund Freud, Alfred Adler Carl Jung can be seen in this novel



# Freudian or Mother Fixation Theory

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- ▶ It is also popularly called “Oedipus Complex”
- ▶ Oedipus complex, is theory propelled by Sigmund Freud to define psychosexual stages of development in a growing male child, who is attracted towards his mother.
- ▶ Graham Hough is of the view that “the whole situation in the novel presents the Freudian Oedipus imbroglio in classic completeness.”
- ▶ The relation with William Morel, the eldest son, and her mother, Mrs Morel, is one of the earliest hint of this.
- ▶ Pual’s hatred towards his father is another example of Freudian Theory.
- ▶ In Greek Mythology, it was a sin under which Oedipus killed his father and married to his biological mother.. However, in *Sons and Lovers*, Gertrude and her sons gives suffering to Walter deliberately and intentionally.



# Auto-Biographical

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- ▶ Critics like Middleton Murry called it an autobiographical fiction.
- ▶ Jenny Turner described it as “semi-autobiographical.”
- ▶ Paul Morel, the main character, resembles to the author, Lawrence; whereas, Walter Morel and Mrs. Morel in the novel are the father and mother of Paul Morel (parents of author)
- ▶ Like Morel, Lawrence was also the son of a miner, and in this novel he is loosely describing his life, at least his past.
- ▶ An imaginative representation in the shape of facts related to the life of author.



# Poverty, Mining and Miners

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- ▶ The novel is set in the mining district, and depicted the poverty and the struggle faced by the miners of the area.
- ▶ Miserable life, unhygienic working conditions of the factory works are shown by the author.
- ▶ Women were seen as an object of desire and the life of maximum of the miners was miserable.
- ▶ Due to hard work, Walter Morel becomes a hard drunkard and this ruined his family life.



# Sexuality

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- ▶ The novel is criticised for excessive sexuality among characters.
- ▶ Paul has taken the role of his father and become a substitute of his father and in rage asks:
  - ▶ Why can't a man have a young mother? What is the old for?
- ▶ Attraction of child towards mother is often bizzare subject but it is present in a Freudian way which is why the novel is criticized.



# Why to Read

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- ▶ This novel has the honour to be called as the first Freudian novel in English., but it did not present directness of the Freudian Oedipus Complex, as everything happens in mind and indirectly.
- ▶ Poverty, Love, family life in a modern world, daily struggles of mining world makes this novel a must read.

