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Madeline Freeman

Trinity University, mfreema3@trinity.edu

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Madeline Freeman
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Dr. Balbert
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The Woman of a Lifetime: How Frieda Lawrence Influenced *Sons and Lovers* and Revived D.H. Lawrence

The process of creating *Sons and Lovers* was a tempestuous and trying journey for D.H. Lawrence. As he progressed through various drafts of the novel, he ended affairs and engagements, overcame a troubling sickness, and grieved over his mother's distressing death. After these numerous tribulations, Lawrence fell in love with Frieda Weekley, who helped him to discern a new perspective on his parents and to produce an uplifting conclusion to his novel. While reading over Lawrence's drafts and typing his manuscripts, Frieda commented in the margins, quarreled with him about his characters and language, and even wrote parts of the novel.¹ In her own words, she "lived and suffered that book,"² powerfully impacting several character portrayals that remain in *Sons and Lovers*. Through Frieda's influence, Lawrence's final version of the novel highlights the emotional damage inflicted on Paul by his maternal relationship, yields to Miriam's critical and sympathetic perspective, and depicts Paul persevering at the end.

In March 1912, a few months after beginning the novel's third version, 'Paul Morel III,' Lawrence met and quickly fell in love with Frieda Weekley.³ The two were perhaps kindred spirits with respect to their experiences of life as outsiders. Lawrence once explained how his differences from others "ma[de] a gulf" that "le[ft him] lonely."⁴ Frieda likewise reflected on having "nothing in common with most people, an uneasy feeling."⁵ Lawrence was primarily attracted to Frieda, however, because she was a breath of fresh air for him, especially compared

¹ David M. Thompson, "Calling in the Realists: The Revision and Reputation of Lawrence's 'Sons and Lovers,'" *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 27, no. 3 (1994), 240.

² John Worthen, *D.H. Lawrence: The Life of an Outsider* (New York: Counterpoint, 2005), 133.

³ James Boulton, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, i. 376.

⁴ Edward Nehls, *D.H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography*, iii. 610.

⁵ Barbara Morgan, "Lawrence, Frieda (1879-1956)," encyclopedia.com.

to his past relationships. Unlike Jessie Chambers, Louie Burrows, and Alice Dax, all of whom he ended contact with while revising *Sons and Lovers*, Frieda had a desire to remain independent from Lawrence and “fearless in opposing and contradicting him.”⁶ She carried herself with a refreshingly assertive and unrestrained dignity that was extremely influential in Lawrence’s writing process. Demonstrating the profound, sacred differences between men and women that would pervade Lawrence’s subsequent works, their relationship provided him with a productive tension that fueled his creative genius. As Lawrence tackled the toils of crafting *Sons and Lovers*, Frieda presented herself as “the ideal partner for his life as a writer.”⁷

While developing his relationship with Frieda and the final draft of *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence was chiefly concerned about emerging as the author D.H. Lawrence, his new and emancipated self. As his later poem “First Morning” recalls, he could not establish this new identity without “free[ing him]self from the past, those others.”⁸ He was likely referring to the women he knew before Frieda, most prominently his mother Lydia Lawrence, whose haunting love and domination he tried eagerly to escape.⁹ Lawrence conveys this anxiety through his novel’s main character Paul Morel, who similarly struggles to realize his individuality by liberating himself from his mother’s grasp. As Richard D. Beards explains, there are two ways to read *Sons and Lovers*: the autobiographical and the psychological. Frieda evidently impacted the former, helping Lawrence discern a new outlook on his own past relationships. The latter primarily surrounds Paul’s Oedipal complex, which became heightened in the novel after Frieda presented “a Freudian gloss.”¹⁰ For instance, Lawrence revised the aftermath of the bread-burning scene in Chapter 8 so that Paul’s father interrupts the fervent and incestual interaction

⁶ Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 112.

⁷ Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 112.

⁸ D.H. Lawrence, “First Morning,” <http://www.public-domain-poetry.com/d-h-lawrence/first-morning-22908>.

⁹ Richard D. Beards, “Sons and Lovers as Bildungsroman,” *College Literature* 1, no. 3 (1974), 204.

¹⁰ Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 111.

occurring between mother and son. 'Paul II' did not include a father confrontation,¹¹ but the published text shows Paul "ach[ing]" to punch his father and begging his mother not to sleep with him.¹² As Paul's mother leaves him, Lawrence stresses the son's "fury of misery" and hatred for his father, bringing to light the Freudian Oedipus complex that Frieda introduced to his novel (*SL* 254).

Furthermore, Lawrence made several emendations to Paul and Gertrude's preceding conversation that illustrate the theme at the heart of *Sons and Lovers*: the connection between Paul's psychological and emotional despair and his relationship with his mother. In his own words, believing that a mother's love could be destructive for her sons' development, Lawrence began to emphasize how she "selects them as lovers" so that "they can't love" anyone else.¹³ Through intense dialogue, Lawrence portrays how Gertrude's suffering because of her son's romantic relationship with Miriam produces Paul's tragic mentality and lamentations:

'You only want me to wait on you—the rest is for Miriam.'
He could not bear it. Instinctively, he realised that he was life to her. And after all she was the chief thing to him, the only supreme thing.
'You know it isn't, mother, you know it isn't.'
She was moved to pity by his cry.
'It looks a great deal like it,' she said, half putting aside her despair.
'No mother—I really *don't* love her. I talk to her—but I want to come home to you.'
He had taken off his collar and tie, and rose, bare-throated, to go to bed. As he stooped to kiss his mother, she threw her arms round his neck, hid her face on his shoulder, and cried, in a whimpering voice, so unlike her own that he writhed in agony:
'I can't bear it. I could let another woman—but not her—she'd leave me no room, not a bit of room—
And immediately he hated Miriam bitterly. (*SL* 251-2)

Lawrence's early drafts of this scene demonstrated considerable sentimentality for the mother, but the transition to *Sons and Lovers* made it "much more emotionally disturbing."¹⁴ For

¹¹ Neil Roberts, "Jessie Chambers, Frieda Lawrence and the Rewriting of 'Sons and Lovers'," *The D.H. Lawrence Review* 41, no. 1 (2016), 16.

¹² D. H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers* (London: Penguin Classics, 2006), 253. Subsequent references will cite this book parenthetically by page.

¹³ Boulton, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, i. 477.

¹⁴ Neil Roberts, "From 'Paul Morel' to *Sons and Lovers*, July–November 1912," in *Sons and Lovers: The Biography of a Novel* (Liverpool University Press, 2016), 152.

instance, for the fourth time in their entire conversation, this passage shows Paul declaring that he does not love Miriam as a desperate attempt to provide relief for his mother. In the previous draft, Lawrence wrote that Paul “could not bear her to be like that” before changing it to “he could not bear it.”¹⁵ Through this revision, Lawrence shifts the focus to Paul’s tormenting situation as a whole, implying that his pain stems less from Gertrude’s despair and more from the agonizing effects of their relationship. Lawrence draws further attention to Paul’s own tortured perspective as he “writhed in agony,” a line that previously read: “He knew how great her suffering must be.”¹⁶ Moreover, this passage originally ended with Paul yielding to his mother’s laments, “which Paul in his heart knew to be true.”¹⁷ Lawrence replaced this, however, with Paul’s instant antagonism towards Miriam, demonstrating an “irrational and self-damaging”¹⁸ displacement of painful emotions about his general situation onto the absent Miriam. Because of these edits, the scene no longer provokes empathy for Gertrude and her extreme suffering, which would have, as Jessie Chambers once complained, “handed his mother the laurels of victory.”¹⁹ Frieda expanded on this criticism with her assertive character as well as a “rudimentary awareness of psychoanalysis” and Freudian theory.²⁰ Agreeing that Lawrence’s own mother had this same harmful effect on his emotional state, Frieda contended that Lawrence’s early drafts “quite missed the point” about this toxic relationship.²¹ After her influence, Lawrence steered away from the viewpoint and glorification of Gertrude, beginning to present her sons as “damaged by their relationship with their mother” for the first time.²² Concentrating on Paul’s harrowing perspective, Lawrence’s changes to this scene exemplify how the interaction with Gertrude works to the detriment of her son’s psychological and emotional state.

¹⁵ Mark Schorer (ed.), *Sons and Lovers by D.H. Lawrence: A Facsimile of the Manuscript*, 299-300.

¹⁶ Schorer, *Facsimile of the Manuscript*, 299-300.

¹⁷ Schorer, *Facsimile of the Manuscript*, 299-300.

¹⁸ Roberts, “From ‘Paul Morel’ to *Sons and Lovers*,” 154.

¹⁹ E.T. *D.H. Lawrence: A Personal Record*, 202.

²⁰ Roberts, “From ‘Paul Morel’ to *Sons and Lovers*,” 133.

²¹ Roberts, “Jessie, Frieda, and the Rewriting,” 17.

²² Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 125.

Lawrence's relationship with Frieda continued to aid him as he often grew weary of this extreme focus on mother-son relationships. In October 1912, Lawrence wrote *The Fight for Barbara* as a respite from creating *Sons and Lovers*. With its comedic tone and childless title character, the work served as a break from the themes and emotional demands of *Sons and Lovers*. The plot's strong resemblance to his current relationship with Frieda also demonstrates his preoccupation with her at the time. Similarly, he was frequently drafting love poems and letters to her, one of which gives us an idea of how enamored Lawrence was with Frieda: 'God, how I love her—the agony of it.'²³ This declaration is particularly significant considering it was just a few years earlier that he claimed, "I think I loved my mother more than I ever shall love anyone else."²⁴ Lawrence was consumed by grief after Lydia's death in 1910, reflected by this claim and his poems that were "rigidly locked into love and suffering."²⁵ For instance, his poem "The Virgin Mother" sentimentalizes the relationship between a son and his mother to a disturbing extent, depicting the speaker's "helpless" soul remaining in his dead mother's bed.²⁶ Frieda wrote that she "hate[d] it"²⁷ and raged at the poem's "sickly celebration of the inability to love" and move on from his mother.²⁸ Through her love and constructive criticism, Frieda exposed Lawrence to a new, healthier way of living, one that Paul Morel would strive for at the end of *Sons and Lovers*. After meeting Frieda, Lawrence learned how to love another woman, leave behind his past, and gain the strength that he needed to persevere in the future – "you make me sure of myself, whole."²⁹

In another pivotal revision of *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence increased the display of this emotional destruction by introducing a greater role for Paul's brother William.³⁰ Namely, he

²³ Boulton, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, i. 421.

²⁴ Boulton, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, viii. 113.

²⁵ Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 125.

²⁶ D.H. Lawrence, "The Virgin Mother," <https://allpoetry.com/The-Virgin-Mother>.

²⁷ Roberts, "Jessie, Frieda, and the Rewriting," 17.

²⁸ Roberts, "From 'Paul Morel' to *Sons and Lovers*," 151.

²⁹ Frieda Lawrence, "*Not I, But the Wind...*," 53.

³⁰ Thompson, "Calling in the Realists," 239.

changed the third chapter from “Aftermath” to “The Casting off of Morel, the Taking on of William,” which now included a significant number of scenes revolving around William’s early life and relationships.³¹ In these revisions, Lawrence uses William’s character to show that Paul is not alone in experiencing his mother’s extreme influence and prejudicial control. For instance, William “was accustomed to having all his thoughts sifted through his mother’s mind. So, when he wanted companionship...he hated his betrothed” (SL 161). Just like Paul’s reaction to his mother’s agony in the previously discussed passage, William has irrational thoughts about his lover because his mother disapproves of her. Gertrude’s ardent hostility towards other women in her eldest son’s life and his twisted responses serve as a precursor to Paul and Miriam’s disastrous relationship. More specifically, as Gertrude feels her control over William wavering and disapproves of his girlfriends, she “waited, and she kept Paul near to her” (SL 164).

Indeed, the revisions to scenes between Paul and Miriam tweaked his view of her in a way that further exposes this emotional damage. Frieda likely had a heavy influence on her portrayal as well, explaining that she “had to go deeply into the character of Miriam” and provide a valuable female perspective for Lawrence.³² After Frieda entered his life, Lawrence started exploring “the catastrophe of Paul’s sexual relationship with Miriam” for the first time.³³ For example, as Miriam worries about the fragile state of her relationship with Paul, he struggles to open up to her:

He did not know himself what was the matter. He was naturally so young, and their intimacy was so abstract, he did not know he wanted to crush her onto his breast to ease the ache there. He was afraid of her. The fact that he might want her as a man wants a woman had in him been suppressed into a shame.

...

As they walked along the dark fen-meadow, he watched the moon, and did not speak. She plodded beside him. He hated her, for she seemed, in some way, to make him despise himself. Looking ahead, he saw the one light in the darkness, the window of their lamp-lit cottage.

He loved to think of his mother, and the other jolly people. (SL 216)

³¹ Roberts, “From ‘Paul Morel’ to *Sons and Lovers*,” 133.

³² Frieda, “*Not I, But the Wind...*,” 52.

³³ Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 125.

Lawrence went back and forth on how to portray Miriam in this particular scene, shifting between favorable and hateful language from Paul's perspective. The earlier drafts read: "she seemed, in some way, ashamed, as of some deep cowardice" and "she seemed in some way, better than he."³⁴ With the final version displayed above, Lawrence shows how this relationship fills Paul rather than Miriam with intense shame, weakness, and insecurity. Because his mother's love has restricted him, Paul "did not know" how to give into this new love and the "freedom that Miriam allows."³⁵ Lawrence highlights this uncertainty through Paul's emotions, which quickly shift from confusion, fear, hate, and finally to joy in just a few lines. To avoid this uncomfortable instability, Paul resorts to thinking about his mother, demonstrating his inability to separate from her and develop as his own confident self. Right after this interaction, Lawrence notes that "Mrs Morel hated [Miriam] for making her son like this...And Paul hated [Miriam] because, somehow, she spoilt his ease and naturalness." (*SL* 216-7). Instead of her own hindering hold on Paul, Gertrude falsely blames Miriam for his anguish. Moreover, by directly connecting Gertrude and Paul's absurd projections of hate, Lawrence stresses her infliction of emotional damage on Paul and his failure to confront it. Contrary to Paul, Lawrence expressed relief at overcoming such confusing anxiety by discovering the ability to love Frieda. After their many travels, which offered a subject for his essay "Crucifixes Among the Mountains," Lawrence rejoiced at this achievement by exclaiming that he and Frieda "*can* be happy, nobody knows how happy...we are fearfully happy together."³⁶ While Miriam exposed Paul to a new, unrestrained life outside the grasp of his mother, she could not help him truly understand and grow from the destruction caused by his mother's influence. Through Frieda's affection and guidance, however,

³⁴ Roberts, "From 'Paul Morel' to *Sons and Lovers*," 143.

³⁵ Seamus O'Malley "The final aim is the flower": Wild and Domestic Nature in 'Sons and Lovers,'" *The D.H. Lawrence Review* 39, no. 2 (2014), 35.

³⁶ Boulton, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, i. 441.

Lawrence was able to persist by discerning the reality of a mother's harmful effects. As John Worthen explains, "Paul was a tragic figure but Lawrence was becoming liberated."³⁷

Lawrence depicts Paul's irrational hate and instability in yet another scene surrounding Paul and Miriam. Paul anxiously waits for Miriam to show up to the library:

A footstep was heard in the passage. The young man listened. It was not she. A boy entered. When Paul saw the lad in the doorway where she should have been, he hated him. Yet she would come. She was so dependable...And it was not so very bad. He listened for the sound of the weather. He heard the boy say that it was pouring. The boy was objectionable. She would come, in spite of him. He clung to the hope of her. He could feel her, across the night, wanting to come. And she never failed him. (*SL* 192)

The sequence of extremely short sentences represents Paul's hyper-sensitivity and insecurity as his focus darts across the room and expands time. What must be a few seconds of Paul waiting for Miriam becomes warped into long, agonizing suspense. Furthermore, Paul displaces the hatred for his emotional despair and lack of control onto a random man simply because he is not Miriam. Just as he did in the meadow scene with Miriam, Paul projects his own self-contempt onto another person by passing disapproving judgments on this stranger. Lawrence also shows Paul's aversion to facing this tormenting mindset in his attempts to distract himself by "listen[ing] for the sound of the weather." Paul's stress is further emphasized through his unreasonable belief that he "could feel [Miriam] across the night, wanting to come," a desperate effort to find some salvation from his own anxieties. Though Paul tries to convince himself "it was not so very bad," Lawrence continues to exemplify Paul's extreme reactions and delicate mental state, both of which come to light most clearly around Miriam and the chance to break away from his mother's love.

In other scenes, Lawrence continues to use Miriam's character to reveal Paul's devastating condition by yielding to her position. Through Miriam's eyes, Lawrence "challenges

³⁷ Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 119.

the perspective that the author shares with Paul”³⁸ and encourages the reader to discern his helpless confusion and absurd behavior. For instance, after Paul tells Miriam he cannot meet her because of his family’s demanding control and jealousy, Lawrence describes her reaction:

Miriam was astonished and hurt for him. It had cost him an effort. She left him, wanting to spare him any further humiliation ... She was hurt deep down. And she despised him, for being blown about by any wind of authority. And in her hearts of hearts, unconsciously, she felt that he was trying to get away from her. This she would never have acknowledged. She pitied him. (*SL* 234)

After this section, Lawrence considered adding that “She really hated men, was born to despise and hate them for the temporal authority they possess. It was not in her to be a mate to any man.”³⁹ However, he left this out of the published text, focusing on Miriam’s critical view of Paul as opposed to one of her. By strengthening Miriam’s voice, Lawrence brings the reader away from Paul’s perspective, draws sympathy to her, and reveals the stress and lack of determination in Paul’s romantic relationships caused by his familial ones. Indeed, the pain Miriam experiences as a result of Paul’s attachment to his mother supports Neil Roberts’ explanation that the novel’s final revisions are “predominantly in favour of a more sympathetic representation of Miriam.”⁴⁰ Furthermore, this passage displays Miriam’s unassertive character and submission to Paul. By “le[aving] him” and deciding “never [to] acknowledge” the roots of his difficult dilemma, she allows Paul to remain hopelessly acquiescent. In this way, Miriam coincides with Kate Millet’s argument that “Lawrence’s heroines are passive,” remain “asleep before being awakened by a man,” and “find fulfillment in submitting to men.”⁴¹ As Lawrence points out, Miriam “felt something was fulfilled in her” after being with Paul (*SL* 207). Miriam’s efforts to capture Paul for herself therefore ultimately fail because his forceful “mother gradually proves stronger.”⁴² Rather than giving Paul guidance to face this toxic authority, Miriam

³⁸ Roberts, “Jessie, Frieda, and the Rewriting,” 6.

³⁹ Roberts, “From ‘Paul Morel’ to *Sons and Lovers*,” 143.

⁴⁰ Roberts, “From ‘Paul Morel’ to *Sons and Lovers*,” 145.

⁴¹ Janice H. Harris, “D.H. Lawrence and Kate Millet,” *The Massachusetts Review* 15, no. 3 (1974), 523.

⁴² Boulton, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, i. 477.

provides pity, “despise[s] him,” and wallows in her own “hurt.” Thus, Miriam’s role in Paul’s life strongly differs from Frieda’s impact on Lawrence, who celebrated Frieda’s contrasting determination to stay, love, and save him: “at last [Frieda] can’t leave me.”⁴³

Additionally, Janice Harris argues that Millet fails to see how many of Lawrence’s later works include the reversed trope of men being awakened and reinvigorated by a woman, such as his characters Rupert Birkin, Dr. Fergusson, Count Dionys, and Oliver Mellors. Frieda may have encouraged such portrayals since Lawrence himself appears like these “sleeping princes”⁴⁴ until receiving “liberation and unprecedented fulfillment” from his relationship with Frieda.⁴⁵ Directly mirroring the satisfaction that Miriam obtained from Paul, Lawrence’s feelings about Frieda seem to subvert the sexual politics expounded by Millet. Further proving to be Frieda’s antithesis, Miriam fails to provide the clarity that Lawrence received from Frieda by productively arguing “like blazes over [his novel]”⁴⁶ and sharing an “intellectual stimulus.”⁴⁷ Moreover, even though “she saw...his restless instability,” Miriam shared Paul’s lack of tenacity, surrendered to his confusion, and ultimately “could not take him and relieve him...of himself” (*SL* 462-3). Conversely, Frieda’s prolific presence and assertion of her independence paved the way for Lawrence’s newly firm beliefs that “the independence of both partners in a relationship [is] a necessary precondition of its survival”⁴⁸ and “the real way of living is to answer to one’s wants.”⁴⁹ Frieda gave Lawrence a new outlook and influenced the renowned focus of his later works—“a belief in the separation of self and other.”⁵⁰ Hence, his declaration in an earlier draft of *Sons and Lovers* that “the final lesson of life is honorable self-sacrifice”⁵¹ became the very quality for which Paul rejects Miriam, who desires the “sweetness of self-sacrifice” (*SL* 462).

⁴³ Boulton, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, i. 430.

⁴⁴ Harris, “D.H. Lawrence and Kate Millet,” 527.

⁴⁵ Roberts, “From ‘Paul Morel’ to *Sons and Lovers*,” 134.

⁴⁶ Boulton, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, i. 449.

⁴⁷ Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 110.

⁴⁸ Roberts, “From ‘Paul Morel’ to *Sons and Lovers*,” 135.

⁴⁹ Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 129.

⁵⁰ Harris, “D.H. Lawrence and Kate Millet,” 528.

⁵¹ D.H. Lawrence, *Paul Morel*, 74.

Lawrence's newfound clarity appears in Paul's reflections towards the end of the novel as he considers that "perhaps he was wrong" about his relationship with Miriam and his nonsensical responses to her (*SL* 321). These realizations are challenged, however, by the difficulty of his mother's death, which Lawrence similarly experienced through losing his own mother Lydia. For instance, Lawrence narrates how Paul drifts into hopelessness and feels that "there seemed no reason" to go on (*SL* 454). In a dreadful time, Frieda was once again at Lawrence's side while he revised the passages about Gertrude's death. In earlier versions, Lawrence contemplated excluding this death or diminishing its level of haunting significance. After Frieda's assistance and advice, though, Lawrence included Paul's response to this traumatic event and concluded the novel with a reinforcement of its thematic center. Namely, having observed his agony for hundreds of pages, the reader watches Paul finally wrestle between "love for his mother and an awareness of the emotional damage that it causes him."⁵² By portraying Paul's nihilism and allegiance to Gertrude even after her death, Lawrence makes it evident that Paul struggles to exist as an individual. Frieda explained that while Lawrence wrote these scenes, "he was ill and his grief made [her] ill too."⁵³ If anyone could have helped Lawrence overcome such tremendous pain to persist in "freeing himself from the love of his [own] mother,"⁵⁴ it would surely have been Frieda, whom he described as "the woman of a lifetime."⁵⁵ Considering Paul's determination and resistance towards the temptation to follow his mother in death, Lawrence must have felt hopeful by the end of his writing process with support from the understanding and encouraging Frieda. Indeed, Paul had "wanted to give up" (*SL* 456), "but no, he would not give in" (*SL* 464).

Thus, in addition to enlightening Lawrence's perspective on his novel and a mother's detrimental impact on her sons, Frieda revived Lawrence in a way that transferred over to Paul's

⁵² Roberts, "From 'Paul Morel' to *Sons and Lovers*," 155.

⁵³ Frieda, "Not I, But the Wind...," 52.

⁵⁴ Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 119.

⁵⁵ Boulton, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, i. 384.

concluding sense of self and hope. The characterization of Paul Morel before the novel's ending is a reflection of Lawrence before he met Frieda—a man in a “constant state of impotence and incapability” who is “insecure about his position in the world.”⁵⁶ With previous women, as indicated by Paul's relationship with Miriam, Lawrence was likely still “a fool who did not know what was happening to himself” (*SL* 209). However, Frieda aided him in his “desire for understanding” (*SL* 210) and his “project to change himself”⁵⁷ through writing *Sons and Lovers*. Lawrence's desire to emerge from this exhausting old self is reflected in his statement from July 1912, only a few months after the couple met: “I loathe Paul Morel.”⁵⁸ By the next year, he also succeeded in transitioning to a new artistic style with writing that increasingly “represented a kind of farewell to the past.”⁵⁹ Lawrence had been predominantly encouraged and guided by his mother to become an artist, so this departure from his old works was crucial to breaking free from her and developing his own self as a writer. Throughout this pursuit, Frieda was the perfect liberator for Lawrence, giving him a new identity and a “mission as a writer.”⁶⁰ From Frieda's firm independence, untamed sensuality, and intense love, he gained inspiration for his new focus of writing and learned how to move forward as the established author D.H. Lawrence.

⁵⁶ Seolji Han, “The Ethics of Melancholic Subjectivity in *Sons and Lovers*,” *The D.H. Lawrence Review* 41, no. 2 (2016), 13.

⁵⁷ Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 129.

⁵⁸ Boulton, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, i. 427.

⁵⁹ Worthen, *Life of an Outsider*, 130.

⁶⁰ Morgan, “Lawrence, Frieda (1879-1956),” encyclopedia.com.

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