

THE INFLUENCE OF D. H. LAWRENCE
UPON FORD MADOX FORD
AS AUTHOR OF THE GOOD SOLDIER
by
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INTRODUCTION

Numerous innovations in both form and content have been made to the novel during the Twentieth Century. Not the least significant of these is the new frankness and directness with which numerous novelists have explored, and are exploring, questions connected with man's fulfilment in love and in marriage and his success in the society to which he belongs.

Among the first English novelists taking the new approach to this age-old theme was D.H. Lawrence. He is notable for having broken away from Victorian traditions and for having attempted to bring a fresh attitude toward love into his novels. Today, he is regarded by many as the master novelist in that field. The insights which he has provided into the theme, and the manner in which he has explored it, have had an enormous influence upon the development of the twentieth century novel.

Lawrence, however, is not only a novelist. In two non-fictional prose works entitled Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious, he formulated a fairly explicit "pseudo-philosophy"¹ which includes his most direct statements concerning the problem of man's fulfilment in love and his success in the world. Lawrence

1. D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious.

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has stated that these studies were written as a result of his experiences as a writer and as a man. Because of this fact, the books provide an excellent primary source for the examination of Lawrence's theory.

During the last seven years, Ford Madox Ford has emerged from the catacombs of little-read authors, and he is recognized today as a major twentieth century novelist. Ford's varied and lengthy career began in the nineteenth century, spanned the first World War, and ended just before the outbreak of World War II. He was born into a family with close Pre-Raphaelite ties, and his writing was influenced by this school. He collaborated with Joseph Conrad, and developed with this older novelist a deep interest in craft; that interest was further developed by Ford's admiration for the works of Henry James. Ford's personal life was spotted with bankruptcies, mental illness, and broken marriages. As man and author, he is something of an enigma, and it is difficult to state whether Ford is the last of the "old line" of Victorian writers or the first of a new tradition.

He certainly displays in his novels a typical Victorian unwillingness to deal directly with passion or to use naturalistic descriptions in his exploration of themes pertaining to the love relationship. Nevertheless, the

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question of man's fulfilment in love and in society is dominant in the best half-dozen of his thirty-one novels. In other words, he is typically Victorian in his unwillingness to give a direct treatment to themes which he, as a twentieth century novelist, would find it difficult to avoid. Consequently, his best novels are works which, despite their fine qualities, pose problems in interpretation to the reader. When a writer must, for some personal reason, give a vague or incomplete rendition of the "objective correlatives"¹ which are necessary for the completion of his work of art, the experiencer of that work will necessarily find the work difficult to interpret. This is a flaw from which Ford was unable to escape when the theme with which he dealt concerned man's quest for fulfilment in love.

Many critics consider The Good Soldier to be Ford's masterpiece. He himself referred to it as a Great Auk's egg, the image stemming from his belief that this was the one great achievement of his career as a novelist.

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1. Eliot, T.S., Selected Essays, London, Faber & Faber Ltd., 1932, p.145. Eliot describes an "objective correlative" as "... a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked".

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Distinguished critics such as Robie MacAulay, John Crowe Ransom, Mark Schorer, and Allen Tate, have stated that The Good Soldier, ranks among the twenty greatest novels produced in the English language during this century. Despite its greatness, the book presents some problems for the reader, and these problems seem to stem at least in part from Ford's indirectness in exploring his theme.

In The Good Soldier, Ford explores the same theme as that which is studied in the major works of Lawrence. Since the two were contemporaries, it is understandable that they might be interested in the same themes. However, when it is considered that they were personally associated during the years 1909 to 1912, the fact of the similarity of themes becomes highly significant. It is always interesting to know of the association of one great literary man with another, but when the association is such that one man might have influenced directly the nature or quality of the other's writing, a knowledge of their association sometimes can be extremely important in leading to an understanding of the works themselves.

In this thesis, a study will be made of the similarities between Lawrence's theory concerning man's fulfilment in love and in life, and parallel aspects of Ford's treatment of this subject in The Good Soldier. As a result of this study, with supporting evidence gleaned

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from the business and personal relationships of these two men, conclusions will be reached on the extent to which Lawrence seems to have influenced the older novelist.

The present work proceeds from a study of the Ford-Lawrence association, to a re-capitulation of Lawrence's theory, to a detailed study of The Good Soldier from the point of view of Lawrentian doctrine. Chapter One comprises a factual study of the events which occurred during the years when Ford and Lawrence were associated with each other in a writer-editor relationship. It also contains a brief study of The Trespasser, an early Lawrence novel which displays a Fordian influence in its failure to deal with the man-woman relationship in an explicit, direct manner, but which has at the same time a striking thematic resemblance to The Good Soldier. The overall content of this chapter indicates that while the older, more experienced Ford had a temporary influence upon the young Lawrence, the most lasting and significant influence was that which the "pupil" had on his "teacher".

Chapter Two contains a re-capitulation of Lawrence's essential argument as extracted from Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious. This study presents the basis for comparison with the work which is to be examined in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

Chapter Three contains a re-capitulation of the

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intricate plot structure of The Good Soldier and a study of the society which Ford depicted in this novel. The latter is then compared with Lawrence's views concerning the society of his day, and his attitude toward the educational system contemporary to him. It is seen in this Chapter that the very flaws which Ford depicts in the society of The Good Soldier are condemned most vehemently by Lawrence.

The major male characters of The Good Soldier are studied in Chapter Four, and evaluated from the point of view of Lawrence's theory. It can be determined from this chapter that the male characters depicted by Ford suffer the same inadequacies as Lawrence considered man to be suffering in his own society. The aimlessness and frustration of the lives of Ford's characters stem from the same problems which Lawrence noticed in his own day.

Chapter Five comprises a presentation of seven female characters who are depicted in The Good Soldier. As in the case of the male characters, Ford's women are unable, for varying reasons, to fulfill their roles in society. These reasons are the same as those which Lawrence saw as being responsible for the failure of many marriages in his contemporary world.

The Conclusion presents a definitive statement of a fact which was indicated in Chapter One: that the

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partly-Victorian writer, Ford Madox Ford, was influenced substantially by his protege, D.H. Lawrence, and that this influence, while it is apparent in many of Ford's books, becomes abundantly clear when The Good Soldier is examined in the light of Lawrence's theory.

The aims of this thesis can be stated most succinctly in terms of "material object" and "formal object". The "material object" of something designates a subject in relation to whatever can be said about it. The "formal object" is the thing according to its manner of being known; that is, it represents the subject viewed under a particular aspect. Hence, the "material object" of this thesis is the presentation of certain facts concerning Lawrence's love theory, Ford's The Good Soldier, and the relationship which existed between these two men. The "formal object" is the examination of these things with a view to determining: firstly, the similarities between Lawrence's love theory and parallel aspects of Ford's The Good Soldier; and secondly, the extent of Lawrence's influence on Ford in the conception and creation of The Good Soldier.

CHAPTER ONE

MASTER AND DISCIPLE

This brief introductory chapter will present an account of the business and personal relationships which existed between Ford Madox Ford and D. H. Lawrence. This relationship had an effect upon the writings of both men, particularly upon those of Ford, and a study of it is therefore vital to this thesis. It is not difficult to discover that Ford had criticised adversely the "phallic" nature of Lawrence's writing.¹ Moreover, it appears from a study of The Good Soldier that Ford himself had tried to avoid the type of writing which he disliked in Lawrence's work. Although Ford was influenced by Lawrence's thinking, he at the same time believed that the novelist should avoid "phallic" passages, and the combination of these two factors resulted in the inherent difficulties which one experiences in reading The Good Soldier. Consequently, a clarification of the Ford-Lawrence relationship will be useful preparation for the comparisons which will be made in the ensuing chapters.

The material object of the chapter then, is the

1. Since the term "phallic" is interchanged in some memoirs with the adjective "erotic", it seems likely that Ford was referring to naturalistic descriptions of the physiological aspect of the sex act.

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presentation of these business and personal relationships.¹ This material has been gleaned from various critical works and memoirs. The formal object is to examine and point out certain relevancies which these relationships have to the comparative study which follows.

This chapter, consequently, will include biographical details only to the extent that such details provide essential background to, or information about, the relationship between Ford and Lawrence. It is not intended as a biographical sketch or study of either man, as such would be irrelevant to the aim of the thesis. Hence, the inclusion of facts concerning the personal lives and the careers of both men will be strictly limited.

By 1909, when Ford and Lawrence met for the first time, the former had already been established as a man of letters in England and in continental Europe. Although only thirty-six years old, he had published four volumes of children's stories, ten novels (two of them in collaboration with Joseph Conrad) four volumes of poetry and nine volumes of non-fiction.

1. It is also important to note that much of this chapter comprises a study of the theme and plot structure of Lawrence's novel, The Trespasser. It will be seen that this is necessary if the relationship between Ford and Lawrence is to be explored adequately.

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Lawrence was not quite twenty-four years old then. Because he had not yet had any work published, he had begun to consider himself a failure in the world of literature. He had tried unsuccessfully to have his poetry published. He had sent some of his work to a writer for the Daily News, asking for the writer's opinion on its merit, but the work had been returned by the writer's wife, who apologized that her husband was unable to review the manuscript, due to the pressure of work.¹ In addition, the Nottingham University Magazine had rejected some of his poems.² Dejected, Lawrence had vowed to a friend of his youth, Jessie (Chambers) Wood: "I've tried, and been turned down, and I shall try no more. And I don't care if I never have a line published".³

This episode had occurred in the spring of 1908. The following Christmas, Miss Chambers and Lawrence were together again, and despite his protests, she decided to send some of his work to the editor of the dynamic new literary journal, The English Review. However, she did not do this immediately, and it was June, 1909 before she finally copied a short story entitled Odour of

1. Edward Nehls, D.H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography, The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison; Vol.1, p. 104.

2. Ibid., p. 82.

3. Ibid., p. 104.

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Chrysanthemums and some of Lawrence's poems which she liked best, and forwarded them to the editor of The English Review.¹ The editor was Ford Madox Ford.

The following is Ford's recollection of the day when this first work arrived at his office:

In the year when my eyes first fell on words written by Norman Douglas, G.H. Tomlison, Wyndham Lewis, Ezra Pound, and others ... upon a day I received a letter from a young school-teacher in Nottingham. I can still see the handwriting -- as if drawn with sepia rather than written in ink, on grey-blue notepaper. It said that the writer was a young man who wrote, as she thought, admirably but was too shy to send his work to editors. Would I care to see some of his writing? In that way I came to read the first words of a new writer²

Ford continues his memoir by stating that upon reading the opening paragraph, he immediately decided to publish the story. When asked by his secretary whether he had found another genius he replied, "It's a big one this time".³

The two men, editor and contributor, met soon after Ford had reviewed these first works; they began an association which was to last until 1912. Although Ford does not explain why, he states that he never liked Lawrence very

1. Ibid., p. 105.

2. Ford Madox Ford, Mightier than the Sword, George Allen & Unwin Limited, London, p. 98.

3. Ibid., p. 99.

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much personally, but that he "admired him because he had a white flame of passion for the truth".¹ Lawrence, on the other hand, referred to Ford as "... the first man I ever met who had a real and a true feeling for literature".²

A study of many of the detailed biographies, memoirs and collected letters of these men fails to reveal the exact extent of the influence which the one had upon the other. It is known, however, that Ford encouraged Lawrence, and made sincere efforts to enhance the younger man's literary reputation "for a period of slightly more than two years"³ and that he considered The White Peacock and Sons and Lovers to be major novels of great genius. He claims to have spent long hours with his protege reviewing the manuscripts to these novels and suggesting emendations which were sometimes accepted, after much discussion, and sometimes rejected.⁴ Ford does not give examples of those emendations.

The break in their association followed a dispute over the original manuscript of The Trespasser, a novel which Lawrence had published in May, 1912. Ford recalls:

1. Ibid., p. 117.

2. Edward Nehls, D.H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography, Vol. 1, p. 82.

3. Ibid., p. 117.

4. Ford Madex Ford, Mightier Than the Sword, p. 120.

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... one day, he brought me half of the MS. of The Trespassers¹ - and that was the end. It was a Trespassers much - oh, but much! -² more phallic than is the book as it stands²

It is not essential to the aims of this thesis to undertake the extensive research which would be necessary to determine how phallic the original manuscript of The Trespasser actually was. However, a friend of Lawrence named Helen Corke has stated that some "... grandly, symbolic passages which were written into the original manuscript of The Trespasser ... were deleted at the urging of Ford, who ... preferred the serenities of canonized art to the insecurity and unpredictableness of life".³

On the other hand, the reliability of Miss Corke's statement might also be questioned, because it is generally recognized by Lawrentian critics that The Trespasser is to some extent "a revision of some work by Helen Corke, the

1. Lawrence had originally called the novel The Saga of Siegmund; various other titles, among them Trespassers in Cytherea, and the one which Lawrence preferred, A Game of Forfeits, were also considered. It is possible that the word "Trespassers" was pluralized when the meeting to which Ford refers took place; it is also possible that Ford, who wrote these memoirs at least twenty years after the event, was mistaken concerning the exact title of Lawrence's novel.

2. Ibid., p. 121.

3. Edward Nehls, D.H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography, Vol.

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friend of his school-teaching days".¹ It is possible that Miss Corke was indignant about the removal of certain passages because she herself had contributed them in the first place.

The association between Ford and Lawrence ended with this incident, and Ford claims never to have seen Lawrence again to talk to him; nevertheless, his respect for the younger man's abilities never waned, and he realized that:

his gift for form, in his sort of long book, was such that I could suggest very little to him and the rest of his gift was outside my reach. And, as I have said, he is quite good enough as he is -- rich and colored and startling like a medieval manuscript.²

After the break in their association, Lawrence continued to respect Ford's talent and although he did consider him to be rather tiresome, he maintained a restrained fondness for his one-time editor. Lawrence made a particularly perceptive comment concerning Ford which explains one of the latter's most serious problems:

Hueffer lives in a constant haze ... He has talent, all kinds of it, but has everlastingly been a damned fool about his life. He's fine in half a dozen lines of writing but won't stick to any one of them, and the critics can't stand

1. Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, London: Gerald Duckworth Ltd., p. 121.

2. Ford Madox Ford, Mightier than the Sword, p. 121.

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that in a writer.¹

It is not essential to this thesis to determine the exact degree to which these two writers influenced each other; however, some general indication of reciprocal influence can be of help in the study which is to follow. It has been seen that Ford took exception to what he called the phallic nature of Lawrence's novel, The Trespasser. On the other hand, it has been seen that he looked upon Sons and Lovers as a work of genius. These two facts, considered together, give rise to an interesting problem. Both these novels, and The Good Soldier as well, are books which deal to a large extent with the problem of man's fulfillment in life. If any of the three can be considered to have phallic passages, it is Sons and Lovers. Indeed, The Trespasser as it now stands is no more phallic than is The Good Soldier, although it may have been in the original manuscript.

A comparison of the themes and the objective correlatives of The Trespasser with those of The Good Soldier, reveals some striking facts. To begin with, as far as theme is concerned, the two novels have much in common; each of them revolves around the problem of man's

1. Edward Nehls, D.H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography, Vol. ii, p. 412. (Ford's surname was originally "Hueffer".)

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fulfillment in life and love. Even in the "objective correlatives" employed by these men, similarities are evident.

The protagonist of The Trespasser is a thirty-eight-year-old violinist and music teacher, named Siegmund, who is married and the father of four children. Unhappy in his marriage and apparently unfulfilled as an artist, he seeks happiness with his twenty-eight year-old pupil, Helena, whom he has known for eight years. Almost all the action of the novel takes place during a weekend on the Isle of Wight, which brings this eight-year relationship to an end. Siegmund appears to have looked upon Helena as the embodiment of those ideal qualities which could bring him happiness and fulfillment in love. But the weekend brings no such fulfillment. Instead he comes to an awareness of the fact that Helena is not completely his, and that his ties with his family are stronger than he had suspected. Helena, on the other hand, is unable to give herself to him completely. She is, as Lawrence says, one of "... that class of 'dreaming women' with whom passion exhausts itself at the mouth".¹ Siegmund is an ideal to her - perhaps partly because of their pupil-teacher relationship - and the stark reality of his love-making is

1. D. H. Lawrence, The Trespasser, p. 30.

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not at all desirable to her. Consequently, as a result of their sexual contest, "... her soul seemed blasted".¹ She sees that her ideals are not to be met in Siegmund. At the same time, she finds that she is unable to surrender herself completely to him in their love-making. This may be due to the degree to which she has idealized love; it may also be the result of her awareness that Siegmund himself is not totally free from his connection with his wife and children - particularly his children - and that consequently he will never belong to her alone. It seems reasonable to assess Helena as a woman whose ideals concerning sexual relationships with men hampered her ability both to give and to receive, unreservedly in love. Siegmund finds disappointment when the "affaire de la coeur" of which he had dreamed, and which had been his only source of hope during the preceding years of unhappy marriage, proves unfulfilling to him. Neither will admit directly to the other, but both realize that their relationship will never bring them happiness.

Siegmund, then, returns home from his weekend, carrying with him the realization that there is to be for him no fulfillment in love. He had looked forward with great anticipation to the time when his dream of

1. Ibid., p. 56.

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fulfillment would become a reality. On the train which was taking him to Helena at the beginning of the weekend, he had anticipated "... a sort of new birth";¹ but during his four days with her, he had been forced to acknowledge that even Helena could not bring the fulfillment for which he craved. Nothing remains for him. In despair, he asks himself, "What can I set my foot on when this is gone?"²

Arriving home, Siegmund finds that his oldest children and his wife ignore him completely, and treat him as though he were a stranger. His isolation is made complete when his youngest daughter, Gwen, the only one who seems to care for him now, refuses a piece of chocolate which he offers her.

It will be seen in Chapter Two that Lawrence considered it essential for man to undertake some purposeful activity in life if he were to find the happiness of fulfillment, and that the man who is to undertake such activity must be inspired to it as a result of the fulfillment which he finds in love. Siegmund has failed at his ultimate attempt in love, and he realizes that there is to be nothing in life which can bring him satisfaction.

1. Ibid., p. 13.

2. Ibid., p. 123.

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Thinking of things which had once interested him, such as farming in Canada, he says, "I should be just the same there ... Get the same sickening feeling there that I want nothing".¹ Despairing, he commits suicide.

The Trespasser and The Good Soldier have several similarities. Not the least striking of these is the theme. In each case, the author is exploring man's quest for fulfillment in love and in life. The objective correlatives used in this exploration are also similar in that each novel presents a man whose married life is unfulfilling to him, and who eventually commits suicide after trying unsuccessfully to find fulfillment outside marriage. The Good Soldier gives more ramifications of this quest, and also presents other characters who are directly connected with the central problem. However, the similarities remain, and they are prominent and significant.

Perhaps the most striking similarity between the two books is to be found in the indirectness with which each author explored his theme. Because of the influence which Ford seems to have had on Lawrence, it is very possible that The Trespasser appears as a less phallic, less explicit book than Sons and Lovers, and no more phallic and not much more explicit than The Good Soldier.

1. Ibid., p. 161.

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There is little doubt that Ford, because of his reputation as both writer and editor, influenced Lawrence to make significant changes in his treatment of the theme which he explored in The Trespasser. However, it is also probable that Ford, dealing as he was with a man who is now recognized as master novelist in his treatment of the theme of man's fulfillment in life and love, was also influenced to a certain degree by his protege. Considering the time lag which occurs between the writing of The Trespasser and the publication of The Good Soldier it is possible and highly probable that Ford was influenced in his choice of theme by his relationship with Lawrence.

This introductory chapter has served as a means of introducing the very proximate connection between Lawrence and Ford both as men and as novelists. In Chapter Two, a recapitulation will be made of Lawrence's essential theory concerning the themes which are treated in both The Trespasser and The Good Soldier.

CHAPTER TWO

RE-CAPITULATION OF LAWRENCE'S ESSENTIAL ARGUMENT

It is the purpose of this chapter to examine in detail these aspects of Lawrence's theory which pertain to love, and the various aspects of the man-woman relationship, and which are stated in his books, Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious. More specifically, this chapter is intended, firstly, as a means of presenting the aforementioned aspects of Lawrence's theory, and secondly, as a means of examining them as portions of that theory.

These two books by Lawrence are not solely a study of the relationships between man and woman. The author has also presented in them his views on psychiatry, the birth of consciousness in the human being, the discipline of the young, the particular relationship between the child and each of its parents, the growth of sexual consciousness in the child, and to a limited extent, on the immortal nature of the soul and the nature of the universe. Such topics, because they are not essential to the study which is being undertaken in this thesis, will not be recapitulated nor discussed. The areas which will be considered are those which deal directly with the physiological and psychological aspects of the love relationship, and those which examine the relative import-

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ance of the roles of man and woman in the world. The former is necessary for the overall development of the thesis, because the physiological aspect of love was vitally important to Lawrence, and the psychological aspects, he believed, could be distorted very easily. The latter is included because of the connection which Lawrence saw between man's role as a mate and his role as a member of society; and because of the significance which he saw in the fact that reversals or distortions of certain phases of the roles of man and woman were evident in his contemporary society. These various aspects must be examined in keeping with the overall goal of the thesis. In addition, it is necessary to recapitulate Lawrence's views on education insofar as they pertain to these other matters as presented in the two subject books. This is needed, because aspects of his contemporary educational system appeared to Lawrence to be wrong, and to be the cause of much of man's trouble in his later attempts to form a vital and successful relationship with a woman.

Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious was published for the first time in 1921. The book was controversial by its general nature, and in the specific views which it promulgated (particularly its attack upon Freud) made an open target for the critics, who condemned it nearly unreservedly. One reviewer, Francis Hackett, referred to

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the work as "Interesting, eloquent, and half-baked".¹ In another review, the book was dealt with more severely: "There is little philosophic value or even novelty in the theory...."²

Lawrence was disappointed and angered by the unfavorable reception which his book had received. In order to enlarge on and clarify the views which were presented in Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, he wrote Fantasia of the Unconscious, which was published in 1922. The second book is an expansion of the former, and in many instances, it states more explicitly what had already been said in the earlier work. The author, who had already experienced the scorn of the critics, stated emphatically in the Foreword that he was writing for a very select audience, and that "the generality of readers had better just leave it alone"³ because to them it would seem "... only a rather more revolting mess of wordy nonsense than the last".⁴ The critics rose to the occasion. Those who took the work seriously condemned it. Others

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1. New Republic, a review by Francis Hackett, Vol. 27, p. 329, Aug. 17, 1921.
 2. Springfield Republican, May 24, 1921.
 3. D. H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious, New York, The Viking Press, 1960, p. 59.
 4. Ibid., p. 59.

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refused to take it seriously in the first place, and they wrote flippant reviews in which Fantasia of the Unconscious was spoken of as an ebullient reflection of Lawrence's personal experiences. One of them called it a "... home-brew of psychoanalysis and sex ethics, with an appalling over-supply of yeast".¹ Another stated that "... only one-tenth is psychoanalysis, the other nine-tenths D. H. Lawrence irrepressible and gay".²

Lawrence has stated that the theories expounded in these two works resulted from his novels and poems; that is, that about which he theorizes in these books could be deduced from the novels and poems themselves. He explained:

The novels and poems come unwatched out of one's pen. And then the absolute need which one has for some sort of satisfactory mental attitude towards oneself and things in general makes one try to abstract some definite conclusions from one's experiences as a writer and as a man.³

It is these "definite conclusions" which will be dealt with in this chapter.

The unconscious is vital to Lawrence's theory; but it is not a submerged and vague unconscious, but "the spontaneous life-motive in every organism".⁴ It is a

1. Survey, Vol. 49, p. 397, Dec. 15, 1922.
2. Nation, Vol. 116, p. 74, January 17, 1923.
3. D. H. Lawrence; Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. 57.
4. D. H. Lawrence, Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, The Viking Press, New York, 1965, p. 13.

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non-conceptualizable entity which is known only by direct experience, by watching the manifestations which it presents. It is located "... beneath the burning influx of the navel"¹ within the solar plexus, which is the heart of the nervous system.

For Lawrence, there is a physical seat for all of man's psychic activities. There are two parallel polar systems, one below the diaphragm, the other above it. Below the diaphragm in the solar plexus, there rest, first of all, the sympathetic, or positive system, the positive urging which causes the unknowing child to seek out the breast of its mother and cleave to it and glut itself; and secondly, the voluntary, negative ganglion, which causes in the same child wrath, repulsion, excrementation. These for Lawrence are the centres of dark subjectivity of the individual.

Parallel to these, above the diaphragm, are: the thoracic, or sympathetic plexus, which is responsible for the individual's outpouring of a self-devoting love; and the thoracic ganglion, which brings back to the individual an apprehension of the beloved. The diagram included as Appendix A (see page), will clarify Lawrence's meaning.

In the solar plexus, that is, the lower sympathetic

1. Ibid., p. 20.

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system, rests the central point of a large "network" which will give rise to all of man's appetitive activities.

Hence, the same plexus which causes the child to first seek the breast of the mother, will also give rise in man to the sexual urge.

In the thoracic plexus, the second great positive activity centre in man, there are born drives which cause one individual to give to another a self-devoting, unrestrained love. Hence, the lover will want to identify with the beloved, will want to immerse his or her self in the self of the other, will desire to blend soul into soul. At the same time, there is functioning the thoracic ganglion which causes the individual to want to know the beloved as the beloved alone, in her individuality, is. Hence, the fingers reach out, the eyes search to gain a complete knowledge of the secret, mysterious being which is the beloved.

Because of the great power, the boundless energy of each of these forces, it is necessary to the man and woman as lover and beloved, that both the negative and the positive thoracic planes be active. This is because while lover and beloved are intermingling and to a certain extent may appear to be as one, each nevertheless remains an individual. If the thoracic plexus were not countered by the thoracic ganglion, there would be merely an outpouring.

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The individual could not maintain his individuality for long if his sole real activity were in this outpouring of self to the beloved. If this activity were to continue alone, the individual would so immerse himself in the beloved that his very individuality would be lost. Hence, there is a great need for this balancing factor: the individual activity of one being striving to experience a unique, personal knowledge of the unique, personal aspects of another being. Lawrence defines this more fully as the "tremendous great joy in exploring and discovering the beloved".¹

Conversely, it can be readily seen that if this second thoracic activity alone existed, unhappiness would result. Without the countering sympathetic urge there would develop a distorted love grounded in an obsessive desire to know, to have, but not to give. This insane possessiveness, which is particularly noticeable in unreasonable jealousy, would be as disastrous as if the opposite situation were true.

Love, then, is satisfactory only if enriched by this interchange: that in each partner there is an outpouring of one self to the other, which is countered by the complementary "objective realization of the beloved".²

1. Ibid., p. 38.

2. Ibid., p. 38.

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This realization is similar to adding another self to one's own self and thus enriching it.

This relationship between man and woman can be consummated only in the act of coition: an act which, for Lawrence, is an "untellable" experience, a "great psychic experience ... of tremendous importance".¹ This act becomes necessary for the well-being of the individuals and for the success of their relationship.

Why is it that the relationship of love between man and woman can be consummated only in this act of coition? Looking back to the physiological poles of positive and negative response, one can see that in the union of two persons the ultimate end will be an act or an experience which will allow the one to give most unreservedly to the other, and at the same time to explore most fully the deep, dark secrets of the partner's being. As Lawrence mentions in the following description of the act of coition, there is in this sexual experience a means of contact between the "magnetic" poles of the two partners - an opportunity for interchange such as is never available in any other type of act:

The whole of the living blood in the two individuals forms a field of intense, polarized magnetic attraction. So, the two poles must be

1. D. H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. 141.

brought into contact. In the act of coition, the two seas of blood in the two individuals, rocking and surging towards contact, as near as possible, clash into oneness. A great flash of interchange occurs, like an electric spark when two currents meet or like lightning out of the densely surcharged clouds. There is a lightning flash which passes through the blood of both individuals, there is a thunder of sensation which rolls in diminishing crashes down¹ the nerves of each - and then the tension passes.

In these metaphorical terms, Lawrence has come as closely as he could to telling the untellable: he has captured the atmosphere of the great psychic and physical tumult which is the act of coition. He goes on to say that after this act (not the act of "false coition" which results in prostitution or promiscuity) the two individuals, though separate, have changed; that there is an interchange which radically changed the chemical constitution of the blood and creates a freshness and a newness which were not present before. As a result of this, man craves some new activity which is a part of his role as creator in the world.

This new activity which man craves, and which he must have, is not a specific activity which will satisfy all men in the same way. For every man there is an activity in which he, as an individual, must participate. This work may be a relatively great achievement, as the

1. Ibid., p. 141.

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achievement of the artist; or it may be a relatively minor work in which one individual contributes his energies to the work of a group, as does the soldier on the battlefield. What is important is that for this individual this be a work which is of great consequence, for which he is willing to work long hours, and perhaps, if need be, even sacrifice his life.

It is an integral part of Lawrence's theory that in one direction of human life, the act of coition is the essential clue; that this act is the necessary result of the drawing together of male and female - but it is also integral to Lawrence's theory that in another direction, the final consummation is to be found in another activity. In the male, this second but greater impulse is "to build up out of his own self and his own belief and his own effort something wonderful".¹ This, Lawrence says, is man's prime incentive and motivation in life: not to build an empire for himself and his beloved, but to create or build a world which represents the outpouring of his own creative, religious soul. In addition, there is, he says, a conflict of interests between these two essential drives. Hence, he writes:

The central fulfilment, for a man, is that he

1. Ibid., p. 60.

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possess his own soul in strength within him, deep and alone This central fulness of self-possession is our goal, if goal there be any. But there are two great ways of fulfilment. The first, the way of fulfilment through complete love, complete, passionate, deep love. And the second, the greater, the fulfilment through the accomplishment of religious purpose, the soul's earnest purpose. We work the love way falsely, from the upper self, and work it to death. The second way, of active union in strong purpose, and in faith, this we only sneer at.¹

It has been seen that Lawrence considered man's prime motivation in life to be that of "world-maker", and that he saw it as the cause of disaster when man put sexual fulfillment ahead of this other role. In fact, he considered it essential to the well-being of the entire family, that man, once he had found his fulfillment through love, make his grand step into the world in some "passionate purposive activity".² In time, therefore, priority is given to fulfillment in love; in importance, it is given to this other fulfillment which can be found only in man's role as maker and doer in the world. Lawrence saw the failure of a man to do this as the cause of many unhappy marriages. He saw the possibility of the creation of a vicious circle in which the man, failing in his primary role in life, assumes many of the functions of the wife, and

1. Ibid., p. 156.

2. Ibid., p. 157.

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thus causes the woman in turn to seek elsewhere the satisfaction which she should normally derive from the following of her own role as lover of a man with a mission. Seeking an outlet for her natural activity, she will often turn her wifely love to someone else, probably to her child.

This view does not discount the further notion that "love is a spontaneous thing, coming out of the spontaneous effectual soul".¹ In other words, love is not a deliberately fostered thing which becomes patterned in conformity with a preconceived idea. Rather than springing from an idea, it must rise automatically from the dynamic consciousness of man.

It is for this reason that Lawrence states adamantly that a woman must keep sex out of her head; that she must go into life with preconceived ideas of herself as a woman, or of her lover. Her state in this respect should be parallel to that of the unborn child or newborn babe, which has no idea of itself nor of its mother. The unborn child or baby proceeds in its relationship with this other unknown force, completely without an idea of the other person. But Lawrence says, there is a dynamic consciousness which allows the child-mother relationship to progress. The consciousness which moves the unseeing child

1. D. H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. 132.

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to seek out the breast of its mother is the heart of the same dynamic consciousness which should govern the love affairs of women with their men.

When love is distorted or side-tracked by ideas, that is, when love is victimized by an attempt to make it something which it is not, then disaster ensues. A woman's self-consciousness will cause her to change from that which she is by nature, to that which she, by the distortion of her ideas, thinks she is:

First she is the noble spouse of the not-quite-so-noble male; then a Mater Dolorosa; then a Ministering Angel; then a competent social unit, a Member of Parliament or a Lady Doctor or a platform speaker and all the while, as a sideshow, she is the Isolde of some Tristan, or the Guinivere of some Lancelot, or the Fata Morgana of all men - in her own idea. She can't stop having an idea of herself. She can't get herself out of her head. And there she is ... till the whole man-and-woman game has become just a hell, and men with any backbone would rather kill themselves than go on with it - or kill somebody else.¹

Expanding upon this theory of the polarity of being, Lawrence says that active and passive functions have been handed out to man and woman in two different fields; society and love. In society, man must be the active, positive force: that is, he must be the thinker and the doer in the world. It is to man that the roles of creator, legislator, soldier, healer, et cetera, must fall. Woman

1. Ibid., p. 121.

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in this field is to be a passive negative force.

On the other hand, woman should be the "initiator of emotion, of feeling, and of sympathetic understanding".¹ In other words, in the field of love woman is the positive force, and man the negative force. Woman loves; she asks in love. Man is loved; he responds.

It is Lawrence's theory that man's day and his night are two separate fields of life for him; that man in his daytime must follow his religious soul's urge to create, to build his new worlds, even if he has to risk great dangers to do so; that man must sometimes sacrifice himself or cause grief to mother or wife in order to follow that which, because of his role as positive building force in the world, he must follow. At the same time, man must in his night give up that passive pole of his nature to the positive love of his woman; that is, he must have his evening of papers and pipe as the recipient of that powerful force of love of which it is woman's role to be mistress.

But Lawrence leaves no doubt about which of these two must take precedence should a conflict arise between them:

It is not woman who claims the highest in man. It

1. Ibid., p. 132.

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is a man's own religious soul that drives him on beyond woman, to his supreme activity. For his highest, man is responsible to God alone. He may not pause to remember that he has a life to lose, or a wife and children to leave. He must carry forward the banner of life, though seven worlds perish, with all the wives and mothers and children in them. Hence Jesus, 'Woman, what have I to do with thee?' Every man that lives has to say it again to his wife or mother, once he has any work or mission in hand, that comes from his soul.¹

What happens, then, when society's set of rules distorts the concept of man and woman and requires each to assume new roles in keeping with a new ideal?

Lawrence believed wholeheartedly in the complete maleness of man and the complete femininity of woman. The problem with man today, he said, is that he has nourished in his head an ideal of gentleness and wistfulness; and that man consequently has become girlish, through a distortion of that very maleness which is the core of his being. "In fact, many young men feel so very like what they imagine a girl must feel, that hence they draw the conclusion that they must have a large share of female sex inside them".² This conclusion, however, is false, according to Lawrence. The problem is not with the composition of these effeminate males: on the contrary, they are just as masculine as any other man. The problem has

1. Ibid., p. 135.

2. Ibid., p. 132.

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arisen, not from the nature of any man or group of men, but from the ideals which have been propagated for manhood.

"Our ideal has taught us to be so loving and so submissive and so yielding in our sympathy, that the mode has become automatic in many men".¹ In other words, man, who by his very nature has his manhood in his volitional centres, and should be outgoing, forceful, active, authoritative, has had instilled in him ideals which run contrary to this nature and has taken it for granted that he should be introverted, retiring, passive and obedient.

The problem, unfortunately, becomes even more complex and more tragic; for while man has been constructing an ideal for himself which is contrary to his very nature, and has assumed a role very close to that of woman, the role of woman has not remained stationary. She has adopted man's male characteristics and, in order to master her new ideal as woman in the world, master-mistress of her own identity, she has taken that aspect of positivity which she should not have.

On the other hand, in the realm of love, " ... as the initiator of emotion, of feeling, and of sympathetic understanding, the woman is positive, the man negative In love, it is the woman naturally who loves, the man who

1. Ibid., p. 132.

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is loved".¹ But here, too, ideals have distorted nature. The old poles again have been reversed. "Man becomes the emotional party, woman the positive and active".² Lawrence sees man as the creature who in love has come to show the same desires to be taken, the same emotional wants, the same need to give, as those which woman should have by nature; and he sees woman, on the other hand, as the new queen of the earth whose tenderness and pity can now destroy the man who is the object of them.

Thus it has happened, Lawrence says, that in the world, the being who should have his day of glory and his night of surrender to the woman who loves him - that the man who should be the active force in the building of a new world out of his own dynamic creativity - has become subject to the new positive part, woman, and has himself become weak, effeminate, retiring. And thus it is that in love woman has exchanged her positive role for man's originally passive one, and has seen man become the gentle, emotional being she should have continued to be.

There is one other aspect of Lawrence's theory which is pertinent to this study, that is, his belief concerning the education of the youth in society. For

1. Ibid., p. 133.

2. Ibid., p. 134.

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Lawrence all the details which schools teach concerning love and morality are unmitigated trash. Lawrence saw the child as someone who can be taught best if taught to love spontaneity and if led away from an unnecessary emphasis on understanding. In the young child movement is taught, "not by rule or mental dictation",¹ but "by playing and teasing and anger, and amusement A child must learn the fullness of spontaneous motion".² Later, when the child is older, he must learn other activities as well; but he must not be fed the "unmitigated evil"³ of preconceived ideas.

Lawrence sees immorality and vice as springing from a suppression of man's great centres of activity. He says that "Morality which is based on ideas or on an ideal, is an unmitigated evil. A child which is proud and free in its movements, in all its department, will be quite as moral as need be".⁴ In other words, Lawrence is advocating a society in which man, moving free and proud in his own dynamic activities, will follow by his very nature a morality which will be much more effective than that which is fed to him and crammed into him as a set of rules and ideals.

1. Ibid., p. 115.

2. Ibid., p. 115.

3. Ibid., p. 116.

4. Ibid., p. 116.

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It is, then, from these ills that there spring up teachings on love which are connected, not with the dynamic soul of man, but with will and ideal. From this evil emerge the men and women who go into love with ideas that stifle its spontaneous nature and make a mockery of all that it should be. The woman goes into her relationships with men, already having ideals of what her man must offer her if she is to find him acceptable. Consequently, she marries, not in accordance with her spontaneous outburst of love for a man, but in accordance with a preposterous ideal of what characteristics her man must have. The result is a marriage built on a misconception and doomed from its very beginning to failure.

This chapter has provided a re-capitulation of Lawrence's theories insofar as they pertain directly or indirectly to the relationship between man and woman in the world. The physiological activity was mentioned first, because without it no discussion of the polarity of being is possible. The ideas on the polarity of being, as set forth by Lawrence, provide always at least an implicit, and sometimes explicit condemnation of the practices of his contemporary society. They also provide the basis for his opinions on man's duty to a higher quest beyond that provided by love in marriage.

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In summary, it can be said that Lawrence was a firm believer in the dynamic consciousness of man and a foe of the "sex in the head" trend so prominent in his contemporary society; and that he believed staunchly in the primary importance of man's role as the building force in society. Given this theory, one has a basis for comparison with the traits of the characters of The Good Soldier and the situations in which they find themselves, in a society contemporary to that of Lawrence.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOCIETY DEPICTED IN THE GOOD SOLDIER

The preceding chapter comprised a re-capitulation of, and a commentary on, Lawrence's essential argument. In the present chapter, the emphasis shifts to the world which Ford depicts in The Good Soldier. In addition to a summary of the plot of the novel, certain aspects of the society which it reflects, will be presented. Each of these aspects will then be commented upon in context with Lawrence's views concerning his contemporary society.

In this thesis, the essential concern is not with craft but with the net result of craft as seen in the artifact itself. Consequently, discussion of craft will be limited to facets which must be considered in order to clarify a point in the essential argument. No others will be included in this chapter, since it is only through their actions that the plot develops; however, an exhaustive analysis of character will be reserved for Chapters four and five.

One critic has pointed out that The Good Soldier is

... like a hall of mirrors, so constructed, while one is always looking straight ahead at a perfectly solid surface, one is made to contemplate not the bright surface itself, but the bewildering maze of past circumstances and future consequence that ... it contains.¹

1. Mark Schorer, The Princeton University Library Chronicle "The Good Soldier: an Interpretation", April, 1948.

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Ford achieves the effect about which Schorer writes, through the use of a narrator who has recently witnessed the collapse of his marriage and the destruction of a friendship. The action is presented to the reader wholly from the narrator's point of view. Consequently, the reader's analysis of the plot development (and, for that matter, of the entire novel) must be modified and adjusted as the story progresses and more of the idiosyncracies peculiar to the narrator are revealed. Most important of all is the fact that the narrator has been a member of the "little four-square coterie"¹ of four major characters around which the book revolves; and that the appearances of almost ten years of association with the persons nearest to him were a mockery of the hideous reality of things. The story is being told, then, by a man whose recent personal contact with disillusionment affects the confused point of view which he expresses.

The story, told by a character whom the reader comes to know intimately as the book progresses, is told in much the same manner as one man would tell of some experiences in his life to a very interested listener. The narrator makes this obvious early in his story:

1. Ford Madox Ford, The Good Soldier, N.Y., Vintage Books, 1927, p. 5.

... I shall just imagine myself for a fortnight or so at one side of the fireplace of a country cottage, with a sympathetic soul opposite me. And I shall go on talking, in a low voice while the sea sounds in the distance and overhead the great black flood of wind polishes the bright stars.

From time to time we shall get up and go to the door and look out at the great moon and say: "Why it is nearly as bright as in Provence". And then we shall come back to the fireside, with just the touch of a sigh because we are not in that Provence where even the saddest stories are gay.¹

The plot is revealed to the listener slowly, in bits and pieces, as various events come to the narrator's mind, as one brings back through association various other events, all of which are integral to the development of the plot as a whole. It is to Ford's credit as a craftsman that while using such an apparently loose narrative technique, he never inserted an event which was not essential to the rounding out of the artifact. The work derives its unity and its strength from this very fact.

The plot has no apparent chronological sequence, yet a very definite and purposeful chronology exists for a reader who wishes to piece it out. One critic of Ford, R.A. Cassell, has produced a thorough analysis of the chronological sequences of events in The Good Soldier, and in so doing, he has made it obvious that the consciousness of Ford the craftsman was in no way as unsteady as was the

1. Ibid., p. 12-13.

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consciousness of Dowell the narrator.¹

Because of these aspects of the book, the plot analysis which follows is not a consecutive presentation of plot development as it occurs in the novel. It is, rather a collation arranged in chronological order. This re-arranging of the events recounted in the novel is necessary if the proper cause-effect relationships essential to the comparison with Lawrence's theory are to be established definitively and with a minimum of difficulty.

It is interesting and enlightening to know the story behind the title of Ford's novel. In his "Dedicatory Letter" to Stella Ford for The Good Soldier, he stated that he had originally entitled this novel The Saddest Story but "... since it did not appear until the darkest days of the war were upon us"² his publisher had suggested the use of a more attractive title. Ford then suggested "in hasty irony" that the novel be named The Good Soldier. The facts concerning the title which this novel now has are helpful to a certain extent in determining the functions of the various characters and consequently help to clarify the development of the plot.

1. R.A. Cassell, Ford Madox Ford, Baltimore, The John Hopkins Press, 1962, p. 188-191.

2. Ford Madox Ford, The Good Soldier, p. xxi.

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The two central couples in the book are the Dowells and the Ashburnhams. John Dowell and his wife, the former Florence Hurlbird, are an American couple in their mid-thirties who, at the time of their meeting with the Ashburnhams, have been married for a period of about three years. Dowell, who is the novel's narrator, is a wealthy Pennsylvanian, living a life of idle luxury while acting as nurse attendant to his wife, who, he believes, has a bad heart. Florence, it is learned gradually, had been having an affair with a young bohemian-type artist named Jimmy, both prior to and after her marriage to Dowell. She had developed the myth of a delicate heart, possibly as a means of obviating a sexual relationship with her husband and possibly also to allay suspicions concerning her own infidelity. By 1904, she had tired of Jimmy and was presumably looking for a new passion when the Ashburnhams arrived on the scene.

Edward and Leonora Ashburnham have been married for a period of slightly more than ten years at the time of their first meeting with the Dowells. He is the Anglican son of a well-to-do retired English Army Colonel, and to all appearances, a model husband. Leonora, on the other hand, is one of seven daughters of an Irish landlord who had once served in the army with Colonel Ashburnham, but

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who was constantly beset with financial troubles. True to her Irish Catholic tradition, Leonora had been convent-bred. When she was nineteen and Edward twenty-two years old, her father had asked the Ashburnhams if Edward might not marry one of his daughters. As a result, the parents arranged a marriage between the convent-educated crisp, orderly Leonora and the handsome young Anglican romantic who passed many hours reading the novels of Sir Walter Scott.

The marriage had been superficially happy, but at the same time apparently rather meaningless, when one day Edward, true to the benevolent nature for which he was noted, took pity on a servant girl who was weeping over the loss of her lover. When he put his arm around her to console her, she misinterpreted his action and had him arrested. Ashburnham was acquitted, but he soon found the memory of the servant-girl's physical warmth and softness entering his thoughts almost constantly.

A few months later, in 1895, Ashburnham was vacationing with his wife in the area of the Mediterranean. There he met a cosmopolitan prostitute who pretended to be the mistress of a Grand Duke. He was instantly the victim of a raging passion which he was able to subdue only at the price of a small fortune.

The affair with the prostitute nearly wrecked the

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finances of the Ashburnhams. Humiliated and depressed, Edward turned all money matters over to Leonora, who allotted him an allowance and set to work as ruler of the household, noble wife of the erring male, and restored things to their former state. She managed this by enforcing strict economy measures upon both Edward and herself. She erased the benevolence with which her husband had treated his tenants, and had Edward transferred to India, where the cost of living was lower. Leonora's attempts to salvage her marriage were piteously futile. In India, she managed very efficiently to return their finances to a sound state; but her marriage was something which she could not repair. Edward's next affair was with Mrs. Basil, the wife of an Army Major met in India. She became his mistress, and he and Leonora drifted more hopelessly apart. After Mrs. Basil came Mrs. Maisie Maiden, a frail young woman who loved Edward deeply and who died in August 1904, just after the Dowells and the Ashburnhams became acquainted. She had come with the Ashburnhams from India to an European spa, and had been waited upon and pampered constantly by Edward. Then, one night she overheard a conversation between Edward and Florence and in her rush to pack her belongings to return to India, she suffered a heart attack.

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Ashburnham and Florence have an affair which begins on August 4, 1904, and ends with Florence's suicide on August 4, 1913. Leonora, having been advised by the Mother Superior of her convent that her husband would at last settle his affections on her, waits in agonized silence for the affair to end. Dowell, nurse-attendant to an 'invalid' wife, knows absolutely nothing of what is happening. Looking back over that nine-year period, he finds himself unable to know what opportunities Florence could possibly have had to be unfaithful to him.

The series of intrigues does not end with Florence. The Ashburnhams have a ward named Nancy Rufford, who came to live with them at the age of thirteen upon, as she was told, the death of her parents. It is revealed towards the end of the book that Nancy's parents were not actually dead but that she had been taken from them because of the combined factors of her father's cruelty and her mother's alcoholism. At age twenty-one, Nancy is a slim, attractive girl who looks upon her guardians as a model couple. Like Leonora, she is convent-educated. Her mind is pure and innocent and she considers Edward a perfect husband. On the other hand, Edward loves the girl with an intensity which approaches worship. As she grows older his love for her deepens and he becomes consumed with a passionate desire

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for her. At the same time, determining not to reveal his true feelings for her, he begins to drink heavily. To make matters worse, Nancy thinks this a sign that his health is poor, and she becomes more solicitous towards him than ever before.

Finally Leonora, convinced that Nancy stands between her and Edward, becomes embittered and nearly irrational in her thirst for vengeance. Gradually and maliciously, she acquaints Nancy with the facts of her guardian's promiscuity. Nancy, losing all respect for him but feeling now that it is because of an unholy passion for her that he is deteriorating so rapidly, decides to offer her body to him. He refuses her, and makes arrangements to send her to her father in India.

When Nancy arrives in India, she sends a wire to Ashburnham, saying: "Safe Brindisi. Having rattling good time. Nancy".¹ Driven to a more bitter despair by this monstrously cheerful note, Ashburnham commits suicide. Nancy, hearing later of her guardian's death, becomes permanently insane, and the widowed Dowell becomes her nurse-attendant. Leonora marries a young Englishman named Rodney Bayham, and finally has a child. Her second husband is unfaithful to her, too, but discreetly so.

1. Ford Madox Ford, The Good Soldier, p. 255.

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He arranges his affairs to coincide with his business trips to the continent, so that there is little danger of his infidelity becoming public knowledge. With her reputation thus protected, Leonora is quite willing to accept the fact of her husband's infidelity.

And so, while everything is settled in the end, there is no real happiness for anyone:

Well it is all over. None of us has got what he really wanted. Leonora wanted Edward and she has got Rodney Bayham, a pleasant enough sort of sheep. Florence wanted Branshaw (Edward's establishment) and it is I who have bought it from Leonora. I didn't really want it; what I wanted most was to cease being a nurse-attendant. Edward wanted Nancy Rufford and I have got her. Only she is mad. It is a queer and fantastic world. Why can't people have what they want? The things were all there to content everybody; yet everybody has the wrong thing. Perhaps you can make head or tail of it; it is beyond me.¹

The answer to Dowell's agonized question can be found to a large extent in the society and the moral code peculiar to the world in which the characters live. The events recounted in this chapter take place in a circle of society in which appearances are often sharply contrasted to reality. Even people who are well-meaning, such as Leonora, sometimes create a world of artificiality. It is also a world in which sham and pretense are made the order

1. Ibid., p. 237.

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of things. Dowell voices the attitude of his society when he asks:

If for nine years I have possessed a goodly apple that is rotten at the core and discover its rottenness only in nine years and six months less four days, isn't it true to say that for nine years I possessed a goodly apple?¹

Throughout the book, appearances seem to be given more importance than reality. Florence's "heart" is the ugliest example of all. She seems to have no compunction whatever about turning her husband into a nurse-attendant in order that she might continue her illicit love affair. In Chapter Five, it will be seen that Florence makes a mockery of her marriage as a result of preconceived ideals which she has set as norms for the life which she wants to live.

In like manner, Leonora thinks it both advisable and proper to hide from Dowell the fact of his wife's infidelity. Throughout the nine-year period which begins when they first sit together at a restaurant and Florence says "... and so the whole round table has begun"¹ and ends on the evening of Florence's suicide, Leonora keeps up before Dowell the appearances of a happy relationship. There are numerous occasions on which Leonora could very naturally reveal the truth to Dowell; in particular, there

1. Ibid., p. 337.

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are two scenes in the book which show the deliberateness with which she conceals the facts from him, even though the actions of her husband with Florence are a cause of consternation to her.

The first of these scenes opens with the Ashburnhams and the Dowells travelling together by train to the castle of St. Elizabeth of Hungary. At the castle, they enter a room which is said to have been used by Martin Luther as a bedroom. A pencil draft of Luther's Protest is there, enclosed in a large glass. Florence looks into Edward's eyes and says:

"It's because of that piece of paper that you're honest, sober, industrious, provident, and clean-lived ... Otherwise ... you would be like the Irish or the Italians¹ or the Poles, but particularly like the Irish"

With those words, she lays a finger upon Ashburnham's wrist. Dowell is unable to detect anything in particular, but he senses something evil in the air. He becomes frightened, then discovers that Leonora is clutching his wrist so hard it is paining. Leonora flees the room and runs downstairs. Dowell, bewildered, follows her. She asks whether he doesn't realize what is happening and to her surprise he replies negatively. When she sees his complete ignorance of the affair which is developing between Florence

1. Ibid., p. 34.

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and Edward, she excuses her anger by stating that she is an Irish Catholic. Dowell has missed the point, and Leonora has deliberately withheld her knowledge of the situation from him.

In a second, parallel situation, Dowell and Leonora are alone discussing Ashburnham. Dowell has stated that he thinks Edward is an exemplary man as far as the fulfillment of his public functions is concerned. When he asks Leonora whether she does not agree with him, she replies that so far as she is concerned, " ... there is not a more splendid fellow in any three counties, pick them where you will -- along those lines".¹ The conversation continues with Dowell agreeing on the point of Edward's splendid character and stating that he must also be a fine husband. Leonora again conceals the facts deliberately by stating that she is " ... not thinking of saying that he is not the best of husbands".²

The same attitude presents itself, although less emphatically, in the action of Florence's spinster aunts, the Misses Hurlbirds. They had told Dowell immediately before his wedding that he should not marry, but had failed to tell him the truth about their niece's

1. Ibid., p. 96.

2. Ibid., p. 97.

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promiscuity. Try as they would to dissuade him, they could not tell the truth:

They even, almost, said that marriage was a sacrament; but neither Miss Florence nor Miss Emily could quite bring themselves to utter the word. And they almost brought themselves to say that Florence's early life had been characterized by flirtations - some thing of that sort.¹

In Ashburnham's affair with Mrs. Basil, consequences develop which also follow this pattern. Major Basil was able to blackmail Ashburnham because Edward did not want the truth to be exposed. At the same time, Basil was willing to allow his wife to have an affair with Ashburnham as long as it did not become public knowledge, and so long as he was paid for it periodically by his wife's lover.

Leonora continues to live with this same mixture of fact and appearance when she is revealed at the end of the book as seeming quite willing to have her new husband make regular visits to his mistress in France, just so long as an aura of respectability is maintained.

What is equally aggravating to the situation is that within this society in which sham is an accepted thing there apparently exists an educational system which has allowed the problem to expand itself. Ashburnham, at the

1. Ibid., p. 81

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age of twenty-two, goes into the world ungroomed for the realities which he must face. He is, as Dowell points out more than once, a benevolent landlord; but he is also a relatively incompetent one. He is trained to be a good soldier, but the only weapon he uses throughout the novel is the pen-knife with which he cuts his own throat. He reads a lot but his reading is limited to the romances of Scott (which are used by Ford to imply artificiality). In short, he has been trained, but he has not been trained to cope with the world of reality.

Little need be said of Dowell's upbringing along these lines. He appears to have been reared into a life of complete idleness which is also divorced from what man's existence in the world should be.

The most prominent female characters are also poorly prepared for life. Florence, on the one hand, has been given, presumably through her boarding-school education and the close influence of her two spinster aunts, distorted ideals of what marriage should provide for a woman:

She wanted to marry a gentleman of leisure; she wanted a European establishment. She wanted her husband to have an English accent and income of fifty-thousand dollars a year from real estate and no ambitions to increase that income.¹

On the other hand, Leonora and Nancy have been

1. Ibid., p. 79.

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convent-educated. Their training has apparently been rather sparse in the things that really matter. Leonora was able to handle her husband's business affairs very efficiently, but she was unable to bring any measure of satisfaction to her husband in the essential marital relationship. Nancy was completely incompetent when faced with problems of love and sex.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the society which Ford depicts is that there is in this world no real role for the dynamic man. Lawrence had said that man must give to his "... great purpose of manhood, a passionate unison in actively making a world".¹ He said, too, that "... man must build up out of his own self and his own belief and his own effort something wonderful".² "We cannot go on as we are", he said, "poor, nerve-worn creatures, fretting our lives away and hating to die because we have never lived".³ When one places Lawrence's commentary on man's problem in the world beside the society depicted in The Good Soldier, the similarities are remarkable. In The Good Soldier there is no "dynamic activity", no purposeful life such as Lawrence advocates, for any of the male

1. D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. 144.

2. Ibid., p. 60.

3. Ibid., p. 23.

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characters. Consequently, they lead lives of futility and purposelessness. The circle of society which Ford shows is that of the idle rich, and the circle is given a degree of universality by having two Americans and two Britishers comprise the four main characters.

An almost mock-epic effect is produced in the futile actions of some of the persons in this novel: Dowell checks the police reports of all persons entering an hotel at which he is staying; Edward, after Leonora has taken over the management of all of his properties, has no worthwhile activity in life, and his whole existence becomes marred by futile attempts to find fulfillment in love; Florence's uncle sails around the world handing out oranges to anyone he meets.

This, then, is the world which Ford creates as he develops the plot of The Good Soldier. It is a world of pretense, false ideals and aimlessness. The individual characters will be dealt with later. For the moment it is necessary to determine the extent to which this society parallels that which Lawrence spoke of in the books discussed in the preceding chapter.

It has been demonstrated that Lawrence considered the creative activity of man as a "world-builder" to be a source of fulfillment which was primary in importance, if

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not in time. He believed that this activity, regardless of its relative degree of importance in the world, had to be one to which the individual was willing to devote his greatest efforts. In The Good Soldier the world of man is a world of aimless idleness. It is a world in which the dynamic activity which is essential to man's fulfillment, and consequently to his happiness, does not exist. The result is anarchy. It is this to which Lawrence refers when he says that if man's great purposeful activity is taken away from him, "... the world drifts into despair and anarchy".¹ This is what has resulted in the world of the Dowells and the Ashburnhams. Their society crumbles in a concatenation of disastrous events which the shaken Dowell refers to as "... the whole sack of Rome by the Goths".²

The "prison full of screaming hysterics" which had been hidden in this world of sham and mockery finally explodes, and it all seems to have resulted from the very causes which Lawrence has said are the source of man's unhappiness in the world. Lawrence condemned his own society for being one which was not conducive to the dynamic purposive activity of man. It is central to his theory that man by his very nature, wants to "make something

1. Ibid., p. 144.

2. Ford Madox Ford, The Good Soldier, p. 5.

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wonderful, out of his own head and his own self, and his own soul's faith and delight".¹ This for Lawrence had to be the prime activity in the world. For Lawrence, man had to be proud and free in the possession of his own soul.

In the world of The Good Soldier, it is impossible for man to come to grips with himself, because man's whole existence is one of sham. Hence, there are on the fringe of existence a "good soldier", who is not a soldier at all, and a disillusioned nurse-attendant who is not sure any longer why he exists. These aspects are at variance with Lawrence's theory. For Lawrence, man had to be a pioneer in the world who knew he was a man and who was able to possess his "... own soul in silence".² Hence, man had to have an awareness of his own manhood and he had to make for himself a "great relation of aloneness and singleness of being".³ This is not the case with the male characters depicted in The Good Soldier.

This world of The Good Soldier is the very world which Lawrence saw in his contemporary society, and which he condemned. It is a world in which man has not taken on the dynamic activity for which he exists (as is the case

1. D. H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious, p.60.

2. Ibid., p. 169.

3. Ibid., p. 157.

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with Dowell and, to a lesser degree, Ashburnham as well) and in which marriages, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, are doomed to failure.

In this chapter, it has been seen that Ford depicted a world in The Good Soldier which has the characteristics that Lawrence condemned. It has also been seen that the characters, who thus far have been surveyed only peripherally, are the victims of the very lack of self-knowledge and lack of purposeful activity, which Lawrence saw as the cause of an unfortunate state of affairs in society and as the cause of unhappiness and frustration in marriage. Whereas Lawrence advocates a society in which man finds fulfillment in marriage, followed in time but not in importance by fulfillment in the world, The Good Soldier depicts a society in which man finds fulfillment in neither of these areas. Whereas Lawrence has stated "... you've got to know that you're a man, and being a man you must go on long ahead of the woman, to break a way through the old world into the new",¹ The Good Soldier pictures two marriages, one in which the husband's only role is that of a nurse-attendant, and another with the wife usurping the husband's place in business. In neither case is there fulfillment for either party in their love relationship.

1. Ibid., p. 218.

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This general comparison has demonstrated that the characteristics of society depicted by Ford in The Good Soldier are very similar to the characteristics which Lawrence condemned. In Chapter Four, the major male characters of The Good Soldier will be analyzed and compared with the ideal Lawrentian man as depicted in Chapter Two.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE MAJOR MALE CHARACTERS OF THE GOOD SOLDIER

In the preceding chapter the plot of The Good Soldier was presented, and aspects of the world Ford portrayed in that novel were compared with related aspects of Lawrence's theory. In this chapter, the two major male characters of The Good Soldier will be studied, and their characteristics will be compared with those of the "ideal" Lawrentian man as he was depicted in Chapter Two.

The two major male characters in the book are John Dowell and Edward Ashburnham. Other male characters, Florence's uncle John Hurlbird, her lover Jimmy, Colonel Powys, Colonel Ashburnham, and the man named Bagshawe, are used merely as foils and consequently they will not be included in this study. The characters to be dealt with will be analyzed in the order in which they are mentioned above.

JOHN DOWELL

John Dowell's history is the tale of an aimless, wasted existence. He was born wealthy, but instead of utilizing his wealth for the purpose of doing something worthwhile in the world, he seems to have drifted aimlessly and idly throughout his lifetime. His primary problem is a lack of self-knowledge, an absence of any sort of moral stability. From time to time he asks

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himself what sort of man he is and, even more pathetically, what sort of man he should be. At one point, he conjectures that he perceives himself following the course of Edward Ashburnham. He continues,

I suppose that I should really like to be a polygamist; with Nancy, and with Leonora, and with Maisie Maidan, and possibly even with Florence. I am no doubt like every other man; only, probably because of my American origin, I am fainter. At the same time I am able to assure you that I am a strictly respectable person. I have never done anything that the most anxious mother of a daughter or the most careful dean of a cathedral would object to.¹

These are the remarks of a man who has been shown in the novel to be utterly incompetent in matters pertaining to love and marriage. Dowell wants to think of himself in a romantic light, but the facts have already painted him otherwise. He never really knows himself and consequently his actions are pathetically inept. Not knowing himself, he is unable to stand proud and erect in the mastery of his soul. He is withdrawn, meek and helpless.

Dowell is so withdrawn that he cannot escape feelings of self-consciousness. He speaks of "the nakedness that one feels on the sea-shore or in any great open space".² He finds himself longing for security and shelter:

In one's own home it is as if little, innate sympathies draw one to particular chairs that seem

1. The Good Soldier, p.237.

2. Ibid., p. 21.

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to enfold one in an embrace, or take one along particular streets that seem friendly when others may be hostile.¹

These are the words of a man who has retreated within himself, who does not feel secure in his own being, and who shrinks from the reality about him because he is unable to cope with it. He carries about with him the title deed to his Philadelphia farm "as if it were the only thing that invisibly anchored me to any spot upon the globe".²

Dowell's inability to master himself makes him helpless in the world. Florence recognizes this and therefore chooses him as a husband. Leonora notices it also. On the evening of their first meeting, in the restaurant, she has been looking at him questioningly. Then, Dowell recalls that suddenly

into those cold, slightly defiant, almost defensive china-blue orbs, there came a warmth, a tenderness, a friendly recognition ... Oh, it was very charming and very touching - and quite mortifying. It was the look of a mother to her son, of a sister to her brother.³

From that day forth, he says, Leonora treated him, and not Florence, as though he were really the invalid.

It follows that a man who knows nothing of himself

1. Ibid., p. 21.

2. Ibid., p. 5.

3. Ibid., p. 33.

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and who is consequently a misfit in the world would know nothing either of what he should be like. After the tragic events which have forced him to consider himself, Dowell is constantly troubled about the question of morality in society. When Leonora tells him that she had once nearly taken a lover but had failed at the last moment and concludes, "It certainly wasn't playing the game, was it, now?"¹, Dowell remarks:

I don't know; I don't know; was that last remark of hers the remark of a harlot, or is it what every decent woman, county family or not county family, thinks at the bottom of her heart? Who knows And if one doesn't know as much as that about the first thing in the world, what does one know and why is one here?²

This complete uncertainty in matters of sexual morality becomes even more significant when Dowell applies the question to himself. He has been discussing Edward Ashburnham and has described him as "... just exactly the sort of chap that you could have trusted your wife with".³ This statement leads him to conjecture concerning himself:

And yet again you have me. If poor Edward was dangerous because of the chastity of his expressions ... What about myself? For I solemnly avow that not only have I never so much as hinted at an impropriety in my conversation in the whole of my

1. Ibid., p. 9.

2. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

3. Ibid., p. 11.

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days; and more than that, I will vouch for the cleanness of my thoughts and the absolute chastity of my life. At what, then, does it all work out? Is the whole thing a folly and a mockery? Am I no better than a eunuch or is the proper man - the man with the right to existence - a raging stallion forever neighing after his neighbour's womankind?¹

Dowell's conclusion is that he does not know, and that there is nothing in the world to guide us in such matters. Thus, he works out his existence in a world which has no deep meaning for him. He is unable to know what he should be, and is not willing to face the fact of what he has become.

There is another aspect of Dowell's life which is of great importance; his measure of fulfillment in love.

There are three women in The Good Soldier who directly affect Dowell in some way. The first of these is Florence, his wife. There is a bitter humor in the circumstances of their courtship and elopement, and a foul irony surrounds their entire marriage.

In the summer of 1901, Dowell had met Florence in her home town of Stamford, Connecticut. He says that "from that moment, I determined with all the obstinacy of a possibly weak nature, if not to make her mine, at least to marry her."²

1. Ibid., pp. 11-12.

2. Ibid., p. 78.

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These are the words of a man who must have a distorted, or at least shallow, view of love and marriage. Why should a man determine so obstinately to marry a woman if he thought he might not be able to make her his? Possibly a raging passion could cause such a determination; but physical passion is not Dowell's lot, and he says that during a courtship which lasted for only two weeks, "I never so much as kissed Florence";¹ and he adds that Florence had hinted "... she did not want much physical passion in the affair".²

Dowell reveals, as if by accident, that it was Florence, not he, who finalized the notion of their marriage. She had often told him what sort of marriage establishment she wanted to have, and it is obvious that Dowell, who was both wealthy and physically passive, was a good choice - given the standards which she had set for her husband. On August first, Florence told her aunts that she intended to marry Dowell, and Dowell in his narration of this event discloses that "She had not told me so ...".³

On August fourth, 1901, Dowell used a rope ladder to convey himself to Florence's bedroom, the doors having been

1. Ibid., p. 79.

2. Ibid., p. 79.

3. Ibid., p. 80.

locked by her aunts and uncle. Recounting that event in a passage which, because of the narrator's naivety is rendered in a serio-comic tone, he notes that she received him with an embrace which he did not return. It was, he adds, the first and last time "when a woman's embrace had had in it any warmth for me ...".¹ Instead of returning the embrace, he retreated down the ladder where he was kept waiting by his bride-to-be for a period of two hours. Dowell is not certain of the cause-effect relationships between this scene and Florence's subsequent convenient "heart disease" which was supposedly contracted as the result of a storm during the newlyweds' boat-crossing of the Atlantic Ocean. However, it seems reasonable to presume that his failure to respond physically to an embrace given in a bedroom provided Florence, who had already determined to marry him, with a good opportunity to learn the extent to which she could depend on a sexless marriage, and helped her to concoct the scheme which was to divert suspicion of her infidelities.

It is sufficient to say of their relationship in marriage that they "... had got married about four in the morning and had sat about in the woods above the town ..." until eight o'clock, "... listening to a mocking-bird

1. Ibid., p. 83.

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imitate an old tom-cat".¹ Dowell himself is a mocking-bird, imitating the tom-cat in man, pretending to a passionate nature which he does not have. That is, he pretends to himself that he is a man with a passionate nature, trying with the purposefulness of a tom-cat to find a mate. In reality he is like the mocking-bird, which can only do an imitation in a superficial way of that which it pretends to be. The serio-comic vein of this entire section makes Dowell's ineptitude even more pathetic than it usually is.

So Dowell became a nurse-attendant to a wife who was unfaithful to him with two successive men during the entire duration of the marriage - that is, until the time of her suicide.

It can be seen readily that this was a marriage relationship which did not bring Dowell any of the normal love-fulfillment which, according to D.H. Lawrence, man must have in life. It was a marriage of distorted causes and tragic effects, and proved that in the most important of his relationships with women during his lifetime, Dowell was sadly inept.

Then there is the less important, but nonetheless revealing association which Dowell had with Leonora Ashburnham over a period of almost ten years.

1. Ibid., p. 86.

From the moment of their first meeting, Dowell was treated by Leonora as though he were an invalid, or a helpless brother. He was protected by her from a truth which he perhaps would have been unable to face. When the truth was finally revealed to him, after the deaths of both Edward and Florence, he was unable to decide whether Leonora's concealment from him of the facts was good or bad. He felt that he had been saved from bitter unhappiness; yet, at the same time he considered that all through the sordid affair "Leonora was pimping for Edward".¹ Yet, in a vision which he has of Leonora, Dowell says Florence is an "intolerably solitary"² figure whereas Leonora is pictured shining "clear and serene, a northern light and one of the archangels of God".³

Dowell's description of Leonora tells perhaps more about him than it does about her. He speaks of her shoulders as being "too classical"⁴ and continues that he always felt as though

if ever I should press my lips upon them, they would be slightly cold - not icily, not without a touch of human heat, but, as they say of baths,

1. Ibid., p. 69.

2. Ibid., p. 70.

3. Ibid., p. 71.

4. Ibid., p. 32.

with the chill off. I seemed to feel chilled at the end of my lips when I looked at her¹

It must be remembered that Leonora was a woman whom Dowell had known for nearly ten years. Still, he was unable to accept her in any type of relationship. There existed this morbid speculation which seems to display an unnatural attitude towards her. He insists that he loves Leonora and that he would gladly lay down his life for her; yet, there is this attitude, not of physical disinterestedness, but of physical aversion.

Thirdly, there is Dowell's relationship with and his attitude towards the girl, Nancy Rufford. At the time of Florence's death, he had said to Leonora, "Now I can marry the girl",² but his conjecture concerning marriage with Nancy was marked by the same lack of real desire for her as a woman as that which characterized his farcical but tragic marriage with Florence. It is true that there was a touch of admiration in his attitude toward her; in one scene, he describes her as a "saintly and swanlike being",³ but this is not sufficient if there is to be a complete love relationship. While he says that he loved her, he displays a distorted view of the nature of real

1. Ibid., p. 32.

2. Ibid., p. 108.

3. Ibid., p. 128.

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love when he pictures himself as a "sort of convent",¹ to which she could make her vows.

In his relationships with three different women, Dowell can be seen as a man who could find no part of the fulfillment in love to which Lawrence refers. In fact, what Dowell experiences with women is almost exactly that which Lawrence condemns. His helplessness, his naivety, his complete lack of passion, are characteristics which make him a complete failure in love.

Dowell's own theory of love explains partially the dichotomy between what he so unhappily experienced in life and what Lawrence believed man had to have. For Dowell, it is "impossible to believe in the permanence of man's or woman's love",² and as he sees it, a love affair is merely "something in the nature of a widening of the experience".³ He sees a man's attraction toward a particular woman as being prompted by a desire to explore: "to get, as it were, behind those eyebrows with the peculiar turn ... to hear that voice applying itself to every possible proposition, to every possible topic".⁴ This desire, he believes, becomes

1. Ibid., p. 121.

2. Ibid., p. 114.

3. Ibid., p. 114.

4. Ibid., p. 114.

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so strong that the man will want to lose his identity completely in the woman he loves. So far as sexual desire is concerned, he looks upon it merely as a commonplace which "must be taken for granted, as, in a novel, or a biography, you take it for granted that the characters have their meals with some regularity".¹ He considers this type of affair to be something which the same man could experience many times with many different women. But he also believes that there will come along in any man's life one special affair:

And yet I do believe that for every man there comes at last a woman - or no, that is the wrong way of formulating it. For every man there comes at last a time of life when the woman who then sets her seal upon his imagination has set her seal for good. He will travel over no more horizons; he will never again set the knapsack over his shoulders; he will retire from these scenes. He will have gone out of the business.²

It can be seen from these comments that Dowell's love theory and that expounded by Lawrence are at variance. Lawrence makes the act of coition essential and of great value in the love relationship for him, it is the consummating act between man and woman. On the other hand, while Dowell considers it part of marriage, he relegates it to a position of very little importance. Lawrence condemns

1. Ibid., p. 114.

2. Ibid., p. 115.

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a relationship in which one partner gives so one-sidedly that he loses his identity and his individuality in the being of the other; Dowell sees man as someone who craves to lose his identity in the woman he loves. It is true that Dowell believes there are relationships which possess a quality that will give them permanence; presumably this quality is similar to the dynamic attraction which Lawrence considers essential to a happy partnership. But whereas Lawrence explains quite fully the characteristics of this attraction, Dowell does not even offer an explanation of how it differs from all the other affairs which are for man a means of widening his experience.

Lawrence states that man must find fulfillment both in love and in some worthwhile activity in the world. Dowell is a failure in each of these spheres. Throughout the book, he is living a life of idle luxury, in what he himself admits is a "rarefied atmosphere",¹ where there is no great purpose, no worthwhile activity. Even his occupation as Florence's nurse-attendant is ironically worthless, because she is not really an invalid. His conception of himself as an elevator operator in heaven is not atypical of the uselessness of his life in the world.

When he meets Florence for the first time, it is at

1. Ibid., p. 122.

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a tea party. Recalling his first meeting with his wife's aunts, when they asked him his occupation, he says "I did nothing. I suppose I ought to have done something, but I didn't see any call to do it. Why does one do things?"¹ This inactive, purposeless existence is quite different from the life of dynamic, purposive activity which Lawrence prescribes for man. The whole polarity of being is reversed in Dowell. A pathetically ridiculous figure of a man, he assumes the role of nurse-attendant to his wife; a role which ordinarily would fall to a woman. Even in trivial things, he has allowed the polarity of being to be reversed. He watches while Florence bargains with the driver of a droshky, even though he "spoke German much more correctly"² than she.

It can be seen that because of his attitudes Dowell has nothing of that which Lawrence terms the dynamic life of man; that he knows only in an imperfect way "the life of the hearth and of the smoking-room"³ and nothing more. He is the sort of man whom Lawrence saw emerging in society; a weak, spineless creature who knows nothing of life and who contributes nothing to the society in which he lives.

1. Ibid., p. 15.

2. Ibid., p. 43.

3. Ibid.,

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EDWARD ASHBURNHAM

Edward Ashburnham, the so-called "good soldier" of the book, is a much more vibrant personality than Dowell; nevertheless, he is a man who cannot find happiness. He fails in the same spheres as those in which Dowell is shown to have also failed.

Attempting to describe Ashburnham, Dowell refers to him as "a hard-working, sentimental, and efficient professional man",¹ and states that he has "all the virtues that are usually accounted English".² Ashburnham is known, too, as a benevolent landlord; and this is certainly a point in his favor in a country where many landlords were not benevolent at the turn of the century. Yet, his life ends in suicide because he is unable to find the fulfillment in the world which is necessary for his manhood. Ashburnham's life, like Dowell's, is a failure; however, whereas Dowell had an impassionate nature and a lack of perceptiveness which made him incompetent in his quest for happiness, Ashburnham's downfall was caused by almost opposite aspects of his character.

Up to the moment when he foolishly gambles away a small fortune in a vain attempt to win money to pay for an

1. Ford Madox Ford, The Good Soldier, p. 151.

2. Ibid., p. 151.

affair with a Spanish dancer, Ashburnham has been successful in business. Dowell, on the other hand, has no knowledge of the business world. Edward is able to give Dowell sound advice on investing. He is a good soldier, well-liked by his men. It will be seen in this chapter that his downfall is brought about principally by one thing: his failure to find fulfillment in love.

In Ashburnham's life, from the time of his marriage until his death, one can trace relationships of varying degrees of intensity, with seven different women, none of whom bring him the fulfillment which he needs.

The first of these relationships is with his wife, Leonora. Theirs was a thoroughly unsatisfactory partnership which had been arranged by their parents. They had not married because of a compelling attraction for each other, but because their parents had prompted them to do so. The convent-bred daughter of Irish Catholics, Leonora was "handed over to him, like some patient medieval virgin";¹ he had the greatest admiration for Leonora But she had not for him a touch of magnetism".² Coldly efficient, unable to give him the love he needed, she drove him away from her. Noticeable problems in their marriage seem to

1. Ibid., p. 140.

2. Ibid., p. 140.

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have arisen first when Leonora, disturbed by her husband's generosity toward his tenants, began remonstrating with him concerning his policies as a landlord. Here, again, is an example of what Lawrence described as a reversed polarity: the husband's role being usurped to a certain extent by the wife, causing a distortion of the marriage relationship.

Edward seems to reach his initial awareness of the weakness of his own marriage when he tries to comfort a weeping servant girl in the episode which Dowell refers to as "The Kilsyte Case". There is certainly never even the beginning of a love affair in that case, but after the episode "there came suddenly into his mind the recollection of the softness of the girl's body as he had pressed her to him".¹ He becomes aware for the first time of the attractiveness of other women. From that time, Ashburnham becomes involved in a series of unhappy, sometimes tragic, love affairs. The first of these, with a Spanish dancer who claimed to be the mistress of a Grand Duke, is an affair of great passion which begins when she singles him out with her alluring glances one evening at a ball. As a result of her flirtation and his eager responsiveness, they go to bed together. Having spent one night with her, Edward attempts to convince her to become his mistress.

1. Ibid., p. 156.

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She, cold and reasoning, refuses to grant him her favors again without substantial payments. He spends "a week of madness",¹ longing for her. Eyes sunken, he takes to drink and the gambling tables. Finally, she agrees to spend a week with him at Antibes for the sum of five thousand dollars. Unable to do without her, he agrees; but the week is thoroughly unsatisfying to him. There is no enthusiasm on her part for anything except money, and so far as he is concerned, the hope he has of finding true fulfillment is quickly shattered.

In Fantasia of the Unconscious, Lawrence points out that fulfillment in love is found only in the act of coition; but he goes on to say that this consummation cannot occur in acts of "false coition",² which results in prostitution and promiscuity. In Ashburnham's affair with La Dolciquita, there is no consummation of love because there is only physical desire. The act of coition certainly occurs between these two, but it is an act of false coition.

After La Dolciquita comes Mrs. Basil. With her, Edward seems to begin a relationship which has the aspects of true love. Although the affair is treated very vaguely in the novel, the impression is created that these two

1. Ibid., p. 161.

2. D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. 141.

really love each other, and that the only reason for the ending of the affair is the separation of the two upon Mr. Basil's transfer to another station. Had they met sooner, their love may very well have resulted in a happy and enduring marriage.

Lawrence does not state explicitly in either of the works which are studied in this thesis that the attachment of real love is stronger than the ties of legal wedlock. However, it does seem to be implied in his theory that persons who have no fulfillment in marriage should not remain together: it seems logical to conclude from what Lawrence writes that he believes the interchange of passionate, fulfilling love to be essential to marriage; this theory implies further that a marriage which does not have this is really invalid. The implication here is that, applied to the affair between Ashburnham and Mrs. Basil, this belief would have caused them to leave their legal spouses and find their own legitimate fulfillment together. Restrained as they are, however, by the rules of society, they allow themselves to be parted. Once they are separated, the interchange of love between them dies.

There are interesting implications too, to be seen in Ashburnham's "affair" with Maisie Maidan. This is a relationship which does not seem to have been consummated in coition: indeed, poor Mrs. Maidan's heart is not strong

enough to withstand the physical stress of a really passionate affair. Edward's attraction to her is unlike his wholly physical craving for La Dolciquita, and it is also unlike his love for Mrs. Basil. Edward seems to have been content (temporarily at least) to act as attendant to the genuinely invalid Maisie in much the same way as Dowell was content to look after Florence during her feigned illness. The difference between the two is that Ashburnham, in quest of fulfillment, could not remain satisfied with such a relationship for long. Hence, his attachment to Florence almost immediately upon meeting her, in spite of the fact that Maisie Maida is still in his company. The relationship with Mrs. Maida, which has no sexual element, appears to be a type which Lawrence condemned. To see the nature of this relationship, one must take note of an aspect of Ashburnham's life which Dowell only alludes to in his narrative; his sheltered youth and a possibly very strong influence by his mother. He was an only child of a mother who seems to have doted on her son, and who tried to shelter Edward from anything which might corrupt what Dowell refers to as "his virgin intelligence".¹ In the typical manner of a possessive mother, she wrote to her closest friend (Leonora's mother) weekly, stating her

1. Ford Madox Ford, The Good Soldier, p. 137.

satisfaction with her boy's up-bringing. In fact, it was her alarm at having seen Edward "suddenly turn his head round to take a second look at a well-dressed girl who had passed",¹ which caused her and Colonel Ashburnham to begin arrangements for their son's marriage with Leonora. She was not so possessive that she would not give up her son to another; but she certainly seems to have kept him under her control and guidance for as long as she could. In his subsequent relationship with Leonora and, on another plane, with Mrs. Maidan, Ashburnham seems to display what Lawrence would term the result of mother-dominance.

The rendering of these aspects of Ashburnham's background is very obscure and no definitive statement can be made on the cause of the type of relationship which he had with Leonora and Maisie Maidan. It is noteworthy, however, that in Lawrentian doctrine, with which Ford was familiar, the doting, possessive mother is a woman who has not found the necessary love-fulfillment in marriage. Her predicament is caused initially when her husband fails to "go on beyond her"² and find "some passionate, purposive activity"³ outside his marriage and in the world. When she

1. Ibid., p. 137.

2. D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. 156.

3. Ibid., p. 157.

is not put under the spell of her husband's decisiveness and purpose, "the unhappy woman beats about for her insatiable satisfaction, seeking whom she may devour. And usually, she turns to her child".¹ The child, as a result, becomes linked up in an ideal mother-love. When he reaches adolescence he becomes the sad partner to relationships which cannot succeed because of the shadow of mether-dominance. He and his partner may be "good pals",² but they certainly will not find fulfillment with each other. They may be "charming to look at, such a lovely couple",³ but when the frustration of unfulfilling sex begins to intrude, their relationship will degenerate into a "nasty fiasco".⁴

In the case of Ashburnham and Maisie Maidan, too much stress should not be placed upon these aspects; Ford's rendering of their relationship is vague, as is his coverage of details concerning Edward's youth. Nevertheless, the information which is supplied through Dowell's narration does seem to indicate the existence of a situation similar to that about which Lawrence writes.

1. Ibid., p. 157.

2. Ibid., p. 159.

3. Ibid., p. 160.

4. Ibid., p. 158.

Thus far, it has been seen that Ashburnham had relationships with two women - Leonora and Maisie Maidan - which were devoid of sexual fulfillment; that in one tempestuous sexual adventure - with La Dolciquita - he had found the possession unworthy of the effort; that with one woman - Mrs. Basil - he had found love but had allowed it to die. His next romance, which was to span a period of more than nine years, was with Dowell's wife, Florence.

The indirectness of Ford's presentation presents problems in analyzing this relationship. It becomes obvious as the narrative progresses that Edward was unwilling to leave Leonora for Florence, and presumably his unwillingness was spurred by the mores of his society, in which adultery was condoned as long as it was committed discreetly, but in which divorce was anathema. However, these facts do little to explain the nature of Ashburnham's attitude towards Florence. Presumably a physical attraction existed; however, Ford does not reveal, even by insinuation, that Edward's feelings for Florence went any deeper than a physical attraction. It seems that as far as Edward was concerned, the affair with Florence was little more than a refining and a prolongation of the week-long fling with the Spanish dancer. In other words, it is quite probably, though not clearly stated, that even if the attitudes of society had been different, Edward would not have found happiness with

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Florence because he was not attracted to her in the right way. It is understandable that he tired of her eventually, and that she was quite easily displaced by Nancy Rufford when Nancy returned to her guardians' home for her holidays and he suddenly became aware of his ward's attractiveness. All that time, there were two women in his life: Leonora and Florence. With the former, he was the victim of an unhappy marriage; with the latter, he was partner to an unfulfilling affair. He was still searching for a woman who would bring him the essential fulfillment.

The last affair for Edward Ashburnham was the cause of his suicide. In comparing this relationship with the earlier ones, Dowell quite rightly states that Edward wore himself "as thin as a lath in the endeavour to capture the other women; but over her he wore himself to rags and tatters and death - in the effort to leave her alone".¹ Ashburnham's awakening to Nancy came when she was visiting her guardians, on holidays from the convent boarding-school. There is little doubt that he considered himself to have fallen deeply in love with her, and in a moment of frankness he told Dowell "I am so desperately in love with Nancy Rufford that I am dying of it".² However, it must be

1. Ford Madox Ford, The Good Soldier, p. 116.

2. Ibid., p. 250.

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recalled that in his affair with La Dolciquita, Edward had all the appearances of a woebegone lover, and that at one point he had sworn "to cherish her and even to love her - for life".¹ He had tired of that girl in a period of one week. In fact, he had found on every occasion in the past, that the quest for fulfillment was frustrated for one reason or another. Although Ford's rendition of this affair is quite vaguely and indirectly done, it seems that Edward feared that his latest love would also in the end bring him and the girl unhappiness, and for that reason he refused to accept when she offered to come into bed with him. Left with utter hopelessness when the telegram from the girl confirmed that he would never have her, and knowing that after the diverse affairs of the past he would very likely never find the fulfillment he needed, Edward committed suicide.

Fulfillment in love is essential for man, according to Lawrence's theory. Edward Ashburnham is pictured by Ford as a man who is unable to obtain this fulfillment. He is portrayed as one who moved from one love affair to another, not in the manner of a libertine, but as a man obsessed with the need for something which repeatedly eluded him.

1. Ibid., p. 161.

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One other sphere of Edward's life must be examined in the light of Lawrence's theory; his success in some purposive activity in the world. In this respect, also, Ford has created a character who is superior to Dowell; but nevertheless, the degree of superiority is not sufficient to make Ashburnham a success in life. It is interesting to note that during the first five years of his marriage, when he still had control of his business affairs, Edward was relatively happy, and that one of the things which drove him away from Leonora was her intrusion into his activities as a landlord. What Lawrence terms the polarity of being was reversed when Leonora finally usurped her husband's responsible role, and left him with no real activity to pursue. From the Lawrentian viewpoint, such an occurrence was inevitable, because Edward, unable as he was to find fulfillment in love, could not hope to find success in a dynamic role in the world.

In this chapter, the major male characters of The Good Soldier have been presented and analyzed from the point of view of Lawrence's theory concerning man's fulfillment in love and in life. It has been demonstrated that the faults which Lawrence condemned in society have plagued the lives of these characters, and that the characters themselves fall far short of the model which

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Lawrence puts forth. In the following chapter, the female characters of Ford's novel will be presented and analyzed in a somewhat parallel manner.

CHAPTER FIVE

FEMALE CHARACTERS OF THE GOOD SOLDIER

In Chapter Four, the two major male characters depicted in The Good Soldier were presented and analyzed in the light of Lawrence's theory. In the present chapter, seven female characters of this novel will be presented and analyzed in a similar manner. It will be noted that whereas only the two major male characters were studied, the female characters who will be analyzed are not all major; indeed, some of them have very minor roles. This departure from a true parallel is necessary because of the purpose for which the study is being done. The characters to be studied are necessarily those who are involved with the central problem of fulfillment in love. The seven female characters to be treated were all involved at some time with Edward Ashburnham in different relationships, and consequently none of them can be omitted. They will be discussed in the chronological order of their relationships with him.

The first of these characters is Leonora, who is presented as a convent-bred Irish Catholic and as a woman unable to experience passion. In many respects, she is extremely competent. Through frugality and good business-sense, she restores the Ashburnham fortune after her husband loses most of it. In her cold, cruel activities,

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which occur toward the end of the book and lead to its final tragedy, she is stunningly capable. Yet, in love she is a miserable failure. Unable to reduce love to terms of pure logic, she cannot cope with it.

Leonora's failure in marriage is understandable when one recalls Dowell's comment on her:

She had been one of seven daughters in a bare, untidy Irish manor house to which she had returned from the convent ... when she was just nineteen. It is impossible to imagine such inexperience as was hers. You might almost say that she had never spoken to a man except a priest.¹

Dowell presents Leonora as a young woman whose only experience has come from the teachings of the nuns at the convent-school. The concept which she has been given of life is that it is "a perpetual sex-battle between husbands who desire to be unfaithful to their wives, and wives who desire to recapture their husbands in the end".² She has been led to no knowledge of a constant, fulfilling love affair; there is only the picture of man as "a sort of brute who must have ... his, let us say, rutting seasons".³ In fact, when she goes to the Mother Superior with the story of Edward's affair with the Spanish dancer, Leonora is

1. Ford Madox Ford, The Good Soldier, p. 135.

2. Ibid., p. 186.

3. Ibid., p. 186.

told that "Men are like that. By the blessing of God it will all come right in the end".¹

Leonora's idea of marriage is so distorted that she considers it to be an institution in which the wife is a long-suffering but tolerant guardian to an erring male. She seems to know nothing of the true nature of the marriage relationship.

Leonora is presented as a victim of all those circumstances which Lawrence condemns so heartily in Fantasia of the Unconscious. At school, she has learned a set of rules. These rules cause her to enter marriage with a distorted view of the entire marital relationship. She does not marry as the result of a spontaneous outburst of love for a man; and her sad case becomes one which is foretold in Lawrence's study:

First she is the noble spouse of the not-quite-so-noble male; then a Mater Dolorosa; then a ministering angel: ... and all the while, as a sideshow, she is the Isolde of some Tristan ... in her own idea. She can't stop having an idea of herself - She can't get herself out of her head. And there she is ... till the whole man-and-woman game has become just a living hell, and men with any back-bone would rather kill themselves than go on with it - or kill somebody else.²

Leonora, then, has the problem of "sex in the head" which Lawrence condemns in his work. She is incapable of

1. Ibid., p. 186.

2. D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. 121.

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a satisfying relationship with Edward because her views have been distorted by her environment. At the same time, because her idea of man as something of a brute is also a distorted view, she does other things which in effect are to ruin her marriage. Having failed already to give Ashburnham fulfillment in love, she accelerates the ruination of her marriage by usurping his role as active force in the world. She takes over the management of his properties and proves to be competent in business. This usurpation of his role took place over a period of time, and it is interesting to note that during the first five years of marriage, with Edward in complete control of his lands, there is no problem of infidelity. Then, Edward offers to build a private chapel for his wife, and she refused to accept on the grounds that such a thing would be wasteful. From that moment, a change occurs, Leonora begins to intrude more and more into Ashburnham's business, and she becomes less and less attractive to him. Try as she will after that, she cannot give rise in him to any amount of passion. He loses all interest in her and the long chain of infidelities begins.

Lawrence's theory of the polarity of being states that in love, woman has an active function and that in society she is to be passive. The reversal of this polarity, he says, is the cause of much unhappiness in

marriage. In Leonora, one can see a prime example of a woman who, instead of being active in love, looks upon herself as a virginal person who must accept sex as a part of marriage. In other words, she considers herself a passive being so far as love is concerned. At the same time, she assumes an active role in the world, doing things which Lawrence definitely states are part of the province of man. In other words, one may see in Leonora a complete reversal of the polarity of being.

The next person to be considered is the servant girl of the Kilsyte case, "a quite pretty girl of about nineteen".¹ Dowell tells very little about her in his narrative and as a character in her own right, she is of little importance. However, there is one important remark concerning her, which makes it necessary to consider her in this study.

It appears that the primary reason for the girl's protest when Edward kissed her was her realization of the difference in their stations in life:

All her life, by her mother, by other girls, by school-teachers, by the whole tradition of her class she had been warned against gentlemen. She was being kissed by a gentleman. She screamed, tore herself away, sprang up and pulled a communication cord.²

1. Ford Madox Ford, The Good Soldier, p. 150.

2. Ibid., p. 150.

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This serio-comic episode tells little of the girl herself, but it does give another blistering comment on the educational system and, indeed, on the whole society in which she lived. In Lawrence's view, compatibility of a man and woman is not to be judged on the basis of intellectual or social status. He condemns the attitude that a "gentleman" and servant girl must be kept apart because they come from different levels of society. This minor episode demonstrates again that Ford is depicting a society which engenders the very faults which Lawrence criticized adversely.

In La Dolciquita, the Spanish dancer, there are noticeable characteristics which are also condemned by Lawrence. This cosmopolitan prostitute, it is plainly revealed, is able to exude great passion toward a man who is interested in her. However, she is either unaware of, or not interested in, a love relationship for its own sake. Her feminine wiles are for her an instrument for financial success in the practice of her chosen profession. Her first experience with Edward is pleasurable for her but beyond that it becomes nothing more than a means of profiteering. Sex for her, then, does not lead to fulfillment; neither does it appeal to her primarily as a pleasurable experience. It is primarily an instrument

for financial gain.

It can be seen easily that La Dolciquita represents an aspect of distorted womanhood which Lawrence condemns. It has already been demonstrated that Lawrence did not consider the sex act a valid means of fulfillment when distorted in promiscuity or prostitution. Neither did he condone the woman who had an idea of herself and who tried to make her actions conform to that idea. La Dolciquita obviously uses sex in order to bring her finances into conformity with her ideal of the financial position which she should have. There is little wonder that Ashburnham becomes disenchanted with her.

Mrs. Basil is very briefly discussed by Dowell, however, a presentation of that which is known concerning her is pertinent in this chapter. She was the wife of an English army major working with Ashburnham in India. She and Edward fell deeply in love and it would appear that she stayed with her husband only because she believed in the indissolubility of her marriage. As had been mentioned in the previous chapter, Lawrence believed in the supreme importance of the love relationship in marriage; and it is certain that he considered a marriage which did not have this to be invalid. Now, it is illogical that such a dynamic attraction as a woman would

have for a man could not have existed in the same degree toward both men at the same time. This being the case, it seems probable that Mrs. Basil would have left her husband for Edward, had she not considered marriage such an important element in the society in which she lived. She is a woman whose opportunity for happiness is destroyed by her own inability to rise above the mores of her own society. Looking carefully at Lawrence's theory, one can see an implicit belief that marriage itself is valid only when there exists a dynamic attraction between the two partners. In his own life, he says nothing wrong in eloping with someone else's wife, because he did not consider her marriage, lacking as it was in this essential love ingredient, to be valid. Following Lawrence's own theory, it is not difficult to see that he would have considered it morally right - in fact, necessary - for Mrs. Basil and Edward to break their original unsuccessful marriages and take up life with each other.

Maisie Maidan is an innocent version of Leonora. A young woman in her early twenties, she is described by Dowell as "a nice little thing, a dear little dark woman with long lashes She had a lisp and a happy smile".¹ Mrs. Maidan, with her bad heart and shy innocence, is not

1. Ibid., p. 51.

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able to experience or share a complete love, nor does she suspect at any time until immediately before her death that Edward wants her as anything more than a dear friend. When she finally does realize that Leonora believes she has been having an affair with Edward, she is completely disillusioned. Determining to return to India at once, she writes Leonora a letter stating that "I did not know you wanted me for an adulteress It was surely not right of you and I never wanted to be one".¹ In death, she has about her an aura of innocence:

The stem of a white lily rested in her hand so that the spike of flowers was upon her shoulder. She looked like a bride in the sunlight of the mortuary candles that were all about her, and the white coifs of the two nuns that knelt at her feet ... might have been two swans that were to bear her away to kissing-kindness land²

Mrs. Maidan is a lovable little person, but she is not a woman who is able to bring love-fulfilment to a man. In her own marriage, she must have failed also, because although no definite statement is made to this effect, it does not seem likely that a happily-married young woman would leave her husband for an indefinite period of time in order to go half-way across a continent with another couple.

1. Ibid., p. 74.

2. Ibid., p. 74.

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Florence is one of the most malicious characters of the story, and because of what she does to others during her lifetime, there is a sense of poetic justice in her suicidal death. Through a gradual revelation, Ford discloses the fact of Florence's duplicity: that her heart trouble was only feigned, and that her marriage was entered into only so that she might maintain an appearance of respectability while continuing an affair with the young man named Jimmy.

The courtship of Dowell and Florence is an absolute mockery of romance. Florence is locked away in her room by her two old aunts, the Misses Hurlbird, for reasons which are not disclosed to the reader until the book has well progressed. Their attempts to dissuade Dowell from the marriage have failed simply because they cannot bring themselves to admit the real reason for their concern: Florence's sexual promiscuity. They wail when he tells them he intends to take their niece to Europe, because they know Jimmy is already there; yet, they cannot tell the reason because in doing so they would bring shame upon the family name. The truth about Jimmy is revealed to the reader much later, and the jig-saw puzzle begins to take shape. The aunts try desperately to convince Dowell, but they are impotent because their only weapon, which is also their reason for trying to dissuade him, cannot be used:

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They even, almost, said that marriage was a sacrament; but neither Miss Florence nor Miss Emily could quite bring themselves to utter the word. And they almost brought themselves to say that Florence's early life had been characterized by flirtations - something of that sort.¹

But Dowell is not to be put off, and in a masterfully ironic thrust he declares that even if Florence has robbed a bank, he is going to marry her. His suspicions do not become alerted even when Florence meets him immediately following his encounter and asks: "Have those old cats been saying anything against me?"²

On the night of the elopement, Florence keeps her lover waiting beneath her window for two hours. When they later sail for Europe, the rising of a sudden storm provides Florence with an opportunity to feign seasickness and shock, and eventually heart disease, so that the marriage is never consummated. These incidents occur in 1901. In that year, continuing through the meeting with the Ashburnhams in 1904 and lasting until 1913, Dowell is his wife's constant nursemaid. The affair with Jimmy, which lasts until 1904, is something of which the reader is not made aware, although there are vague allusions to it beforehand, until the evening of Florence's death. It is gradually revealed that Florence had a lover constantly -

1. Ibid., p. 81.

2. Ibid., p. 82.

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first Jimmy, then Edward - during the entirety of her marriage; and all that time Dowell waited on her and took the most extreme precautions to ensure that she would undergo no great emotional stress or excitement which might affect her heart. Ford's use of an irony which blankets the entire book is magnificent.

Just as Ashburnham replaces Jimmy, so too does Florence replace Maisie Maidan. One afternoon, Mrs. Maidan overhears Florence talking with Edward below her bedroom window. Realizing that she is to be replaced in what she had considered a rather unique friendship, she resolves to return to her husband in India. While she is packing her trunk, her heart fails, and the trunk closes upon her, "like the jaws of a gigantic alligator".¹ She is discovered, having fallen in this grotesque manner, with her legs sticking from the trunk.

Florence finally loses her position in Ashburnham's affections to the girl, Nancy Rufford, and the manner in which she is replaced produces one of the book's finest ironies. Florence overhears a conversation just as Maisie Maidan had done on the day of her death. This time, it is a conversation between Nancy and Edward, and although the meeting between the two is perfectly innocent, Florence is

1. Ibid., p. 75.

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able to suspect only one thing. Rushing back to her hotel, she meets Dowell in the hallway and sees him talking to a man who had known about her affair with Jimmy. She runs to her room and poisons herself.¹

Ford's narrator reveals Florence's character unwittingly, because he himself is unsure of his feelings towards her. Yet, he does eventually come to the realization that

She should not have done it. She should not have done it. It was playing it too low down. She annexed poor dear Edward from sheer vanity; she meddled between him and Leonora from a sheer, imbecile spirit of district visiting.²

Still Dowell has many fond memories of her, and he presents nostalgic descriptions of her: "Well", he says, "She was bright; and she danced. She seemed to dance over the floors of castles and over seas and over and over the salons of modistes and over the plages of the Riviera - like a gay and tremulous beam, reflected from water upon a ceiling".³ It is a very loving description; yet, one must not overlook the image of the beam reflecting from the water - an insubstantial thing which perhaps describes Florence's character more fully than it describes her

1. Ford Madox Ford, The Good Soldier, pp. 102, 109-110, 116-117.

2. Ibid., p. 71.

3. Ibid., pp. 14-15.

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physical appearance.

The irony of Dowell's position with respect to Florence is deepened by Florence's description to him of the kind of marriage she would want to have:

She wanted to marry a gentleman of leisure; she wanted a European establishment. She wanted her husband to have an English accent, an income of fifty thousand dollars a year from real estate and no ambitions to increase that income. And - she faintly hinted - she did not want much physical passion in the affair. Americans, you know, can envisage such unions without blinking.¹

This statement taken in the context of the events of the book, reveals much about Florence's character. She is obviously a woman who has normal sexual needs; otherwise, she would not have had consecutive affairs with two men. At the same time, she does not hesitate to marry a man who holds no physical attraction for her, because her "ideal" of herself and of marriage leads her to an acceptance of a loveless marriage so long as it will give her the social position she craves. Considering the sudden way in which she is able to throw over Jimmy for Edward, it would appear that she never loved him. However, Ford is not explicit on this. Her affair with Ashburnham seems to be much more serious; but again, Ford is not explicit. She certainly tries to talk Ashburnham into divorcing Leonora and marrying her, but her attempts seem to be

1. Ibid., p. 79.

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encouraged to a large extent by his social position. Whichever way one interprets her actions, Florence is revealed as a woman who is willing for the sake of social position, to marry someone whom she does not love, and who is willing to cuckold her husband in order to find sexual gratification for herself.

Florence is a thoroughly amoral character. To her, sexual behaviour is placed outside the sphere of ordinary morality. She sums up her thoughts when she tells Leonora that in deciding whether or not to commit adultery, it is "a case of perfectly open riding and the woman could just act on the spur of the moment ... I think her actual words were: 'That it was up to her to take it or leave it'".¹ This comment, supported by the very obvious manner in which she "used" Dowell, seems to indicate that for Florence, sex is not so much a vital part of love as it is a pleasurable experience. Her protracted affairs, first with Jimmy and then with Edward, are affairs of physical passion. Whether or not she loved either of them cannot be proven for certain because of the vagueness Ford creates through Dowell's narration; but in Jimmy's case the love is not strong enough to prevent her from marrying Dowell and in the affair with Edward an interest in his position seems

1. Ibid., p. 10.

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to have been prominent. She is perhaps not quite so promiscuous as La Dolciquita in that she does not sell sex, but at the same time she is not very interested in having a true dynamic relationship with a man if such a relationship is going to inconvenience her.

Nancy Rufford is the last and the most pathetic of Edward Ashburnham's lovers. Nancy, too, is convent-bred; but she has none of Leonora's coldness. She has always looked upon her guardians as the perfect couple, and when she finally finds out the truth about their marriage, and is immediately afterward confronted with the fact that Edward loves her, she is bewildered and shocked. Awareness of life is something which comes to her with cruel rapidity:

... she remembered to have heard that love was a flame, a thirst, a withering up of the vitals - though she did not know what the vitals were. She had a vague recollection that love was said to render a hopeless lover's eyes hopeless; she remembered a character in a book who was said to have taken to drink through love; she remembered that lover's existences were said to be punctuated with heavy sighs.¹

When she has discovered that the love which Edward bears for another - for he has all the symptoms of the lover of her imagination - is directed to her, and when she has learned from his wife that he has had affairs with numerous other women, she decides that the supreme sacrifice

1. Ibid., p. 223.

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is up to her:

What had happened was just hell ... You have to imagine my beautiful Nancy appearing suddenly to Edward, rising up at the foot of his bed, with her long hair falling, like a split cone of shadow, in the glimmer of a night-light that burned beside him.¹

The sacrifice, however, is not offered merely because of her love for him. The irony is that Nancy hated, loved, and pitied him all at the same time. She was sure that he was dying for love of her, and that she must somehow save his sanity and his life: "And she looked at him with her straight eyes of an unflinching cruelty and she said: 'I am ready to belong to you - to save your life'. He answered: 'I don't want it; I don't want it; I don't want it'".²

The nightmare-like horror of reality does not stop there for Nancy. When she has returned to India and sends the flippant telegram, this last act of hers is to be the final blow which drives Ashburnham to suicide. When she hears of his suicide, the shock is more than she can bear and she becomes insane. Dowell becomes her keeper, and Leonora marries a Roman Catholic. Dowell's conclusions are typical of him and of the tone of the book:

Not one of us has got what he really wanted.
Leonora wanted Edward, and she got Rodney Bayham,

1. Ibid., p. 201.

2. Ibid., p. 242.

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a pleasant enough sort of sheep. Florence wanted Branshaw, and it is I who have bought it from Leonora. I didn't really want it; what I wanted mostly was to cease being a nurse-attendant. Edward wanted Nancy Rufford and I have got her. Only she is mad. Why can't people have what they want? The things were all there to content everybody; yet everybody has the wrong thing. Perhaps you can make head or tail of it; it is beyond me.¹

It was mentioned earlier that Nancy is only gradually introduced to the story. Ford's technique is flawless in his portrayal of her, as he presents her first as a silhouette, undefined, uncharacterized, who has suffered a fate "worse than death".² He then introduces her as she had been during her earliest years with the Ashburnhams: a well-behaved, serious, but happy girl who was fortunate enough to have been rescued from a drunken father and a prostitute mother through the goodness of the Ashburnhams.

Dowell describes her thus:

She was tall and strikingly thin; she had a tortured mouth, agonized eyes and a quite extraordinary sense of fun. You might put it that at times she was exceedingly grotesque and at times extraordinarily beautiful She was just over twenty-one and at times she seemed as old as the hills, at times not much more than sixteen.³

Nancy, like Leonora, is pictured as the victim of

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1. Ibid., p. 237.
 2. Ibid., p. 121.
 3. Ibid., pp. 123-124.

an educational system which engendered in women the very type of idealized outlook which Lawrence condemns. Her notion of the realities of love was, to the extent that it was formulated at all, formulated in a distorted manner. The shock of discovering that her ideals do not coincide with reality is more than she can cope with. The result is disaster.

It can be seen, then, that the female characters depicted in The Good Soldier are plagued by the same problems as those which Lawrence states are the cause of so much unhappiness in marriage. In Leonora, the compounding of these disastrous aspects is apparent, in her idealization of love which resulted from her convent-school background, and in her reversal of the polarity of being which Lawrence saw as the problem of many women in the world of his day. In Maisie Maidan and Nancy Rufford, and to a different degree in Mrs. Basil, the conventions of society and the concepts of morality which they have been taught, are conventions and concepts which Lawrence condemns. Reflections of their problem are implied in the portrayal of the Kilsyte girl as well. La Dolciquita is a type of woman whose own distorted ideals lead her to prostitution. For Lawrence, such a woman could not find fulfillment in love, because the fulfillment of which

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he speaks cannot be found in a promiscuous relationship such as the relationship which results from prostitution. The failure of all these women in love is therefore, caused by factors which Lawrence has pointed out as being the causes of unhappiness and failure in love and in marriage.

In this chapter, seven female characters of The Good Soldier have been presented and analyzed from the point of view of Lawrence's theory concerning woman's role in love and in society. It is clear from what has been said that these characters possess, in differing degrees, the very flaws which Lawrence claimed are contributing to the destruction of marriage and of society.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis, it has been demonstrated that Ford Madox Ford's novel, The Good Soldier, explores a theme which D. H. Lawrence dealt with in Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious. It has also been shown that the characters depicted by Ford in that novel encounter the same problems which Lawrence considered man to be facing, particularly in the early twentieth century; and that the society presented by Ford in his novel bears the very characteristics which Lawrence condemned in his own society.

Chapter One presents an account of the Ford-Lawrence relationship, with some commentary on the attitude of each toward the other's work. Because of the special role which The Trespasser, one of Lawrence's early novels, played in this relationship, a brief study of it was also necessary. The conclusion was reached that while Lawrence was influenced, encouraged, and supported by the older Ford, there is a high degree of probability that Ford was influenced in turn by Lawrence's interest in, and exploration of, the love-fulfillment theme.

Chapter Two comprises a recapitulation of Lawrence's essential argument pertaining to the man-woman love relationship. Because his books, Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious, state explicitly

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the same ideas which can be deduced from his novels, the recapitulation is based, not on his novels, but upon the other two works. Lawrence saw a vital relationship between man's fulfillment in love and his achievement in the world. Hence that writer's ideas concerning the relative roles of man and woman in society are also presented and commented upon.

The remaining three chapters are devoted to a rigorous analysis of various aspects of The Good Soldier and a detailed assessment of the relationship of those aspects with Lawrence's theory.

Chapter Three comprises a presentation of the society depicted by Ford in The Good Soldier. The characteristics of this society are presented in detail and at every point comparisons are made with parallel aspects of Lawrence's theory. This chapter indicates clearly that Ford presents an idle society with a distorted sense of values: a society which bears a striking similarity to that which Lawrence condemns.

In Chapter Four, the major male characters of The Good Soldier are analyzed and comparisons are made with the various characteristics of man presented by Lawrence. Lawrence, it will be noted, had stated that man must attain fulfillment in love if he is to find a measure of happiness in life; and that he must, having found fulfillment in love,

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go beyond this to the undertaking of some purposeful, dynamic activity in society. The male characters of Ford's novel do not find fulfillment in love; nor do they succeed in the accomplishment of any purposeful function in society. Ford has presented male characters who are near-opposites to the dynamic male whom Lawrence says man must be if he is to find fulfillment or happiness in life.

Chapter Five consists of a detailed study of those female characters of The Good Soldier who have been connected romantically with the male characters of Chapter Four, and their characteristics are compared with parallel aspects of Lawrence's theory. Lawrence states most explicitly that a woman must rid herself of the "sex-in-the-head" blight which he considered to be one of the major causes of marital problems and the destruction of the man-woman relationship. This Chapter proves that, in various ways, each of Ford's female characters which is studied suffers the symptoms to which Lawrence attributes the growing "anarchy" in his contemporary society.

Thus, through a comparison of Lawrence's argument with related aspects of The Good Soldier, it has been demonstrated that these men were both interested in essentially the same problem. The present work is certainly not intended as a definitive study on the many

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apparent results of the relationship which existed between these two novelists. However, it does prove that there was a vital influence of the one upon the other, and indicates the fact that Lawrence, Ford's "pupil", very probably provided the older novelist with a theme which Ford pursued in his own, individual way.

Ford, who is recognized by many critics as a writer's writer, a master-craftsman in the field of the novel, must also have had a substantial influence upon Lawrence. This point deserves further exploration and could very well prove to be of sufficient significance for a thesis.

It is also apparent that Lawrence's influence on Ford was not restricted to The Good Soldier. In fact, the tetralogy entitled Parade's End, which some critics rank as his finest work, explores in a relatively explicit way the same themes as those which he dealt with in The Good Soldier. It was seen in the present thesis that the principal characters of The Trespasser and The Good Soldier met different degrees of frustration and despair which led to the deaths of several of them. Parade's End bears a parallel resemblance to Lawrence's novel of a later period, Lady Chatterley's Lover. In each of these books the principal characters are able to over-step the constrictions of convention, and they thus set out at the end of the narrative with the promise of fulfillment and happiness.

It seems likely that the influence of Lawrence's theory on Ford extended beyond the writing of The Good Soldier. In this respect, there is room for much more scholarship, concerning both the total extent of Lawrence's influence on Ford, and also on the measure of success which Ford achieved in his exploration of the "Lawrentian theme".

The study of Lawrence and Ford which has been necessitated by this thesis has also given rise to the question of how extensively each of these novelists has influenced other writers of the twentieth century.

Although the problems which must yet be explored are obviously numerous, it is considered that the present thesis has contributed substantially to scholarship on Lawrence and Ford. The importance of Lawrence's theory as discussed in this work is undeniable. The discovery and the proof that he influenced another man who is becoming recognized as a major literary figure should be of more than passing interest to anyone who is interested in the English novel of the twentieth century.

APPENDIX

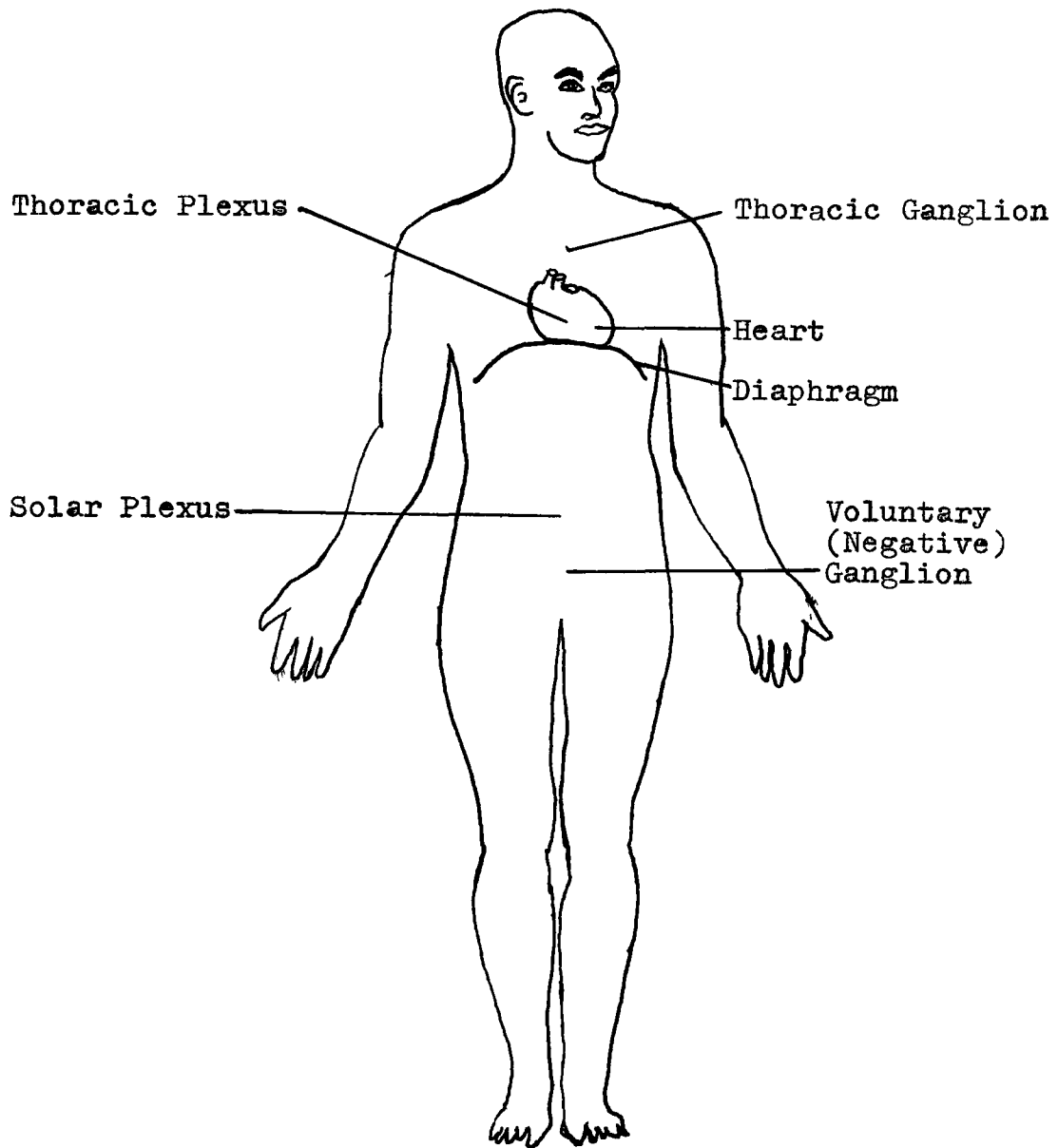


Diagram illustrating physiological centres of man's activities.

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Bowen, Stella, Drawn From Life: Reminiscences, London, Collins, 1941, 297p.

Miss Bowen was Ford's wife during the years 1918 to 1925. This book is largely a collection of her reminiscences covering those years. Although it offers no direct aid to the present work, it is indirectly helpful because of the information which it provides concerning Ford's attitudes towards marriage.

Cassell, Richard A., Ford Madox Ford: A Study Of His Novels, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1961, xi-307p.

This was the first major work in criticism to be published concerning Ford's novels. A large portion of the book is devoted to The Good Soldier, and is particularly valuable to the present work because of the comments made on Ford's point-of-view method in character portrayal.

Ford, Ford Madox, A Call: The Tale of Two Passions, London, Chatto & Windus, 1910, 304p.

In this novel, Ford explores to a certain extent the question of man's happiness and fulfillment in marriage. In many respects, the book is a fore-runner to The Good Soldier, and has been recognized as such by several critics. The book includes a rendition of a farewell scene which bears striking similarities to Ashburnham's parting with Nancy Rufford in The Good Soldier.

-----, An English Girl, London, Methuen, 1907, 278p.

In this early work, Ford portrays a man who is unable to find happiness and a woman who has had thrust upon her the cultural and moral standards of a society. The two are weak fore-runners to Edward and Leonora Ashburnham. One scene in particular is similar to a scene in The Good Soldier, in which Nancy Rufford and Edward are seen on a park bench by Florence-- an episode which leads to Florence's suicide.

-----, The Good Soldier, New York, Vintage Books, 1951, xxll-256p.

-----, It Was The Nightingale, Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1933, v-382p.

This book of impressionistic memoirs provides an

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understanding of the years during which Ford was working as editor of The English Review, and during which he was associated with Lawrence. It also supplies interesting information on Ford's attitudes toward the society in which he lived. Consequently, it was of great value to the present work.

-----, Ladies Whose Bright Eyes, London, Constable, 1911, 363p.

This novel is considered to be among Ford's better early works. Although its setting is largely in the Middle Ages, its theme is much like that of The Good Soldier, and consequently it is directly helpful to the present work.

-----, The March of Literature: From Confucius' Day To Our Own, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1939, 306p.

This highly impressionistic history of literature is not directly pertinent to the aims of this thesis. However, it does much to reveal Ford's ideas concerning the nature and purpose of the novel.

-----, Memories and Impressions: A Study in Atmospheres, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1911, xix-336p.

This collection of memoirs covers Ford's childhood and youth, and provides insights into the environmental influences of his development as an artist and as a man.

-----, Mightier Than The Sword, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1938, v-292p. (Published in the U.S.A. as Portraits From Life, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1937; and Chicago, Henry Reguery, 1960).

This collection of reminiscent essays contains an interesting chapter on Ford's association with D.H. Lawrence, and is consequently invaluable to the development of Chapter One of the present work.

-----, Parade's End, Toronto, Signet Classics, 1965, two vols., 517p. & 350p.

Ford's tetralogy was published first during a four-year period from 1924 to 1928. The novelist's exploration of themes pertaining to love and marriage in the England of the First World War is different in approach and technique from his study of similar problems in The Good Soldier; however, in spite of the differences, this tetralogy does shed light upon some of the most difficult problems in The Good Soldier.

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-----, The Young Lovell: a Romance, London, Chatto and Windus, 1913, 310p.
This minor novel, written as it was just one year before The Good Soldier, offers proof that even when he was merely spinning a tale, of the knight-hood of the Middle Ages, Ford had the question of man's quest for love uppermost in his mind.

Goldring, Douglas, The Last Pre-Raphaelite, London, MacDonalD, 1948, xv-288p.
This is a revealing book by a man who worked for Ford during the hey-day of The English Review. It provides particularly valuable data on the chronology of events, surrounding the publication of Lawrence's first works.

Gordon, Ambrose Jr., The invisible Tent, Austin, The University of Texas Press, 1964, ix-153p.
This work is a critical evaluation of seven of Ford's most important novels, including The Good Soldier. The author gives worthwhile insights to Ford's work which are pertinent to the present thesis.

Hunt, Violet, I Have This To Say, New York, Boni and Liveright, 1926, ix-306p. (Published in England as The Flurried Years, London, Hurst and Blackett, 1926.)
Written by Ford's second "wife", this book provides an intimate commentary on his life during the days of The English Review. Although not directly helpful in the preparation of this thesis, it does provide a further commentary on Ford's attitudes and his deportment in marriage.

Lawrence, D. H., Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, New York, The Viking Press, 1960, xxiii-225p.

-----, Fantasia of the Unconscious, New York, The Viking Press, 1960, xxiii-225p.

-----, Sons and Lovers, New York, The Viking Press, 1963, 420p.
Considered one of Lawrence's finest novels, this work is helpful to the present thesis because of Ford's comments on it.

-----, The Trespasser, Baltimore, Penguin Books Inc., 1961, 217p.
An analysis of this important novel was essential to the present work in order that a worthwhile presentation could be made of the relationship

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between Lawrence and Ford.

Lid, R.W., Ford Madox Ford: The Essence of his Art, Berkley, University of California Press, 1964, xi-20lp. This book is a competent and interesting study of the development of Ford's craftsmanship. Although not directly useful in the preparation of this thesis, it does help indirectly by providing insights into Ford's special use of Dowell as narrator.

Meixner, John A., Ford Madox Ford's Novels, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1962, x-303p. One of the major studies on Ford's novels to date, this book is extremely valuable for the perceptive study on The Good Soldier, particularly for the character analysis on Edward Ashburnham.

MacShane, Frank, The Life and Work of Ford Madox Ford, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965, xx-298p. This biography is considered by many critics to be a definitive work on Ford's life and career. It is useful to the present work for the commentary given on Ford's association with Lawrence.

Nehls, Edward, D. H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography, Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1958, Three volumes, This extensive work is valuable to this thesis for two reasons: first, for the information it provides on Lawrence's own life - a life in which he practised what is advocated in his scientific writing - and second, for the facts which are provided from several points of view, including Lawrence's, on his association with Ford.

Ohmann, Carol, Ford Madox Ford: From Apprentice to Craftsman, Middletown, Connecticut, Wesleyan University Press, 1964, x-185p. This book contains a limited amount of biographical information. The rest of it is a study of the steps of development in Ford's craft as a novelist. The section on The Good Soldier provides a worthwhile analysis of the architectural elements of craft in that novel.

Wiley, Paul L., Novelist of Three Worlds: Ford Madox Ford, Syracuse, University of Syracuse Press, 1962, ix-321p.

This study traces Ford's development through, and

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his success in escaping, the influences of the Pre-Raphaelites, with whom he was connected by family ties; it studies the influences of Henry James, whom Ford called his dear master, and of Joseph Conrad, with whom he collaborated; and finally, it analyzes Ford as a novelist who emerged as an artist in his own right.

Young, Kenneth, Ford Madox Ford, London, Longmans, 1956, 43p.

This brief study of Ford's life and works is a worthwhile introduction to this author; however, its importance has been diminished greatly during the last decade by the full-length studies which have been published. It had no direct bearing on the preparation of the present paper.

ABSTRACT

Ford Madox Ford (1873-1939) and D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930) are major figures in the development of the twentieth century novel. In studying these two men, it is interesting to note that Ford explores the same theme in his finest novel, The Good Soldier, as that which is studied in the major works of Lawrence. When it is considered that the two men were personally associated during the years 1909 to 1912, the fact of the similarity of themes becomes highly significant.

In this thesis, a study is made of the similarities between Lawrence's theory concerning man's fulfillment in love and in life, and parallel aspects of Ford's treatment of this subject in The Good Soldier. As a result of this study, with supporting evidence gleaned from the business and personal relationships of these two men, conclusions are reached on the extent to which Lawrence seems to have influenced Ford.

Chapter One comprises a factual study of the events which occurred during the years when Ford and Lawrence were associated in a writer-editor relationship. It also contains a brief study of The Trespasser, an early Lawrence novel which displays a Fordian influence in its failure to deal with the man-woman relationship in an explicit, direct manner, but which has at the same time

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a striking thematic resemblance to The Good Soldier.

Chapter Two contains a re-capitulation of Lawrence's essential argument concerning man's quest for fulfillment in love and in life.

Chapter Three contains a re-capitulation of the intricate plot structure of The Good Soldier and a study of the society which Ford depicted in this novel. The latter is then compared with Lawrence's views concerning the society of his day.

The major male characters of The Good Soldier are studied in Chapter Four, and evaluated from the point of view of Lawrence's theory. It is determined that the male characters depicted by Ford suffer the same inadequacies as Lawrence considered man to be suffering in his own society.

Chapter Five comprises a presentation of seven female characters who are depicted in The Good Soldier. These women are unable to fulfill their roles in society, for the same reasons as those which Lawrence saw as being responsible for the failure of many marriages in his contemporary world.

It is concluded that Ford was substantially influenced by Lawrence, and that this influence becomes unquestionable in the light of the present study.