

Tribhuvan University

Redrawing the Gender Boundary in D. H. Lawrence's *Selected Stories*

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by

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled
"Redrawing The Gender Boundary in D. H. Lawrence's *Selected Stories*"
is my own original work carried out as a Master's student at the Department of
English at Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus except to the extent that assistance
from other's in the thesis design and conception or in presentation
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All sources used for the thesis have been fully and properly cited. It contains no
material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of
any other degree at Tribhuvan University or any other educational
institution, except where due acknowledgement
is made in the thesis.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "**Redrawing the Gender Boundary in D. H. Lawrence's *Selected Stories***" submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus Tribhuvan University Kathmandu, by Pabin Dhakal has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Abstract

The study in the Selected Stories “The Rocking Horse Winner,” “The Odour of Chrysanthemum,” “The Blind Man,” and “Things” of D. H. Lawrence has endeavored to bring out the condition of women in the society. In the stories, women cross the demarcation generated by the patriarchal society. Males impose their supremacy on females but the females boycott them and do different activities remaining out of patriarchal restriction. Women are limited in household activities. They have to suffer from diverse problems. They don’t get support from men even in harsh situation. So, they attempt to exist independently.

In the stories, the women characters, Hester of “The Rocking Horse Winner,” Elizabeth of “The Odour of Chrysanthemum,” Isabel of “The Blind Man,” and Valerie of “Things” try to cross the gender boundary. Hester joins in a job to solve money problems as well as to maintain social status. Elizabeth takes out her hand from cleaning, washing and arranging bed for drunkard husband. Isabel restrains extra-marital affairs with Bertie despite her husband’s skeptic nature. Whereas, Valerie struggles to settle down her husband and family. While observing these, the characters seem to be facing the constraints boldly. Therefore, they try to sustain their lives without depending upon others. All the stories emphasize on to treat women as their ability and capacity not by their sexual organs.

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Introduction: Subversion of Gender Roles

D. H. Lawrence's short stories, in his story collection *Selected Stories* (2014), present the condition of women characters. They are deprived of all types of opportunities at home and outside making their personal life and family life miserable. The women characters learn that they need to do something on their own for survival. They try to establish their own existence by crossing the boundary as defined by the contemporary society. Therefore, women attempt to cross the patriarchal boundary and involve in different activities for supporting their family, fulfilling their needs and desires and sustaining their life independently.

Theorists Judith Butler and Betty Friedan focus on gender and gender roles to empower women's condition. The prominent theorists Judith Butler and Betty Friedan talk about the subjects of Sex, Gender, Desire, Subversion of identity, hierarchy and identity. Judith Butler in "Gender Trouble" says sex is biological, and gender is culturally constructed, then the two concepts are independent of one another. She argues against a strict binary association between sex and gender, as well as between gender types. If gender identity is complex, especially in its relation to sex, Butler argues that feminist must embrace this complexity and move further away from traditional gender roles. She argues that people must rethink the most basic categories of human identity to make society better. Betty Friedan in "Feminist Mystique" talks hierarchy of needs and identity. She states women need more meaningful and fulfilling work just like men in order to achieve "self-actualization" which is the highest level in the hierarchy. She offers for women in recovering their identities, particularly the necessity of giving up their status as housewives.

“The Rocking Horse winner” presents the problems of Hester and her struggles. Hester and her husband are the primary characters including their children, Gardener and Oscar Creswell. Hester’s husband has a job. However, that is not sufficient for him to lead family. So, the house is always haunted from money problems. Hester doesn’t get enough support from her husband. She has to care and rear the children as well she needs to maintain the social status. But she faces money problems. Therefore, she secretly joins a job but can’t solve the money problems. Then, her son Paul determines to fix monetary problems being a winner in horse race by putting bet. Somehow, he wins the bet but accidentally he dies.

“The Odour of Chrysanthemum” displays the sad and bitter reality of a woman in the family. Elizabeth is a main character including her husband, children and mother-in-law. Walter works in a coal mine. Elizabeth cooks dinner at home. Her daughter Annie comes home late from school and she scolds her for being late. She asks her daughter if she met Walter on the way. Elizabeth provides them dinner and waits for him late at night but he doesn’t come. He is drunkard. When he comes home intoxicated, she has to clean and wash him daily as well as arrange the bed too. At that day until he comes midnight, she goes to search for him but she doesn’t meet. Then, she returns to home. After sometimes, some people arrive her home carrying a dead body of Walter. Her mother-in-law cries but she doesn’t wail. However, she advises her not to cry because children could wake up. She cleans the dead body, covers him in a sheet and locks the parlor door.

“The Blind Man” explains the relationship of husband and wife. Maurice Pervin, Isabel and Bertie are the characters. There was a sort of kinship between Isabel and Bertie, an affinity. They understood one another instinctively. So, Isabel gets married with Maurice. In the beginning, their relationship is very good. They

spend their life happily. Isabel keeps her interest in agriculture and cattle raising. Maurice goes to France. The first child of them dies. However, Maurice gets wound when he goes second time there. He becomes blind and returns to home at that time she is in pregnant condition. She expects pleasure, joy and relief after his arrival. Although his blindness shatters her dream she loves him and cares him. She tries to adjust with him by breaking close friendship with Bertie. But, she couldn't tolerate the unbearable activities of Maurice because he suspects upon her, he feels alone, despair and goes into depression. Therefore, she continues her relationship with Bertie for getting pleasure, joy and happiness.

“Things” is a story based on real sense of freedom and natural beauty.

Valerie and Erasmus, several years before the war they met and got married. They go to Paris, France, America and Europe in search of real freedom and beauty. They spend some times in one place and again move to next place in search of beauty and freedom but they couldn't get because of modernization and industrialization.

Valerie feels tired while roaming here and there so she advices him to accept new changes. By looking this condition, Valerie's mother couldn't satisfy and offers them to live in America. Valerie forces him to return to America from Europe. They begin to live in Cleveland University where Erasmus teaches French, Italian and Spanish literature. Later, he becomes a changed man.

Therefore, the women characters in the stories suffer from male atrocity.

They try to break and overturn the fastening of the society. They cross the patriarchal boundary and involve in different activities for supporting their family, fulfilling needs and desires and existing their life independently. Women don't have access in means and resources. They are in underprivileged condition. They have to engage only in household activities, child bearing and rearing. But men are in

privileged condition. Society has given power and right to male to rule and govern upon female. They involve in different occupation and profession. All means and resources are in their hand but they don't pay required degree of attention towards their wife and children. As a result women have become nothing but a labor force. Lawrence stories present the disparity operating between male and female.

Feminism designates the belief in the social, economic, and political equality of the sexes. M. H. Abrams in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* defines feminism as a movement of struggle for the recognition of women's cultural roles and achievements and for women's social and political rights (124). Women are confined to the domestic sphere; while public life is reserved for men. Women are taken as coward, emotional, weak and dependent beings. Men are taken as brave, strong and courageous beings. But in D. H. Lawrence's short stories male seems unable even to perform their functions. In "Rocking Horse Winner" Hester is sad because her son dies. She suffers from money problems. Likewise, in "Blind Man" Isabel Pervin goes in trouble because her husband Maurice Pervin becomes blind and still suspects his wife. In "The Odour of Chrysanthemum" Elizabeth is very sad and problematic because her husband is drunkard. Every day she needs to clean and wash him as well as arrange the bed for sleeping also. Whereas Valerie and Erasmus go to settle into a life of despair by increasing the rapid growth of modernization and materialism. At that time, women have no right to raise voice and to go outside from the house. They had to completely sit under the pressure of men. Society treats women as inactive and secondary beings. The women are forced to live into the life of despair, anxiety, interval and hollowness. But the women, in the stories, stand strongly and fight various problems. They destroy the fence prepared by male. They justify that they are not dependent beings. They involve in knitting, weaving and do

job for earning money. It shows that they also can do which men do. They have also desires, aims and plans. They claim that women should behave not on the basis of sexual organs but by their capability and dexterity. So, they go ahead not as directed by the society but by their own sense and ability.

Lawrence, representing different characters in the story, states that both society and male members have significant role to determine the condition of the women. Even the society of that period was already transformed into the modern society. But the roles assigned to women and ways of looking towards them was traditional. They had to totally sit under the control of men. Whatever men ordered they had to do and followed. There is no equality between male and female in each and every sphere. Even, the family members in the stories don't have mutual and cordial relationship. The then- patriarchy's domination and demarcation generates distance between male and female. Female are excluded from all types of chance and opportunity. Thus, the women feel compelled to survive extreme pressure of the society. So, the situation and the plight of the women characters are deeply studied in the context of modernization.

Social, cultural and gender roles determine the attitude and behavior of the person. In the stories, all characters have been influenced by gender, economic and social injustices. Society, gender, culture, language and mass media have been the prime factors of domination and exploitation upon the women in the family and society. The women characters in the story spend panic and miserable life. They have to do whatever their male members order. Their role can't be completed only looking children and household activities. They also have to look and care their husband. Women are suppressed and boycotted from social roles and responsibility.

Women's role in patriarchal society is confined to child bearing and rearing and the household activities. But, in Lawrence's stories, the women characters have no choice but subvert the existing gender roles for survival. Why do women characters trespass traditional gender roles and subvert male female relationship in contemporary society? The research will be centered on inspecting the answer to these problems. The role created by the traditional society is not fair, time-bound and contextual because society favors only male. Women annihilate the constructed gap prejudices and conservative thinking of men. The women in the stories try to create equality, freedom and opportunity by breaking the boundary and male hegemony. In one hand, they suffer from their husband. On the other, they have been the victim from the patriarchal system of the society. The then- society treats male and female differently. The role is determined on the basis of their sexual organ but not looking their ability and capacity.

The primary effort of this research is to examine how the women are adversely affected by the concept of gender roles and how they endeavor to subvert the male hegemony and supremacy imposed upon them by using the ideas and notion in Butler's and Friedan's gender and sex, subversion of identity and hierarchy. Similarly, this research attempts to find out how the gender inequality and injustices create pessimism, cynicism and solitude in women life. Women's lives have been pathetic due to the narrow mind of the male to look upon the female. In spite of unfavorable situation, women keep up struggling to establish their own existence and identity.

Hester's Efforts to Support Family

Hester in “Rocking Horse Winner” is in trouble due to the lack of money. Her husband has a job but he is expensive in his tastes. He doesn’t support his family. Hester works secretly in the studio of a friend who is the chief ‘artist’ for the leading drapers. She struggles to exist selfstanding. According to Lawrence, “She married for love and the love turned to dust” (7). She expects love and support from her husband. She has a dream to spend happy and wealthy life after getting married but she always suffers from money problem. Neither she can fix her problems nor fulfill the demands of her children. Though her husband does a job, acts as the head of the family, he doesn’t pay enough attention towards his family. In “The Symbol, The Pattern, the Way to live,” W. D. Snodgrass reviews:

There could scarcely be a more apt description of Hester’s situation. As for her husband, we cannot even guess what he is, he gives to few clues. Failing to supply the luxuries that both he and his wife demand, he can be withdrawn, ceased to exist. The one thing he could always give- himself, the person he is-seems part of a discarded currency. The mother, the father, finally the boy each in turn has withdrawn his vital emotions and affections from commitment in and to the family. (192)

Despite the claim that the male is the head of the family, Hester’s husband is clueless person. He neither supports nor leads the family. Even he can’t solve his own problems. So, she falls in difficulty but she tackles with problems by crossing the traditional concept of the society. In Lawrence’s story, “Hester worked secretly in the studio of a friend who was the chief ‘artist’ for the leading drapers. She drew the figures of Ladies in furs, ladies in silk and sequins for the newspaper advertisements” (18). She works for earning money because her house is haunted

from money problem. She has to maintain social status. Hester efforts to make her family good and prosper. She is influenced by modernization where money is in center. She has to fulfill the desires and demands of the children and maintain social standard through money earning by her. When she gets money she admits her son in well- known school, manages tutor and brings furniture for decorations. She is the responsible figure from all sides. She tries to be autonomous. In “The Feminine Mystique” Betty Friedan writes:

Women also had minds. They also had the human need to grow. But the work that fed life and moved it forward was no longer done at home, and women were not trained to understand and work in the world. Confined to the home, a child among her children, passive, no part of her existence under her own control, a woman could only exist by pleasing man. (138-139)

Hester involves in job to fix the financial problem as well as fulfill desires of her children. She is also expensive in taste. She goes to party and drinks. She buys expensive furniture and decorates the house. She can think and generate ideas. She never forgets her responsibility towards her children. Women are not source of pleasing for men. In an article “Fancy or Imagination”, W. R. Martin writes:

They buy “splendid and expensive toys, for their children; they spend lavishly on themselves in a desperate struggle to keep up” their social position. Neither the toys nor the social position give real satisfaction and the parents are condemned to ever more frantic and meaningless repetition. This is seen in the mother. She clamors for money but as soon as she gets the “dollar 5,000”. She is back where she was

before, wanting more money more desperately. The parents too are on a rocking-horse, and they are not individuals- like the wooden horse they have no names- but representatives of a large section of bourgeois society. (65)

Hester is in trap. She has to take care of children as well as uphold the social position. Patriarchal society doesn't give any clue to women but society focuses on showy nature. So, she wants more money and spends money to buy different things. She exists in the society being an independent and strong person. In Lawrence's story, "Hester had a small income, but not nearly enough for the social position which they had to keep up" (7). She thirsts for money to compete with the society. Traditional gender roles are one sided and biasness which give more space to men. Women don't have more space as like men. Traditional roles are against women desires and freedom. Traditional roles don't let women to go out from the home. Women duty is just sitting at home, cooking food, child bearing and rearing. Men neither support them nor women get freedom.

In this situation, how family condition will be proper. As a mother or wife she has more responsibility to perform different task inside the house as well as outside also. She doesn't get any possibility from her husband to accomplish it. Her idea can't come true if she remains under the traditional gender roles. Therefore, she plans to be independent. Modern society emphasizes on money and material things. She has lack of money but she doesn't become desperate and hopeless. She believes that she is an essential being of the society. Michel Haar argues, "a number of philosophical ontology have been trapped within certain illusions of "Being" and "substance" that are fostered by the belief that the grammatical formulation of subject and predicate reflects the prior ontological reality of substance and attribute"

(qtd. In Butler 28). Men treat women as an object, source of pleasure and inferior beings and men are described as courageous and subjective beings.

Women are taken as substance rather than the being. Society defines them as a machine for performing household activities and birth of the baby. Males are taken as a subject whereas females are considered as a predicate. In the story: "When Hester was at a big party in town she fought with the feeling, might and main, for she believed in common sense. But it was too strong. She had to leave the dance and went to downstairs to telephone to house" (21). Hester goes to party with her husband. She engages in drinking and dancing with her husband. She involves in outer world's entertainment. Husband is in full of luxury and joy. She also enjoys there. He seems completely indifferent towards his children. But even Hester couldn't remain there peacefully. She is concerned about Paul who looked desperate and nervous from some days. She leaves dance and go downstairs to telephone people at home. It shows that women are more sensible, careful and determined. They are capable to work each and every sector. W. S. Marks III in *Modern Fiction Studies* writes:

He becomes a scapegoat who atones for the sins of his house—the material, social, and intellectual ambitions that corrupt normal affection, dislocate the proper authority of the father, and disintegrate the moral ties of the family, replacing them with the cash-nexus. Paul's death, we may assume, finally stills the haunting whisper, "There must be more money!" (385)

In the story, father is the head of the family. He has whole authority to maintain material, social and individual needs and ambitions of the family members.

Therefore, his irresponsibility creates dislocation and disorder in the family. All members are morally disintegrated because of money. Mother desires money but she doesn't make her son to be suffered from problems. She pays attention for overall development of her children. Hester's husband only uses her to accomplish his desire and pleasure. She has been a substance for him. She has become his object but he never cooperates and helps her in harsh condition. In such situation, she makes herself strong and efforts to establish as a subject.

Furthermore, in the story, "Paul neither slept nor regained consciousness and his eyes were like blue stones. His mother sat, feeling her heart had gone, turn actually into a stone" (23). She worries by looking the condition of Paul. But her husband doesn't feel any pain and suffering, even he doesn't care also. She closely observes him. Her heart beats fast but she doesn't lose her hope. George. F. Freije in "Equine Names in "The Rocking-Horse Winner" says, "Life itself is like the crossing of a dilapidated bridge; death is equated with falling through its holes. Under the bridge is the ocean of eternity; divided in half by a gigantic rock" (78). Hester attempts to bring him to consciousness but she doesn't become succeed. She doesn't look restless. She doesn't cry. She makes her heart strong and fight with challenges without any distract. It means she fearlessly tackles the patriarchal society. As the society believes those females are emotional and sentimental but she presents her as courageous and strong. Women can face all types of constraints and difficulties.

Isabel Challenges Society through Extra Marital Affairs

Isabel in "The Blind Man" suffers from her blind husband Maurice Pervin. Initially, their relationships become good. Later, her husband becomes blind and the

relationship gradually falls in problem. His own life is torture to him and his presence is unbearable to his wife. His physical disability makes her a sense of burden, weariness, terrible. Therefore, to remain away from solitude and loneliness, she continues her relationship with Bertie, her old friend. She loves him-though not in the marrying sense. There is a sort of kinship between them, an affinity. Besides this, she cultivates a real interest in agriculture and cattle raising.

Isabel in “The Blind Man” becomes happy with her husband in the beginning. When husband is blind, trouble begins in her life. In Lawrence’s story, “she loved Bertie Reid- though not in the marrying sense. There was a sort of kinship between them, an affinity. They understood one another instinctively” (26). She has relationship with Bertie since childhood. She discontinues her relationship with Bertie when she gets married. Regina Fediman says:

There is a crisis between Isabel and Pervin. She is expecting a child and wants to luxuriate in a “rich, physical satisfaction of maternity” and retire into herself (p.348). Although they have had a wonderfully, incredibly happy year of nearness and peace. She is now afraid of Pervin’s world of darkness. It has meant rapture and passion and unspeakable beauty to her, but now she longs for the light. She reaches out for friends, inviting Reid “who seemed almost indispensable to her living” to visit them (p.347). Reid is her distant cousin and erstwhile close friend, but she has not seen him in several years. (65)

Isabel and Pervin relationship is in critical condition. Initially, they spend happy life. There wouldn’t be any trouble and misunderstanding between them. Isabel expects a

child and luxury in her life. When Pervin becomes blind her happiness begins to fade. Even though he is blind he suspects upon her. He tries to impose male hegemony. She feels pain and torture. Mary Douglas states, “A polluting person is always in the wrong. He has developed some wrong condition or simply crossed over line which should not have been crossed and this displacement unleashes danger for someone” (qtd. In Butler 179). Pervin has been blind but he has negative stereotypes to look on female so creates problems in Isabel’s life

Pervin’s physical disability and depression create burden in Isabel’s life. Isabel fully cares and tries to make her husband happy and satisfied through love and support but Maurice himself goes into the loneliness and depression. Besides this, he doubts upon her. If she speaks with other male members he becomes restless and impatient. Therefore, he has become danger for her. Similarly, in the story, “Isabel and Bertie chatting gossip and reminiscence, the blind man silent. At length Maurice rose restlessly, a big obtrusive figure. He felt tight and hampered. He wanted to go away” (41). Bertie Reid comes to meet Isabel. They have intimate relationship. She does chatting and gossip with him. They talk about their former activities. When they are together the blind man becomes silent. Maurice doesn’t endure their gossip and closeness. So, he rose restlessly and goes away from there. Nils Clausson review states;

Maurice world is said be a “peaceful” and “serene” on of the dark intimacy. “life was still very full and strangely serene for the blind man, peaceful with the almost incomprehensible peace of immediate contact in darkness” (46). Quite on the contrary, it is a world of violence, turmoil and terror. The darkness seemed to be in a strange swirl of violent life just upon her. (116)

The same world is different for them. The world is peaceful and calm for Pervin because he is blind and lives under the cover of darkness. The same world is instable and hell for Isabel because his darkness generate disorder, violence and terror in her life. But she doesn't escape from the problems. Rather she continues her relationship with Bertie to remove burden and pessimism. In Lawrence's story, "Isabel cultivated a real interest in agriculture and cattle- raising. For she, being at heart perhaps an emotional enthusiast, always cultivated the practical side of life, and pride herself on her mastery of practical affairs" (28). Isabel keeps her interest on in agriculture and cattle rearing. She does everything for sustaining her life.

Isabel's husband, Maurice Pervin, head of the family unable to work because of blindness. She takes whole responsibility of the family. Thus, she cultivates her interest in agriculture and cattle raising to run her family. It doesn't mean without her husband she can't live. It means she can survive herself without depending upon others. Women can survive and spend their life except the support of men. In "Gender Trouble" Judith Butler states, "The production of "nature" operates in accord with the dictates of compulsory heterosexuality, the emergence of homosexual desire, transcends the categories of sex. If desire could liberate itself, it would have nothing to do with the preliminary marking by sexes" (35). Our society emphasizes on heterosexuality but doesn't accept the homosexual desire. As like this, our society has ruled upon the female. It says that female can keep sexual relationship only with her husband. Females are not allowed to involve in extra-affairs. Even talking to male is also taken negatively. But in the story, Isabel breaks the traditional notion of the society. Germaine Greer explains:

Although the repression mechanism was described in various ways, the reaction to that mechanism was taken (as it usually is) to be a

ground for continuing it. Women were too weak, too vulnerable to irrational influences to be allowed to control their own lives. When one of my students collapsed in her final examination with cramps and bitter uncontrollable sobbing, the cause was officially recorded as hysteria: the aetiology of her case was particularly important but the word hysteria seemed to supply all the answers. (56)

Men dominate women in different ways because women are believed too weak, too vulnerable and emotional. So, Maurice attempts to control over Isabel. Isabel feels uneasy and difficult due to the mental disorder of Maurice. His attitudes after blindness is the cause of fear and pain. Judith Butler states:

Sexuality is culturally constructed within existing power relations, then the postulation of a normative sexuality that is “before,” “outside,” or “beyond” power is a cultural impossibility and a politically impracticable dream, one that postpones the concrete and contemporary task of rethinking subversive possibilities for sexuality and identity within the terms of power itself. (124)

Gender and sex are different terms. Sex is natural where as Gender is socially constructed to govern upon female. In the story, though Maurice is blind, he thinks his wife as an object. He is disable but enforces to impose male supremacy on her. On the name of sex she has been treated as inferior and weaker beings. Isabel tackles against the blind perspectives of the society and leads her life as her wish. Gender is not represented as ‘real’, but as a boundary which is politically regulated. The conformation of the female has already been described in terms of a particular type of conditioning begins to emerge. What happens is that the female is considered as a

sexual object for the use and appreciation of other sexual beings, men. The characteristics that are praised and rewarded are those of the castrate-timidity, plumpness, languor, delicacy and preciousness. Body ends with a look at the way in which female reproduction is thought to influence the whole organism in the operations of the wicked womb, source of hysteria, menstrual depression, weakness, and unfitness for any sustained enterprise.

Carols Goldin in “The community of the Blind: Social Organization, Advocacy and Cultural Redefinition” argues, “The blindness as an “inconvenience,” a disability that makes certain tasks more difficult for the blind than for the sighted. It is a “nuisance” not to be able to read print, not to be able to drive, and so forth” (128). Due to the blindness of Maurice, the distance between him and his wife have been increased. Although he is blind, he involves in different agricultural activities, goes outside alone in darkness and becomes restless and unsatisfied. He neither follows her suggestion nor remains happy with her. Therefore, it creates burden, anxiety and troubles in Isabel’s life. But she never does negligence to him. She always efforts to make him happy and pleasure. Though she is closed with Bertie but she never forgets her duty and responsibility.

The soul and body is the myth of the Eternal Feminine, nowadays called the stereotype. Our culture evaluates women by looking their physicality. Women are taken as an object or an ornament. Society treats women as an artifact. In “The Rocking Horse Winner” husband doesn’t assist to his wife. He does totally careless to play his role in the family. He uses her just as a source of pleasure. In “Blind Man” Maurice behaves Isabel in a negative way. He doesn’t tolerate Isabel’s activities. Both are compelled to locate only in the house but they come out from their internal boundary as delimited by the society. They don’t want to remain as an

object. They desire to be subject. Revolution ought to entail the correction of some of the false perspectives which the assumptions about womanhood, sex, love and society have combined to create. Tentatively it gestures towards the redeployment of energy, no longer to be used in repression, but in desire, movement and creation. Therefore, they strongly protest the biasness and unequal perspective to look towards women from socially, sexually and psychologically. They say their identity don't have to measure from men, for women, they can create their identity by themselves. Tradition notion about gender is totally one sided and wrong where women are excluded from all chance and opportunity and men are fore grounded unnecessarily. Women also can do all things which men do.

Isabel continues her relationship with Bertie Reid. She destroys the preliminary marking of sexes. In Lawrence's story, "she sighed, picked up the poker, and again began to prod the fire to rouse the clouds of soft, brilliant sparks" (40). It means again she longs to keep her relationship with him. Sometimes, she disconnects her relationship with Bertie for making her marriage relationship strong and long lasting. When husband becomes blind she invites Bertie in her life not marrying sense but removing pain and sufferings from her life.

Isabel and Elizabeth in both stories, struggle to go far away from male dominancy. Both feel irritation, pain and bored of their husband's activities. Isabel's husband is blind who doubts her. Whereas Elizabeth's husband is drunkard who never comes home in time. So, they destruct male hegemony. They long to remain away from their husband's burden and atrocity. Therefore, in the story Isabel challenges the society by keeping extra- marital relationship with other male. "Isabel knew Bertie well. She despised him even while she admired him. He understood

amazingly – she had no fear of his understanding. As a man she patronized him” (40). She knows very well about Bertie. She keeps relationship with him just fulfilling her desire. She patronizes him. She wants to remove all types of burden through Bertie. She only uses him. Society confines the female desire. But Isabel stands against the narrow concept of the society.

Elizabeth’s attempts to Stand against Tradition

In “The Odour of Chrysanthemum” Elizabeth is in panic condition. Her husband is drunkard, always comes home late night. But she has to wait him until he arrives. Sometimes, she has to go searching for him. She has to wash and clean her drunkard husband. Thus, she is confined in the traditional norms and values of the society. She strives to come out from the male supremacy. She accepts all types of role and responsibility as assigned by the society. She says, “If your father comes he will carry on and say there never is a fire when a man comes home sweating from the pit – A public house is always warm enough” (53). Her husband works in mine. He is drunkard also. He never directly comes home after finishing his work. He goes to pub for drinking. When he drinks other people should carry him to reach at home. She cares him. She always waits for him until he arrives. Rather he blames her and goes to public house for getting warm. Elizabeth primarily concerns upon her husband and children but husband remains indifferent to her.

Untimely, Elizabeth’s husband dies. They are working class family. Husband works outside and she works inside. It doesn’t mean she can’t survive without her husband. Somehow, she feels ramification but she strongly stands against the demarcation created by the society. Elizabeth life is complex but she strongly stands against conservative notion of the society. Judith Butler in “Gender Trouble” states:

Men are not born with a faculty for the universal and that women are not reduced at birth to the particular. The universal has been, and is continually, at every moment, appropriated by men. It doesn't happen, it must be done. It is an act, a criminal act, perpetrated by one class against another. It is an act carried out at the level of concepts, philosophy, and politics. (158)

No one is superior and inferior by birth. But society has made male as powerful whose role is to dominate and keep the female in underprivileged condition. In the story, husband drinks everyday and comes home late night. Elizabeth should clean and wash him, and make bed for him. It is the atrocity of male which gives only pain and suffering. She tolerates all things but she doesn't get proper love, care and good response. She says, "It is scandalous thing as a man can't even come home to his dinner! If it's crozzled up to a cinder I don't see why I should care. Past his very door he goes to get to a public-house, and here I sit with his dinner waiting for him" (54). Elizabeth expresses that it is very scandalous of men who can go outside to drink but can't come home in time even for taking dinner. She waits her husband but he remains in public house without concerning his family. Then she commits not to wait him for dinner.

Judith Butler stands against the traditional notion of gender division. She subverts and modifies the role assigned by the society. Butler efforts to think through the possibility of subverting and displacing those naturalized and reified notions of gender that support masculine hegemony and heterosexist power, to make gender trouble through the subversive confusion of precisely those constitutive categories that seek to keep gender in its place, (33-34). Butler is resisting accounts of gender divisions which see the binary categories of male and female as

originating in natural sexual divisions, yielding either a biologically or psychologically essentialist account of masculinity and femininity. Elizabeth resists gender role. She doesn't accept the role given by the society.

In the story, Elizabeth says, "I won't wash him. He can lie on the floor. Eh, what a fool I have been, what a fool! And this what I came here for to this dirty hole, rats and all, for him to slink past his very door" (55). As a female or wife that is her duty to wash and care but she challenges her husband by rejecting traditional role. Butler suggests that gender is not constituted consistently and coherently in different contexts. There is great divergence, multiplicity and contradiction within the categories 'woman' and 'man' both cross- culturally and within a culture. Butler's discussion leave us with the option of accepting gender differences as either universal or essentialist or as fictions: yet neither seems adequate. The development of gender as a category within social science wasn't simply an invention. It served an important explanatory function, uncovering causal mechanisms at the social level. Butler persuasively argues:

The identity politics of feminism constrain the very subjects for which feminism presumes to speak and works to free and, thus, Butler calls for a deconstruction and critical genealogy identity itself – for a politics of subversion. For instance, she claims that politics don't have to proceed from unity and solidarity. Rather, coalitions must recognize their contradictions and fragmentations and take action with just those contradictions in min. There is no need for a unified "doer behind the deed" for in Butler's vision the doer is constructed again and again in and through each deed." (195)

The identity of female is measured through male. Females don't have independent identity. In the story, Elizabeth doesn't have her own identity. The politics of that period has given more right and authority to male as a result she treats as a slave and worker. However, she struggles to give her identity as doer. So, the deconstruction of identities is not a dismantling of politics. This application of deconstructionist theory to gender and sexuality is much needed. Similarly, the strategy of subversion is a significant contribution to feminist politics. Many feminists have argued that women are outside or could be outside the contamination of phallogocentrism and compulsory heterosexuality. However, Butler emphasizes that women, gays and lesbians are always constructed by and embedded in these very structures. Since women, gays, and lesbians have less stake in the dominant culture, they have the freedom of movement necessary to subvert, destabilize, displace and denaturalize the categories of gender, sex and desire.

In Lawrence's story, women are repressed and subjugated. They spend their life in darkness. In search of light they come out from the limitations imposed by patriarchy. "The clock struck eight and she rose suddenly, dropping her-sewing on her chair. She went to the stair foot door, opened it, listening. Then she went out, locking the door behind her" (57). She waits expecting his arrival in time but he doesn't come. She has the skill of sewing also, from which she makes different items. Still she hopes and listens if he has come out but she doesn't see him. Then she locks the door and goes outside for looking for him. It is her regular duty. She feels irritated and uneasiness due to the immoral behavior of her husband. As a result, "She had denied him what he was-she saw it now. She had refused him as himself. And this had been her life, and his life. She was grateful to death, which restored the truth. And she knew she was not dead" (70). She becomes free and

releases from tension and burden. She can sustain herself without support of male. This is her life but it is controlled by other. She doesn't have right what to do and not. Now, she realizes and decides to avoid all types of male supremacy and dominancy. She is strong. When her husband dies she becomes happy because she gets freedom and free from exploitation and domination. She survives in her own way.

Valerie's Struggle to Settle Down the Family

In the story "Things" Valerie victims from the stubborn character of her husband. She should run after him because he runs to and fro in search of freedom but he deprives his wife from the freedom and traps her under his control. They wander here and there to settle down the family but they can't get because of modernization and industrialization. They want to live in peaceful and beautiful area but all these are encroached by modernization. Specially, they prefer noiseless and naturally beautiful area. Erasmus is more traditional and conservative who doesn't accept the changes easily. So Valerie says, "We are living on the past, you know, Dick, said Valerie to her husband" (107). Valerie suggests her husband it is impossible to exist in present searching real beauty and freedom of the past. Thus, they have to be changed. Living in the past can't accept the present. It implies that male can't accept the changing role of female. So, male perspective towards female must be changed. Betty Friedan in "The Feminine Mystique" raises voice for women's right and freedom. She states, "Woman had to prove that woman was not a passive, empty mirror, not a frilly useless decoration, not a mindless animal, not a thing to be disposed of by others, incapable of a voice, in her own existence, before they could even begin to fight for the rights of women needed to become the human equal of men" (138). Women are not a tool for using decoration according to men

wish and desire. They have their own power and existence to rule and guide. So, they are active beings.

Woman is not a passive and mindless animal. They also have knowledge to think and do something. Elizabeth follows her husband. Wherever he goes she goes there but he can't permanently settle down the family in a singular place. He himself runs in search of freedom but he doesn't provide freedom to his wife. Her advice to him to change oneself is greater than to search for changes. Rebecca Walker, prominent feminist, challenges all forms of discrimination and inequality. She says the lines between male and female are often blurred which need to end and removed all types of dark cloud imposed upon female by male. She states:

We fear that the identity will dictate and regulate our lives, forcing us to choose inflexible and unchanging sides, female against male, black against white, oppressed against oppressor, good against bad. We have trouble formulating and perpetuating theories that compartmentalize and divide according to race and gender and all the other signifiers. For us the lines between us and them are often blurred, and as a result we find ourselves seeking to create identities that accommodate ambiguity and our multiple positional ties; including more than excluding, exploring more than defining, searching more than arriving. (p. xxxiii)

According to walker women don't have their own identity. Their identity depends upon their husband. Male is considered as powerful, good, oppressor, etc. whereas female is taken as weak, bad, sensitive and oppressed. Walker doesn't pursue and agree the terms given by society. She encourages women to choose flexible and

changing sides. Women are suppressed on the name of women, on the name of black, on the name of poverty and so on. In the story, Valerie's mother says, "She didn't think her daughter's life looked so very marvelous at present: homeless with husband idle at the age of forty, a child to educate, and a dwindling capital – looked the reverse if marvelous to her" (110). Male is the head of the family. It is the duty of the male to lead, to guide and manage the problems of the family. Erasmus can't settle the family because he has been directionless and aimless. Neither, he has money nor job. They are homeless. Valerie's mother doesn't feel satisfied with the role of Erasmus. She doesn't get happiness in her daughter's life. She thinks all these have happened because of Erasmus.

The famous activist and feminists Betty Friedan, in *The Feminine Mystique*, struggled for establishing equality and opportunity for women. Because of her active participation and role, female voice reached into the apex and chance to present in mainstream culture of the nation. She described a depressed suburban housewife who dropped out of college at the age of 19 to get married and raise four children. She states:

In almost every professional field, in business and in the arts and sciences, women are still treated as second-class citizens. It would be a great service to tell girls who plan to work in society to expect this subtle, uncomfortable discrimination-tell them not to be quiet, and hope it will go away, but fight it. A girl should not expect special privileges because of her sex but neither should see "adjust" to prejudice and discrimination. (149)

Friedan claims that women are as capable as men for any type of work or any career path. Her book doesn't challenge only the condition of hegemonic sexism but also expanding arguments for women's education, political rights, and participation in social movements. The *Mystique* of Betty Friedan writes: "She helped to change not only the thinking but the lives of many women" (169). She coined the term feminine mystique to describe the societal assumption that women could find fulfillment through housework, marriage, sexual passivity, and child rearing alone. Further, prevailing attitudes held that "truly feminine" women had no desire for higher education, careers, or a political voice; rather they found complete fulfillment in the domestic sphere. She also argued that the feminine mystique hurt women both personally and professionally, and she held that, for women as well as for men, identity was largely cultivated through a sense of personal achievement, primarily through a career. Wittig writes:

I confront a nonexistent object, a fetish, an ideological form which cannot be grasped in reality, except through its effects, whose existence lies in the mind of people, but in a way that affects their whole life, the way they act, the way they move, the way they think. So, we are dealing with an object both imaginary and real. (qtd. In Butler 164)

The domination upon female by male is an ideological, nonexistent and fetish. It lies in the mind of people. It can be grasped only through their act. The husband behaves wife as inferior being because he thinks himself as superior being. He has power to govern upon female body. He keeps his wife under his control and order. Husband takes wife as his supporter and helper. So, he doesn't like Valerie suggestion. Later, he accepts Valerie's idea when he becomes optionless. Valerie gets suffering from

his activities who always runs after the imagination rather than reality. Neither he shows the way nor gives clues for permanent settlement. But Valerie depicts him the ways. She says, “you don’t care for Europe any longer. As you say, it’s dead and finished. They offer us a house on the college, and mother says there is room in it for all our things. I think we’d better cable “Accept” (111). Valerie tells him to leave Europe and settle down in America. Where her mother offers them as a house on the college. He is well learnt man but no ability to manage the family. She emphasizes to accept it for better living standard. Betty Friedan in “The Feminine Mystique” argues, “True equality between men and women wouldn’t be “functional” the status quo can be maintained only if the wife and mother is exclusively a homemaker or at most, has a “Job” rather than a “career” which might give her status equal to that of her husband” (202). The equality between male and female can’t be happened until female get chance to come out of home and involved in different economical and social activities.

Female identity is measured through the eyes of male. Females are taken as an object. They have to follow whatever society orders. Their role is important only inside the house. But female role shouldn’t limit only in household activities. When female involve in job then they can get equal status to their male. In story, “Erasmus glowered at her like a concerned rat. One almost expected to see rat’s whiskers twitching at the sides of the sharp nose” (111). Erasmus feels odd to accept the purpose of wife. In reality, he thinks himself as qualified and powerful but he can’t adjust his family. He doesn’t like to work and settle there but he compels to stand with the point of her wife. So, he glowers her as a corner rat.

Conclusion: Epitome of Female Identity

In Lawrence's stories, all characters are from working class. They are affected by the industrialization and modernization. Among them, women are doubly victimized. They are excluded from chances and opportunity. They suffer from the attitude of patriarchal society. They don't get any freedom and option in lives. But they don't remain silently as a passive creature. Directly and indirectly, they cross the boundary of the society. Women are also active. They have also strong desire to do something in their lives. They engage in job coming out from the home. The women lives in the story are panic and miserable but they don't escape from the troubles. Without depending upon male members they struggle to maintain family problems as well as their lives. Therefore, they stand against all forms of biasness, prejudices and domination. They try to be independent by breaking the conservative boundary of the society.

Lawrence has reflected the troubles of working class family, mainly from gender perspectives in his stories. In "Rocking Horse Winner" when Hester is in economic problem she doesn't ask her husband rather she involves in job as well goes to party, drinks and dances there. When Paul dies she feels pain but strongly handle the critical situation. In "The Odour of Chrysanthemum" Elizabeth doesn't wash and clean her drunkard husband. She looks content and delighted after the death of her husband. Elizabeth doesn't seem restlessness and impatience rather she firmly stands all types of difficulties. She also does knitting and weaving. In "The Blind Man" Isabel prolongs her relationship with Bertie after getting married. She knows her husband is disable. She does everything for making him happy and pleasant. When her attempts failed she closes with Bertie. She firmly stands against the problems despite her husband supports. Valerie in "Things" contributes to establish family which her intellectual husband can't do as well she arranges job for

her husband. According to society male is the head of the family. Male has power to rule in the family and society. In the story, men neither can lead the family nor fulfill the desire and demands of wives and children. Even men can't complete their own responsibility towards their family. But, they control over their wives. They treat them as an object. Therefore, in the stories, all women do struggle to come out from the repression. Gradually, women boycott traditional roles and adopt new ways for making their lives better. So, they were in suppression but they didn't favor whatever male ordered. They slowly subvert their roles by enduring all ups and downs.

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