

**Feminist Writings**  
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**Tickets, Please! - Part 3**

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So, hi and welcome to this N P T E L session on Feminist Writings.

We were looking at the conclusion of the D H Lawrence story Tickets, Please! So, it is an interactive session. That is the reason why we have, all of you here. So, we will conclude it and then we will have a maybe, some commencing questions and your takes on this conclusion as well.

So just a very short and quick recap of what we have discussed already. So we see how this particular person John Joseph, who happens to be this more or less only male in this company of women working in the tram route way.

And this is important for us to remember because it is 1919 right after the First World War and we know already that there has been a dramatic demographic change in terms of able-bodied men available for work in public space and then of course more and more women come up, take up jobs such as working in trams etc.

So that gendered reconfiguration is important for us to remember in the context of this story, specifically given 1919 and then we see what one of the things which should be, we should

be asking ourselves, what is John Joseph doing here and why he is not there in trenches may be, or why is not he injured so, maybe?

I mean, there is something about him which we do not know, perhaps, which is not quite told. I mean we are told he is a bit of a predator; he essentially is a hunter man in this particular context. But what we see at the end of the story is that how the hunter gets hunted, right?

So this is very interesting series of metaphors from hunting, animal metaphors which come in and just strategically strewn in at the story in the end which makes the message even more dramatic.

Now we see how Annie is one of the protagonists in the story. She feels wronged by John Joseph's, she is someone who is expecting more holistic, emotional relationship with him whereas from his perspective it is more of a carnal relationship and he quickly moves on to another person and then to another person.

And she feels wronged and she grieves over it and then she plans a vendetta, revenge which is spectacularly played out in the end, very collectively.

So we have a group of women who have been wronged, each one of them by John Joseph

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and they essentially gang upon him in a very violent, visceral way.



And we have, what we need to remember is how the violence over here operates at many levels, at many registers. It is not just physical and visceral; it is also linguistic

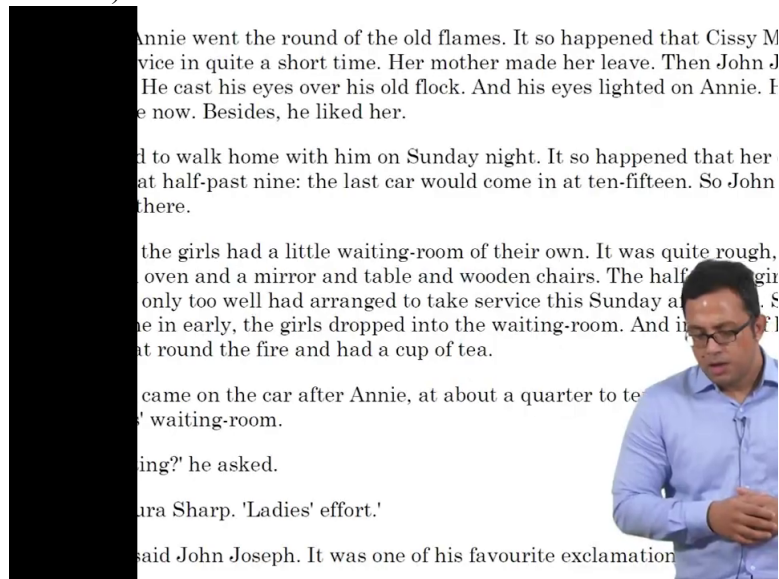
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to a certain extent.

So if you read it carefully you will find that how John Joseph's pet expressions are used back on him by the women in terms of appropriating his pet phrases and using back it at him, or hurling back at him some kind of a linguistic retaliation which becomes some kind of an anticipation of the violence which takes place in a physical level, right? So that is something which we need to bear in mind as well.

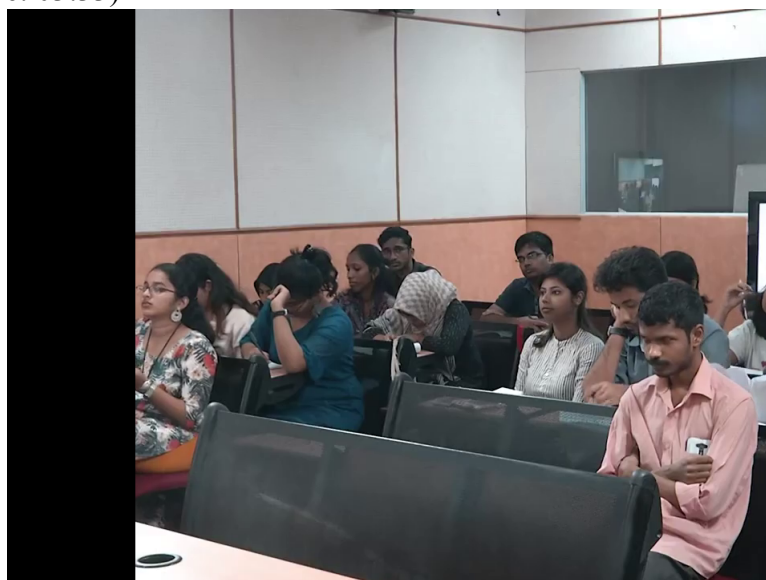
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Ok, now we will just start at the beginning of the conclusion because the setting is important. Where this entire act of violence takes place and we are told that at the depot, the girls had a little waiting room of their own, right.

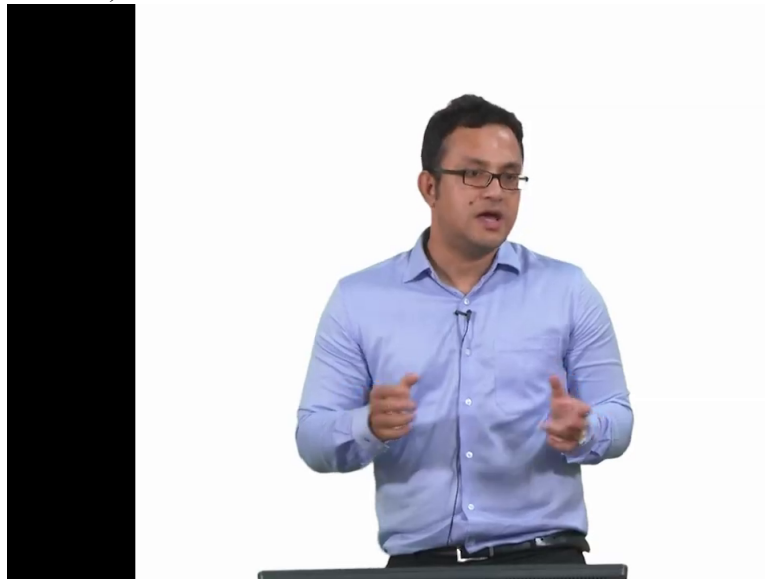
So it is a waiting room and again it is a very domestic space, it is very traditional and domestic space. Women come, perhaps change after their duty and go back home. It is perfectly

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innocuous, perfectly domestic. It is nothing violent or absurd about it. It was quite rough, but cosy, with a fire and an oven, again very domestic metaphor as a

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wooden chairs.

So if you take a look at the furniture in this waiting room, very cosy, very homely, very intimate, there is nothing unhomely about it which is to say, something uncanny about it, it is perfectly familiar intimate setting.

The half dozen girls who knew John Joseph only too well had arranged to take service this Sunday afternoon.

So there is a plan brewing, we are told that these people who had deliberately taken service Sunday afternoon just so that they can act out this planned vendetta perhaps on John Joseph.

So, as the cars began to come in, early, the girls dropped into the waiting-room. And instead of hurrying off home, they sat around the fire and had a cup of tea.

So again, so far we have a series of very domestic, homely metaphors, a group of women making a cup of tea in an oven, in a small cosy room, there is nothing about it which is even remotely dangerous or subversive. So, setting appears very deceptively domestic at the beginning.

And the deception, deceptive quality is interesting for us to unpack because we see how it is very quickly and dramatically defamiliarized when John Joseph comes in and we have this visceral violence enacted at the end.

So, instead of hurrying off home, they sat around the fire and had a cup of tea.

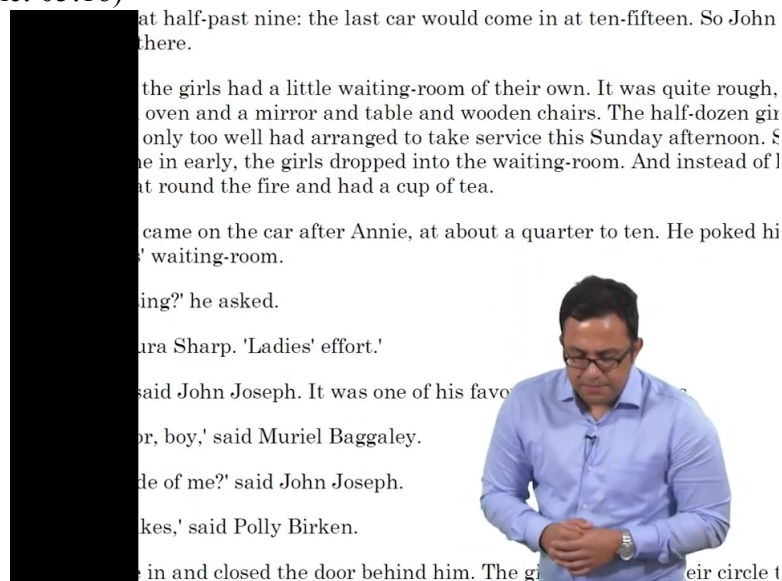
So John Joseph came on the car after Annie, at quarter to ten He poked his head easily into the girls' waiting-room.

'Prayer-meeting?' he asked.

'Ay,' said Laura Sharp. 'Ladies' effort.'

So again

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it is important for us to underline and observe the linguistic registers over here. It sometimes takes double innuendo, double meaning. So 'Prayer-meeting?' He asks and response he gets is 'Ladies' effort.' which again could be interpreted in many ways.

So it is collective effort by all these ladies who had been wronged presumably by John Joseph and now they have collected, they have gathered together and this is very much of ladies effort in that sense. So you know there is that register operative as well.

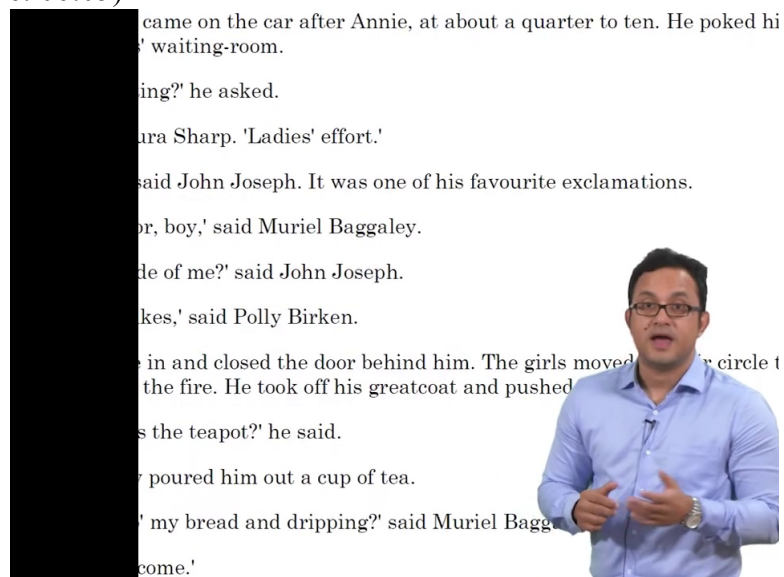
'That's me!' said John Joseph. It was one of his favourite exclamations.

So that is important for us to understand, and remember and observe that we are told what his favorite exclamations are. And these exclamations are used back at him, as of this entire retaliation game which takes place.

'Shut the door, boy,' said Muriel Baggaley.

'Which side of me?' said John Joseph

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'Which tha likes,' now again this is very colloquial, which tha likes, which you like, so again this is not grammatically very correct or sophisticated but that is the point. I mean we are talking about register which is very colloquial in quality.

We have seen already how in the story, when the sentiments shift, when it becomes more intimate, when it becomes more close there is a corresponding shift in linguistic register as well. It becomes more colloquial, more slanging, more local in quality

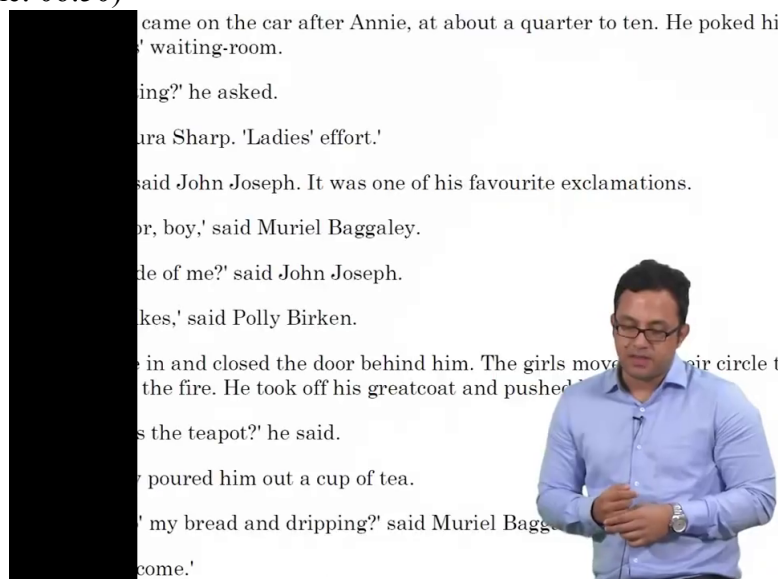
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right which is to say, it moves away from the objective empirical, grammatical position to a more colloquial position in a very nice correspondence with the shift in sentiment.

Ok. He had come in and closed the door behind him. The girls moved in their circle, to make

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a place for him near the fire.

Again this circle is important. It is beginning of the hunting metaphor, it is beginning of the hunting of the pack metaphor which is being employed over here and they make him sit down in the middle of the fire and circle around him.

He took off his great-coat and pushed back his hat.

So we have seen already how in the story the sartorial signifiers are very important. We have seen the tweed cap of John Joseph as an aspirational category of dresses wearing a tweed cap which is to say that he is perhaps aspirational to be a gentleman and his great-coat over here is perhaps a uniform that is very, which suggests superiority compared to the other girls around him.

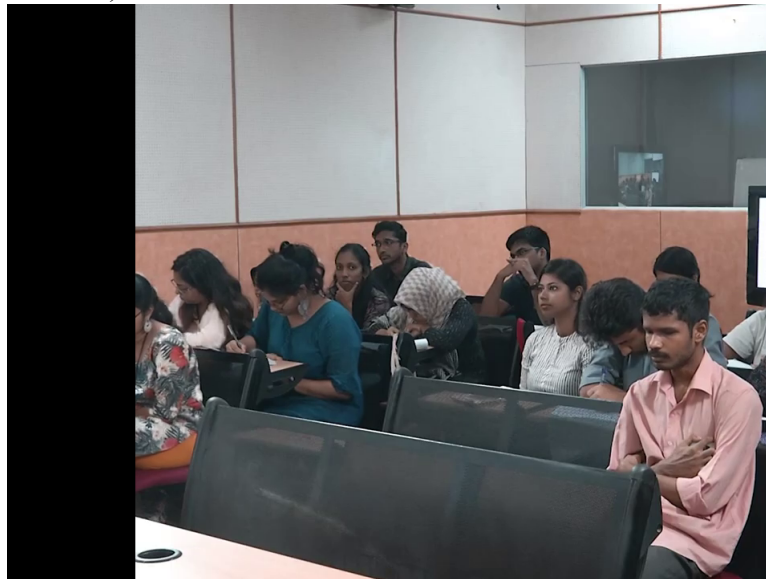
And he takes off his great coat and pushes back his hat, right. So he is taking off, this doffing of the great coat becomes a symbolic over here because what we see very quickly in this scene is an act of emasculation, complete emasculation, an active disembodiment, right and of course we know that dresses or sartorial signifiers play a very big part in embodiment.

How you dress, what you dress. It could be social statements; it could be very much part of your extended embodiment, right. So, embodiment operates at many levels, there is (( ))(8:00) quality, there is a neuro-psychological, biological level of embodiment and equally it is extended, discursive quality of embodiment which flattens out to dresses, language etc.

So taking out his great coat becomes very symbolic scene over here which we need to underline and observe.



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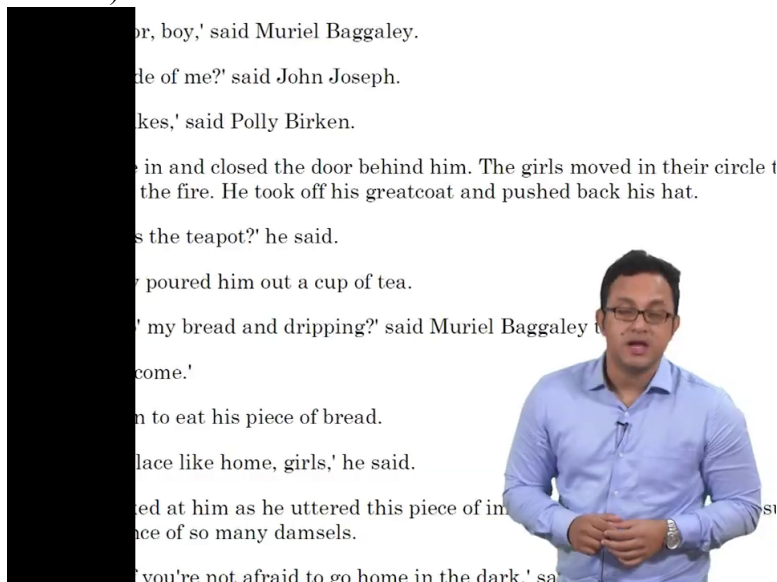


'Who handles the teapot?' he said.

Nora silently poured him out a cup of tea.

'Want a bit o' my bread and drippin'?' said Muriel Baggaley

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to him.

'Ay, all's welcome.'

And he began to eat his piece of bread.

So, I mean, notice the very deliberately done domestic setting over here. There is a group of women serving him tea, giving him bread, and he is just being this powerful man, enjoying, consuming the kindness of women over here which is to say this is a very superficial kind of a structure which is laid out before us. And that is going to be dismantled and decimated very, very quickly, right.

So this is a very common trop in literature. You create a setting to dramatize the deconstruction which follows subsequently where you create a superficial setting, a superficial structure just to hammer home the deconstruction and the decimation of that which takes place subsequent to that particular scene, Ok.

And he began to eat his piece of bread. And this is a very important sentence where he says 'There's no place like home, girls,' right. So the homely quality of the setting is underlined and dramatized by this particular statement where he says 'There's no place like home, girls,'

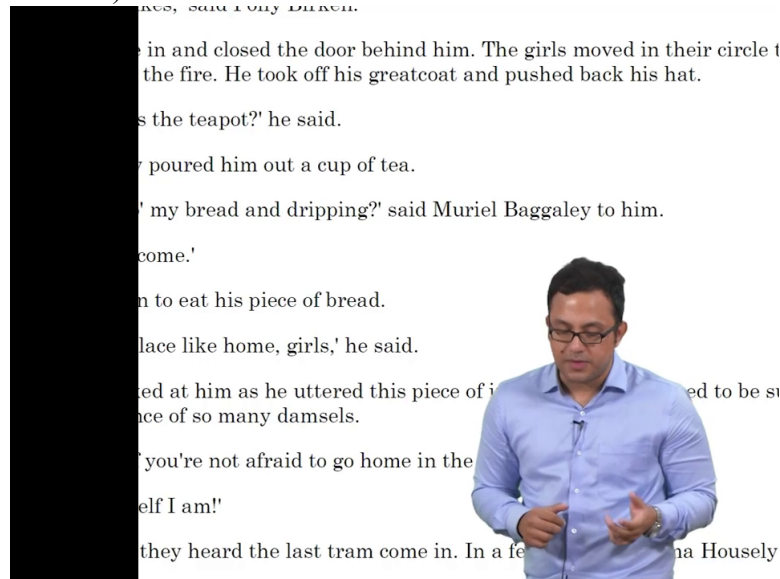
And we have find, you know we have already seen how the concept of home becomes very important in feminist studies, in feminist writings, in gender studies, in general because home suggests intimacy, coziness, familiarity etc. whereas ...that is homely.

And what is unhomely can very quickly become uncanny, and we talked about already the etymology of the word uncanny as used by Freud which means unheimlich, which actually means unhomely, outside the home, right.

So this is very, very homely for him at the moment but then deceptive and the subliminal, suggestion is very quickly becoming unhomely perhaps. It is very quickly becoming an uncanny space which it will very, very shortly.

So, they all looked at him as he uttered this piece of impudence. He seemed to be sunning

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himself in the presence of so many damsels.

So again, he is being this very powerful man, this very embodied male who is surrounded by all his women, enjoying the attention, enjoying the comfort they are offering and, in terms of the tea and the bread, and there is a commonality to be drawn between this and the opening of Mansfield's Fly.

If you remember even there, the boss seems to be placed in position, in a position of privilege where he enjoys all the manly embodiments of having a new office, reading Financial Times, using the phallic paper knife, and drinking whisky at his own disposal.

Everything around him at the beginning of the story was very, very masculine. And then of course we saw how that is emasculated very dramatically as the story progresses.

So over here we have a similar superficial and deceptive setting of masculinity and this comfort of being this powerful man. Ok.

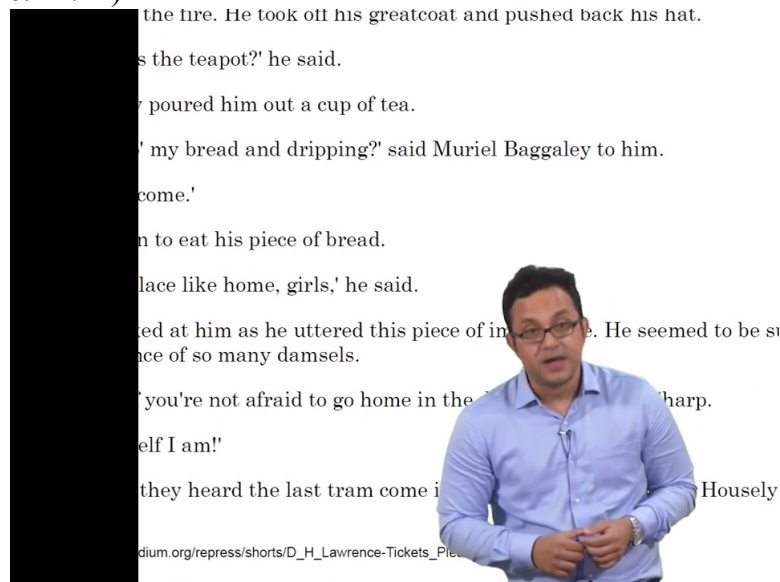
They all looked at him as he uttered this piece of impudence. He seemed to be sunning himself in the presence of so many damsels.

'Especially if you're not afraid to go home in the dark,' said Laura Sharp.

'Me! By myself I am.'

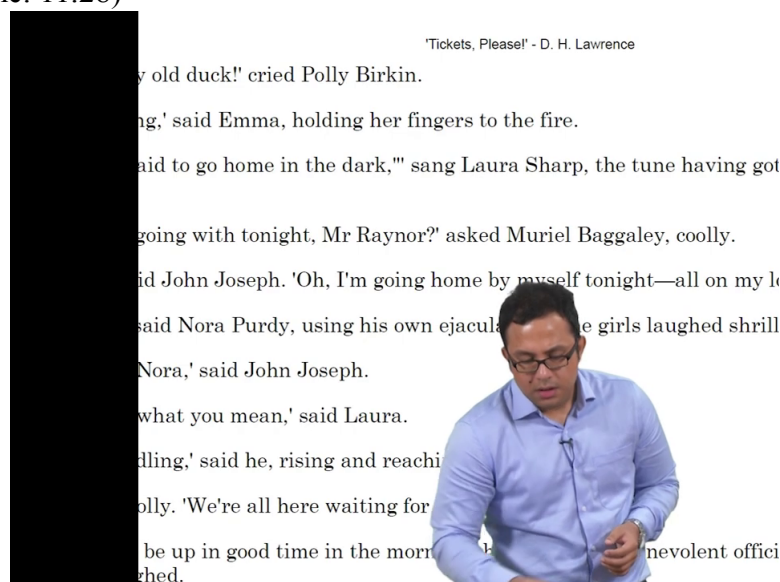
They all, they sat sat till they heard

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the last tram come in. In a few minutes Emma Houselay entered.

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'Come on, my old duck!' said Polly Birkin.

'It is perishing,' said Emma, holding her fingers to the fire.

'But—I'm afraid to go home in the dark,' sang Laura Sharp, the tune having got into her mind.

So this is the beginning where the words of John Joseph are used back at him, right. So again, used back at him was a deliberate tonal shift, so I am afraid to go home in the dark, so the tonal shift, the tonal register which changes becomes the beginning of subversion, becomes the beginning of violence.

So we can see how the violence is notched up linguistically by using the words back at the person with tonal shifts before it becomes visceral and physical as it does in the end. Okay.

'Who are you going with tonight, Mister Raynor?' said Muriel Baggaley, coolly.

So, Mister Raynor as he (( ))(12:16) name of John Joseph and addressing him as Mister Raynor is obviously suggestive of the fact that he is still supposedly superior over here. He is still supposedly the tram inspector over here, being questioned by the tram conductors, right? So who are you going with tonight, Mister Raynor? asks Muriel Baggaley, coolly.

'Tonight?' said John Joseph. 'Oh, I'm going home by myself tonight—all on my lonely-O.'

'That's me!' said Nora Purdy, using his own ejaculation.

Again, I mean hurling back expressions has begun.

'That's me!' said Nora Purdy, using his own ejaculation.

The girls laughed shrilly.

Right, so again I mean what is important for us to understand here is the collective quality of the actions which are performed over here. They are all laughing together shrilly, they are all beginning to attack together and in a very visceral way and we have the animal metaphors, the hunting metaphors which will come in very quickly as we will see.

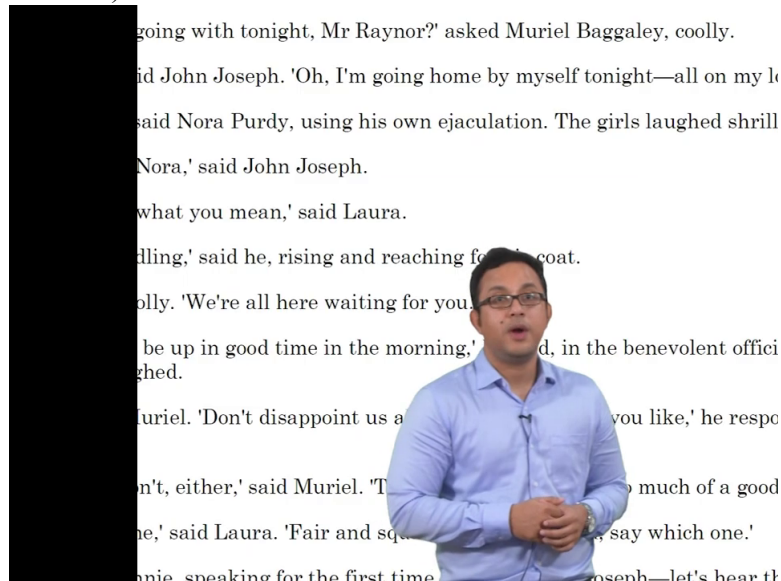
'Me as well, Nora,' said John Joseph.

'Don't know what you mean,' said Laura.

'Yes, I'm toddling,' said he, rising and reaching for his coat.

'Nay,' said Polly.

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'We're all here waiting for you.'

'We've got to be up in good time in the morning,' he said, in the benevolent official manner.

They all laughed.

So we can see how, when he begins to sense some kind of a strangeness in the room, he is very quickly resorting back to the official position of the tram conductor/inspector, why he is saying we have to be up early up tomorrow morning, it is a Monday morning. So you better head back home etc.

And adjective is important, benevolent official manner which is very familiar trope of patriarchy when it does not want to expose itself as a predator. It goes back being benevolent and official, that is what he is resorting back to. He is resorting back to that register. He is drawing to that register in terms of defending himself, Ok.

They all laughed. Again collective quality. They are laughing together. They are laughing shrilly together. They are laughing at him. Ok.

'Nay,' said Muriel. 'Don't disappoint us all'

'I'll take the lot, if you like,' he responded gallantly.

'That you won't either,' said Muriel, 'Two's company; seven's too much of a good thing.'

Now what is interesting over here is how the women at this particular point are supposedly objectifying themselves. They are asking him who are you going back tonight.

And he tries to evade first by saying 'I am gonna home', secondly by saying 'I am happy to take all of you together'. To which they object and say, you know, two is company, seven is too much of a good thing.

And again this is a very superficial (( ))(14:36). The superficiality is important for us to understand. They are supposedly objectifying themselves over here by asking him this question who you are going to pick among us, right. So it is complete reversal of agency which is operating over here.

So they are the ones who actually acquire agency. They are the ones who possess agency over here which is further dramatized by the comicality of the objectification. There is a semi-serious objectification and they are speaking from the position of strength, from the position of agency, from the position of privilege over here.

And it is important for us to understand how the agencies operate in so many level, at linguistic; numerical they are more in number compared to him, and also in terms of the sexual presence in the room. There are more females than males in this room.



And hence they seem to, they are deconstructing this supposed objectification which is used against them in other times. Why, because they seem to have the agency in this particular room.

And again what we see very quickly is how does domestic innocuous little room very quickly becomes a discursive battleground.

And that is something which we keep seeing consistently in this course how spaces change discursively,

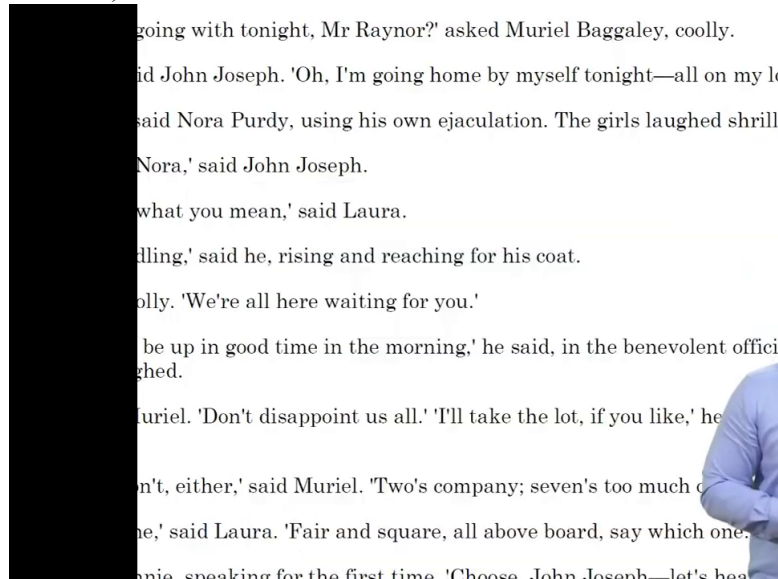
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how they are mapped, how they are remapped very quickly in terms of the becoming something else, right.

So the domestic space becomes a battleground which we have seen already and

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let us say, for instance, in a Bell Hook's essay where we saw how the rave Christian domestic home can become a battleground of gender, can become a torture chamber essentially where someone is confined and punished physically, corporally for being a dissident etc, right.

So something similar is about to happen over here. So at the beginning we have the superficial signifiers of comfort, homeliness, domesticity, etc, and then very quickly that begins to change in a very uncanny way into something else.

And there is this, I think I may have mentioned already in the class before; there is a slightly obscured quality about this particular scene. Those of you who have read Pinter would know, even in Harold Pinter's plays, we have very pseudo topically domestic settings like birthday party for instance, a homecoming for instance.

And those are very superficially there. And that is very deliberately chosen, those settings, those situations because the situations which you expect to be very normal and normative and celebratory. And then it begins to break completely. It begins to become more, more visceral and violence and dark and sinister.

And therein lies the menace in Pinter's theater. That it takes up superficially, you know closed structure, a superficial normative structure and then completely denormalises it, right, in a sense of deconstructing it through violence, through absurdity, through menace right.

This cold sinister menacing quality about that kind of theater which I think is bit, is probably present here as well along with

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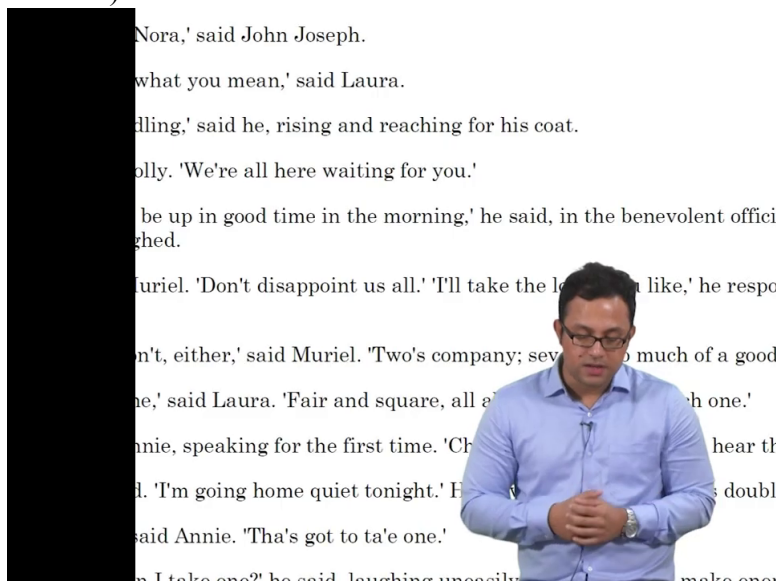


the entire theater of cruelty thing. So there is a theater with absurd thing over here, theater cruelty thing over here, both are operative in different degrees, Ok.

So, and then this is what is asked to him.

'Nay—take one,'

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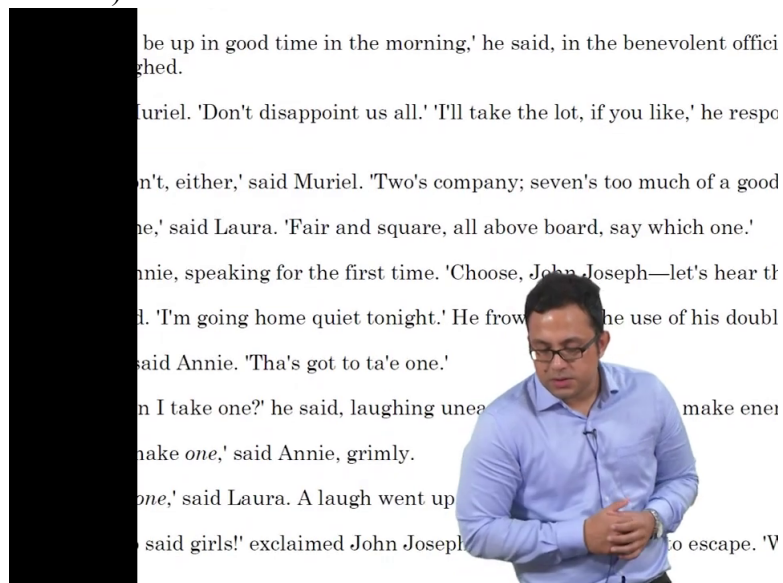
said Laura. 'Fair and square, all above board, and say which one.'

Right, so again this seems to be objectification but this is spoken by the woman and they are the ones possessing power, possessing language, possessing the question symbolically speaking, right. So they are the ones who, you know own the question at the moment, say which one.

'Ay,' cried Annie, speaking for the first time. 'Choose, John Joseph; let's hear thee.'

'Nay,' he said. 'I'm going home quiet tonight.'

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He frowned at the use of the double name.

Again look at the shift in the language over here. So, they first addressed him by his Christian name and now they address him as his double name, John Joseph.

And that is to say the official familiarity, the official protection that he happens to have is going away, which has started already when he took off his great coat, right.

So taking off the great coat was a beginning of the sartorial symbol of his, you know laying down of his defense mechanism and now that is being translated into him being

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addressed by his Christian name, by his familiar domestic name John Joseph.

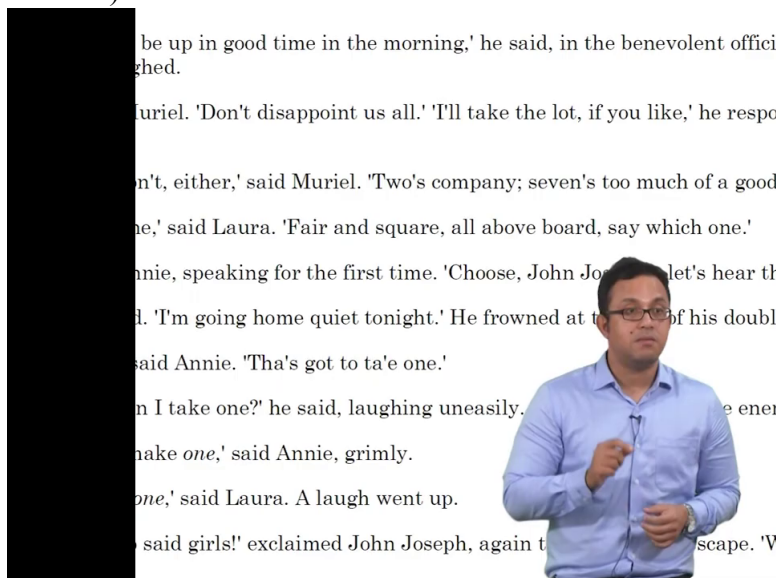
'Choose, John Joseph; let's hear thee.'

'Nay,' he said. 'I'm going home quiet tonight.' He frowned at the use of the double name.

'Who says?' said Annie. 'That got to take one.'

'Nay, how can I take one,' he said, laughing uneasily. 'I don't want to make enemies.'

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'You'd only make one' said Annie, grimly.

And this is the point when it begin to realize the whole idea of quote unquote allowing him to take one person is bit of a joke, right because what is being said quite quickly is you make one enemy only. Because the person you choose will turn out to be your enemy.

So it is not a question of some drama of desire, it becomes a drama of, you know repulsion actually which is being played out over here.

So you will only make one, the person you choose will become your enemy by default. You have chosen one, said Laura. The laugh went up. So again, the collective quality of laughter is important over here and that becomes part of the ammunition which is being directed against him.

Laughter the language, I mean notice the way in which this is how embodiment operates. It starts with dress, and then language and then laughter and then becomes more, more physical in quality.

So that becomes part of the entire disembodiment drama, right. A different signifier before it becomes actually biological and corporal in quality, right.

So all that signifiers melt away first before actually comes to the body, Ok right.

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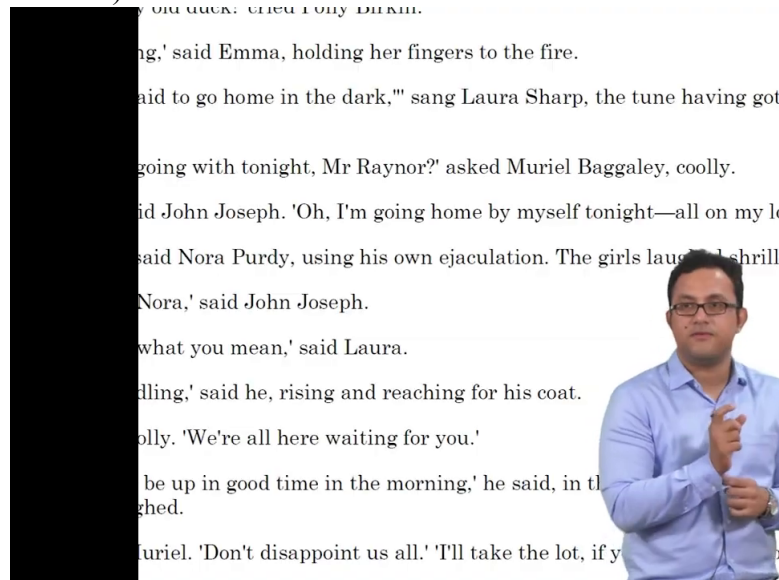


So 'Yes, I'm toddling,'

'We're all here waiting for you.'

So, you know when he says 'I am toddling', I am heading off, and again look at the choice of

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ver, I am toddling, toddling over here obviously is suggestive of some kind of infantilization, you toddled away. It is not very manly form of walking. He didn't say, I am walking away, or I am galloping away, or I am heading off. I am toddling which to say I am going away in a very toddle-like way.

He said, rising and reaching for his coat.

Again the movement is very symbolic. He is reaching for his coat; he is reaching for his protection which would again make him a tram inspector once he puts on that coat.

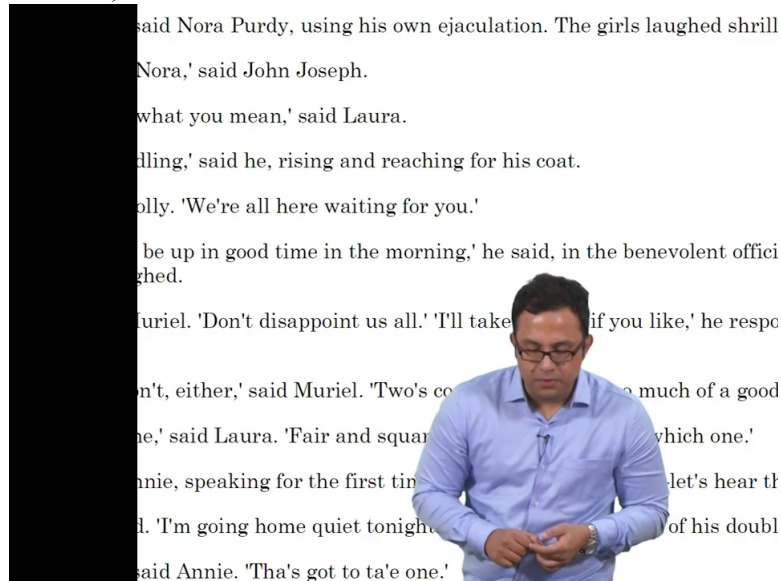
'Nay,' said Polly. 'We're all here waiting for you.'

And then 'We've got to be up in the morning,' he said, in the official, benevolent official manner.



And then he is asked to choose one person. And of course he turns to be evasive. And then  
'Fair and square,

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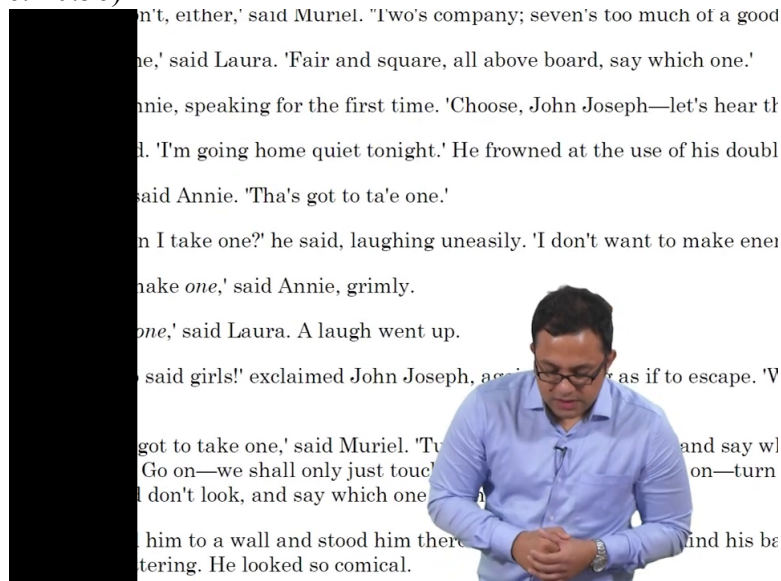
all above board, and say which one.'

And then he says 'I don't want to make enemies.'

And they say the person you choose will become your enemy by default, Ok.

And then we are told

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interestingly that he turns as if to escape. And this escape mechanism is important because this is in first direct metaphor of hunting, which we get over here.

I mean he is about to be hunted and the pack metaphors, these hunting metaphors, animal metaphor which keeps coming in now but he has begun to sense danger, he has begun to sense menace as it were and has turned into escape. 'Well—good-night.'

'Nay, you've got to take one,' said Muriel. 'Turn your face to the wall, and say which one touches you. Go on, we shall only just touch your back, one of us. Go on, turn your face to the wall, and don't look, and say which one touches you.'

It becomes a little bit of a, again notice how this seemingly childlike play actually becomes very erotically violence, violent in quality, so again we have this very interesting relationship between the ludic activity and the erotic activity which comes in together.

And you have seen already how the fairground in the story is a spectacle for that as well. It becomes a very suggestive ludic space for covert sexual activities, right.

And now we have the fairground being replicated over here in this very small waiting room which becomes more sinister and more dense and more condensed in quality by similar kind of play activities operated over here.

So seemingly it seems to be a childlike game where someone is turning against the wall and people are touching in the back and he is supposed to guess who is the one touching him. But this becomes a trigger for violence. This becomes a trigger for very sexualized form of violence which is what we get in the story, right.

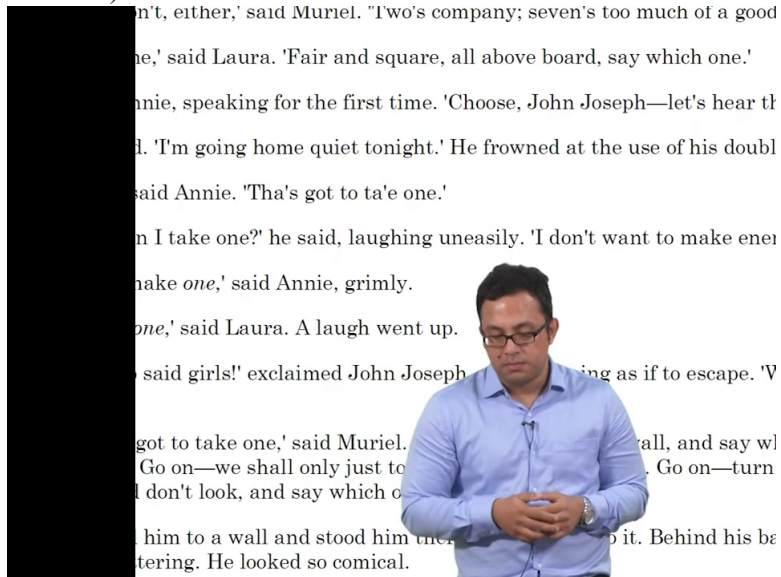
So space is a very important issue at work over here and as the case would anything with gender and gender performativity, it cannot possibly be divorced from space.

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So any form of embodiment is spatial in quality, more specifically spatiotemporal in quality, right. Any embodiment emerges or is generated out of spatiotemporal situation and that has to be borne

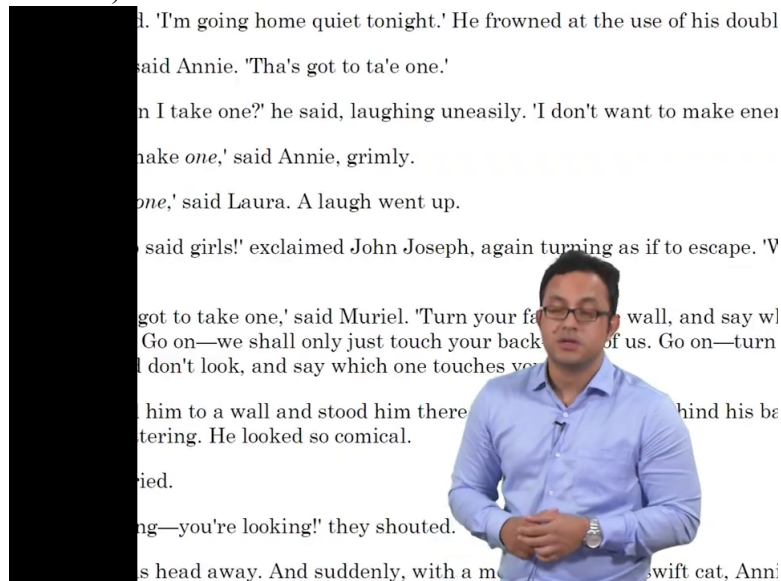
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in mind for us who study gender carefully.

Ok. 'Turn your face to the wall, and don't look, and say which one

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touches you.' They pushed him to a wall and stood him there with his face to it. Behind his back they all grimaced, tittering.

So again the collective quality of grimacing together, tittering together.

He looked so comical.

And this is the beginning of his emasculation that takes place, the comicality which takes away his embodiment, his masculinity, his manliness and all these familiar metaphors of superiority and sexual privilege. They are all taken away from him and he becomes essentially emasculated and decimated in quality. He looked so comical.

And that is something which may be said about the boss in the Mansfield's Fly when he is trying to cry but he cannot because no tears are coming to him. There is a bit of comical buffoon like quality about him as well which takes place at that particular setting.

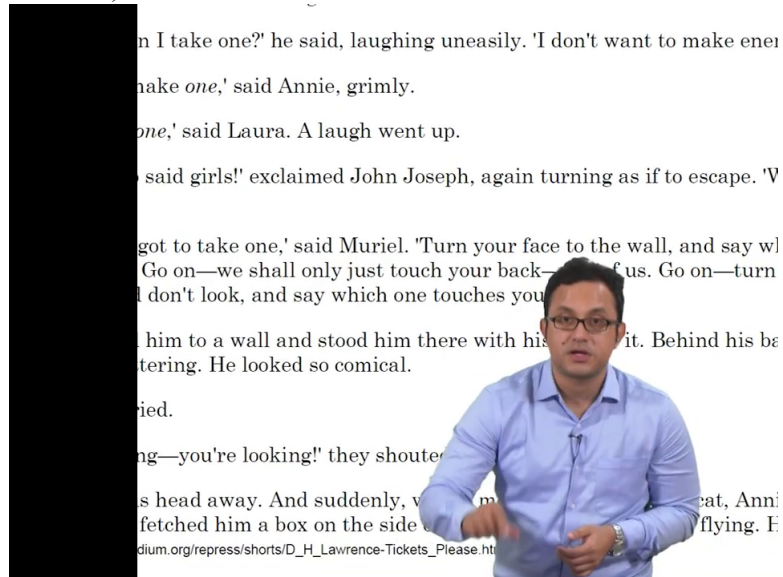
And now a similar situation is happening here with John Joseph where the big tram conductor/inspector who is supposed to be the boss of all his girls. He is being essentially imprisoned and ganged up against by these people and he looks comical being made to stand against the wall.

'Go on' he cried.

'You're looking, you're looking!' they shouted.

He turned his head away. And suddenly, with a movement

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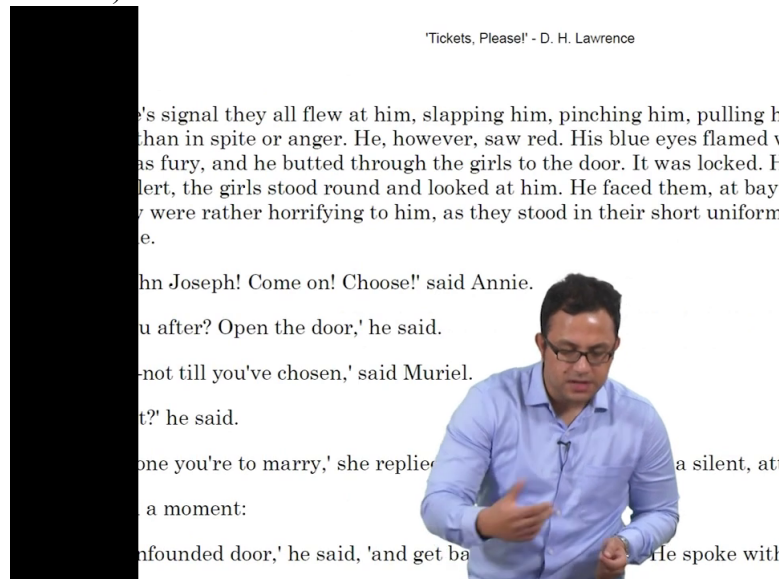


like a swift cat,

Again I mean the animal-like phrase is important over here.

Annie went forward and fetched him a box on the side of the head that sent his cap flying. He started,

(Refer Slide Time: 24:19)



he started round.

But at Annie's signal they all flew at him, slapping him, pinching him, pulling his hair, though more in fun than in spite or anger. He, however, saw red. His blue eyes flamed with strange fear as well as fury, and he butted through the girls to the door. It was locked. He wrenched at it. Roused, alert, the girls stood round and looked at him. He faced them, at bay. At that moment they were rather horrifying to him, as they stood in their short uniforms. He became suddenly pale.

So, I mean it is loaded with all kinds of symbolism. Let us unpack bit by bit. In the beginning we have the girls flying at him, right. Obviously it is a bird metaphor which is being used, as a pack of birds attacking him, and of course there are lot of texts you can think about in terms of those who equate, which equate, which simile equate wild birds with feminism, wild birds with, you know feminine agency.

You can think of films for instance, Hitchcock's Birds is a very good example of that as well which has been studied by people like Camille Paglia who have looked at the entire unleashing of the wild birds as some kind of a feminine agency which completely domesticates the very rural English setting. That is a very good film that you can use a reference for this particular point.

But then what we see over here is they all flying at him, slapping him, pinching him, pulling his hair. Initially though more in fun than in spite or anger.

So the word fun is very important over here. It is very coded word. It has erotic quality to it. It has a violent quality to it. And it is a very interesting entanglement of different sentiments. Fun right, that is being told to us in a very codeword, coded way.

Now he however, saw red. His blue eyes flamed with strange fear as well as fury, and he butted through the girls to the door.

He wanted to escape but he cannot escape. It was locked.

So the locked door becomes again very symbolic of this imprisonment metaphor, this hunting metaphor that is being, that is at play over here.

He wrenched at it. Roused, alert, the girls stood round and looked at him. He faced them, at bay. At that moment they were rather horrifying to him.

Right, so they become a spectacle of fear as far as he was concerned.

As they stood in their short uniforms. It is very, very visual. They are all standing in the uniforms; these tram conductors attacking him collectively, right?

So and this is what I meant when I said this is a very good story to look at, especially given the debates we are having today about harassment at workplace, about exploitation



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at workplace and gender issues have played at the workplace and this seems to be a very good anticipation of that kind of debate in the post- First World War setting.

Because what we have is, on the one hand liberation of agency, women are coming out and occupying public spaces in terms of becoming tram conductors, but then

(Refer Slide Time: 27:08)

"Tickets, Please!" - D. H. Lawrence

...s signal they all flew at him, slapping him, pinching him, pulling him  
than in spite or anger. He, however, saw red. His blue eyes flamed with  
as fury, and he butted through the girls to the door. It was locked. F  
alert, the girls stood round and looked at him. He faced them, at bay  
were rather horrifying to him, as they stood in their short uniform  
e.

John Joseph! Come on! Choose!" said Annie.

"You after? Open the door," he said.

"Not till you've chosen," said Muriel.

"What?" he said.

"One you're to marry," she replied. He was silent, at  
a moment:

"Unfounded door," he said, "and get back." He spoke with

the harassment, sexual exploitation is very much at work. So, it is group of women standing in uniforms becomes very symbolic register in terms of retaliation of some kind of harassment which takes place in professional place.

And of course, I mean notice that this is still a professional place. And this particular setting is a professional waiting room for the tram conductors. So it becomes, the setting becomes very important as well. The sartorial signifiers, the spatial signifiers, all come together in very interesting way to make it a symbolic retaliation.

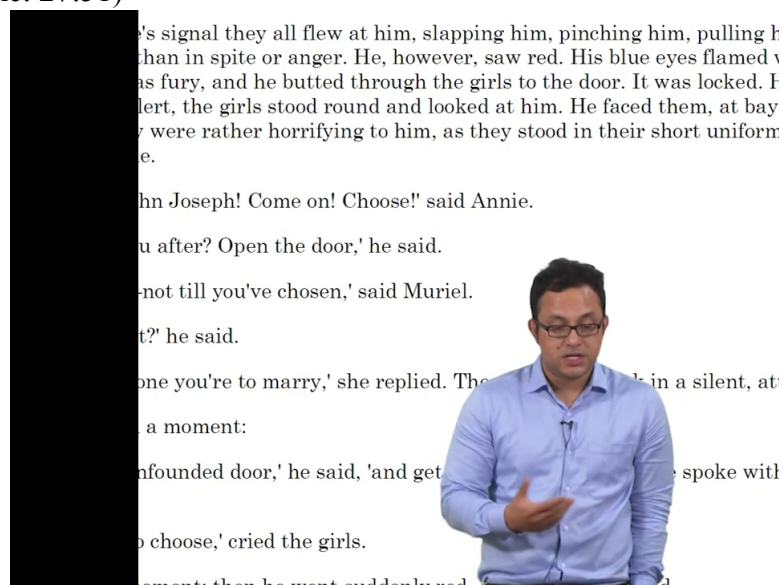
Ok, so that symbolism is important for us to understand. He became suddenly pale.

Right, so draining off his life blood as it were.

'Come on, John Joseph! Come on! Choose!' said Annie.

'What are you after? Open the door,'

(Refer Slide Time: 27:51)



he said.

'We shan't—not till you've chosen!' said Muriel.

'Chosen what?' he said.

'Chosen the one you're to marry.'

And this is a very important word over here. You are to marry one person, name the person you want to marry.

Right, so the word marriage over here is also a very metaphorical word because it goes against the entire sexual predator quality. So you know, you choose the person you want to marry over here and of course we know very quickly as we read it, as the person he chooses will reject him immediately.

So it is a very deliberate kind of reverse objectification at work, right. So apparently it seems that they are offering someone who will be married to him and the person he chooses rejects him immediately.

So you know it makes the rejection more spectacular by the people owning the question. And owning the question becomes a very important object over here.

They own the question, they own the language. They own the rhetoric; they own the metaphors, right. So, the metaphors are owned by the women over here. And that becomes part of the agency package, part of the agency narrative that they have, right.

So, they are the ones who own the language over here and that becomes part of the retaliation, part of the violence, part of the agendic embodiment which they enjoy compared to the agencylessness that he has been subjected to over here by being hunted on. Ok.

She replied.

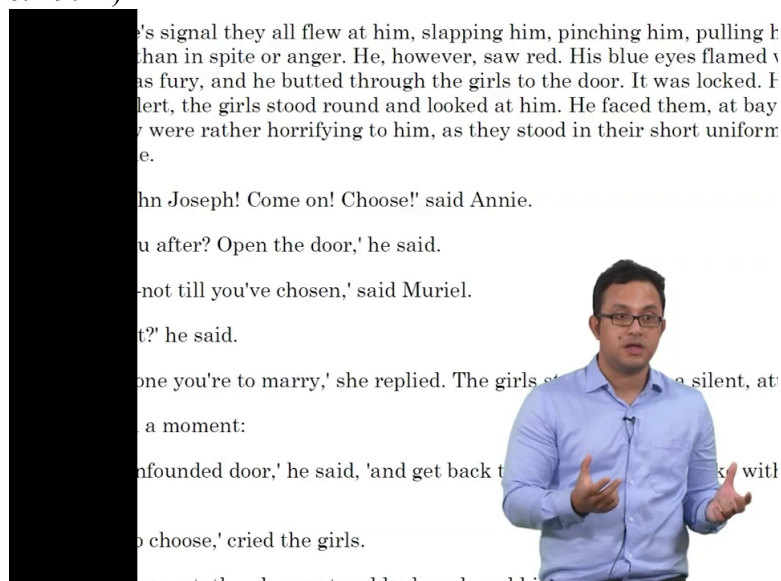
The girls stood back in silent attentive groups.

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Again the silence becomes collective in quality.

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The shrill laughter was collective, the silence becomes collective. Everything becomes collective. It is more of a gang activity which is at play over here.

He hesitated a moment:

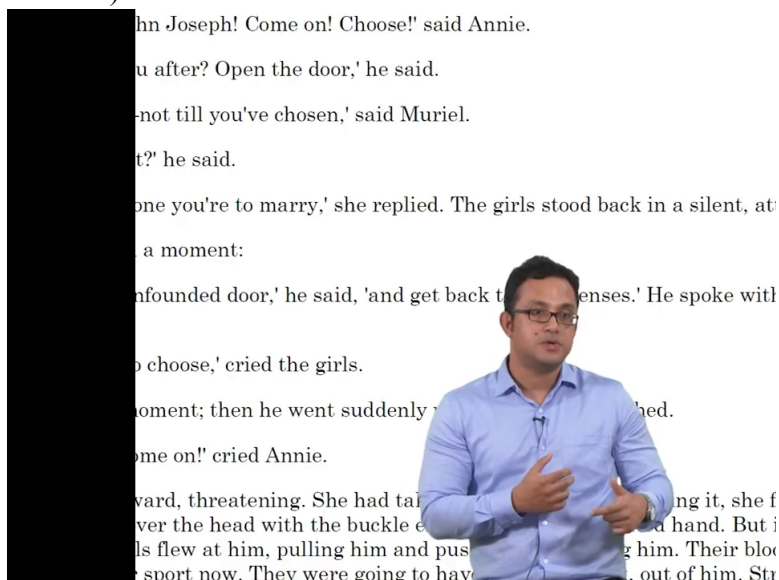
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'Open the confounded door,' he said, 'and get back to your senses.' He spoke with official authority.

Again falling back on the official register in terms of defense mechanism, right. So, he wants to be a tram inspector over here and not a predator.

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But of course he is not allowed to be that at the moment.

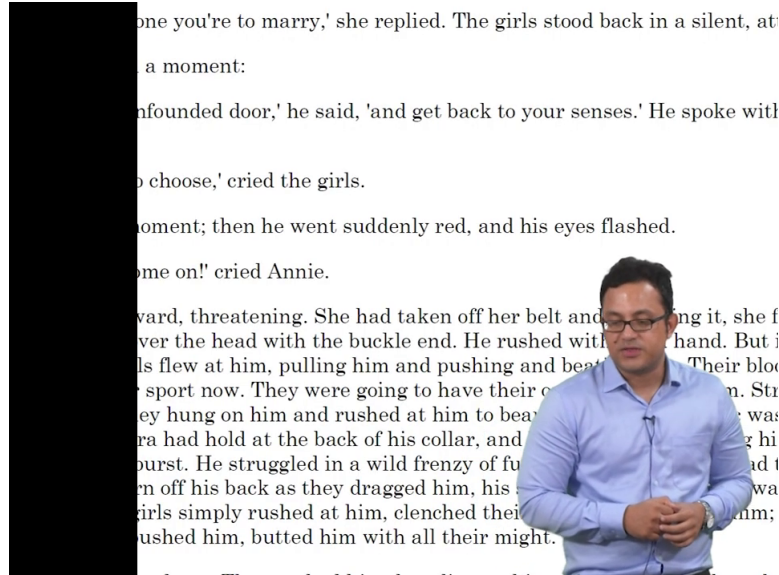
'You've got to choose!' cried the girls.

He hung a moment, and then went suddenly red. And his eyes flashed.

'Come on! Come on!' said Annie.

He went forward, threatening. She had taken off her belt,

(Refer Slide Time: 29:49)



and swinging it, she fetched him a sharp blow over the head with the buckle end.

So this again becomes very symbolic. Taking off the belt and hitting someone is very traditionally, stereotypically phallogocentric activity, right. It becomes part of the patriarchal authority narrative which we have seen already at play in Bell Hook's Essay.

Taking out the belt becomes very symbolic act of enactment of masculine violence, masculinised violence, etc. and that is reverted back over here.

And that is very much part of the owning back package. They own the metaphors. They own the language. They use the language back at him. And then of course taking out the belt becomes quite literally owning the instrument of torture, owning the instrument of domination over here,



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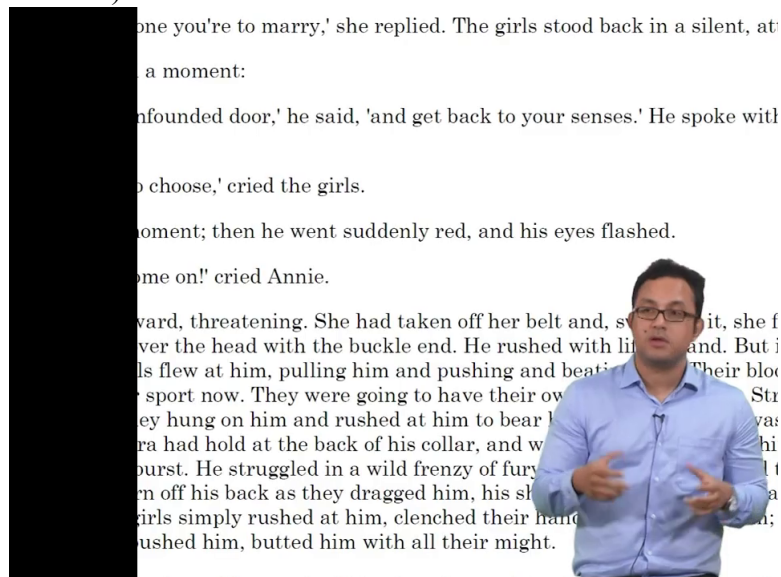


right.

So, this domination is sexual in quality, this domination is violent in quality, is very corporeal in quality. But of course you see, before you come to the corporeality of it, there are so many other discursive appropriations taking place already in terms of dress, language etc. right?

And now we come

(Refer Slide Time: 30:48)



to the corporeal quality of this entire enactment, this entire retaliation, Ok. So, this is very, very corporeal, and almost sexual in quality. Right.

He rushed with lifted hand but immediately the other girls flew at him.

Again this bird metaphor of flowing together as a pack is important, pulling him and pushing him, beating him. Their blood was now up. He was their sport now.

Interesting word again, he was a sport now. So he becomes, so entire objectification has reversed over here. So, we can see now there is a superficiality of objectification at play. The person being objectified throughout this entire episode is John Joseph. Right. So, that makes the other forms of objectification which the girls were offering him, are comical and subversive in quality.

So, he is object now, he is sport now; he is the one who is being hunted now. So, the hunter is being hunted, and the complete reversal of gendered performance.

They were going to have their own back, out to him. Strange, wild creatures, they hung on him and rushed at him to bear him down.

Again the wildness metaphor, the wild metaphor, the animalistic metaphors are important for us to observe.

His tunic was torn right up the back; Nora had hold at the back of his collar, and was actually strangling him.

Right, so very violent, very erotic in quality.

Luckily the button-hole burst. He struggled in a wild frenzy of fury and terror, almost mad terror. His tunic was torn off his back as they dragged him, his shirt-sleeves were torn away, one arm was naked. The girls rushed at him, clenched their hands



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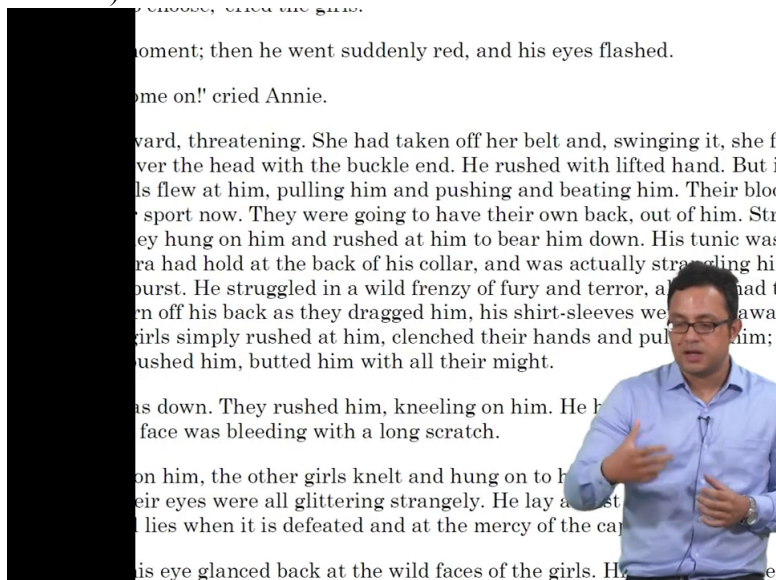


and pulled at him or they rushed at him and pushed him, butted him with all their might

Right so he becomes an object over here. This becomes almost a theater of cruelty at play, a theater of horror at play.

So very interestingly

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it becomes, and also see the way in which the rational language was used, superficially in the beginning, only to become irrational and anarchic, and irrational setting of having a tea pot and bon fire and furniture was laid out in the beginning, very superficially only to become irrational and anarchic in quality, right.

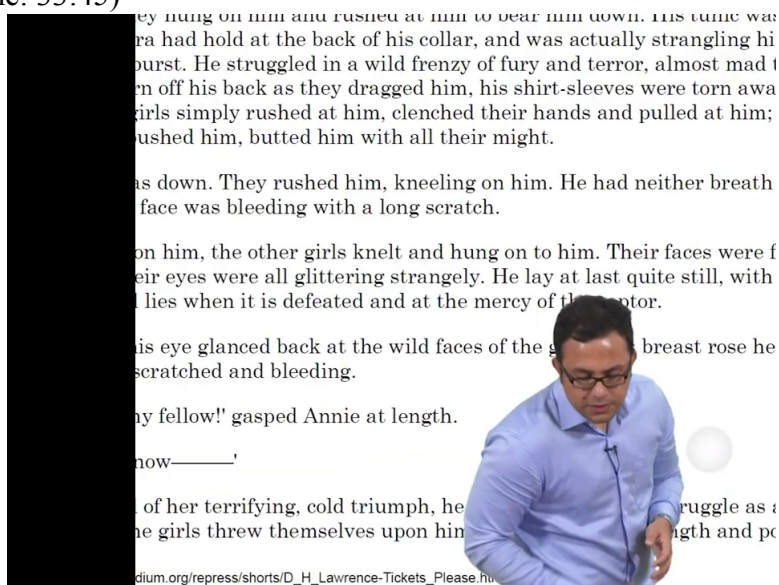
So the anarchic quality was set up using deliberately superficial rational instruments, such as language, furniture, tea etc right. So this becomes very much a theater of cruelty, of retaliation, of wronged women you know, against the sexual predator who happened to have wronged them all the time in the professional space.

At last he was down. They rushed him, kneeling on him. He had neither breath nor strength to move. His face was bleeding with a long scratch.

Annie knelt on him; the other girls knelt and hung on to him. Their faces were flushed, their hair wild, their eyes were all glittering strangely. He lay at last quite still, with face averted, as an animal lies when it is defeated and at the mercy of the captor.

Right, so he is a captor, he is animal, he is hunted over here. And completely at the mercy of his gang of people who are, who have captured him essentially.

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Sometimes his eye glanced back at the wild faces of the girls. His breast rose heavily, his wrists were scratched and bleeding.

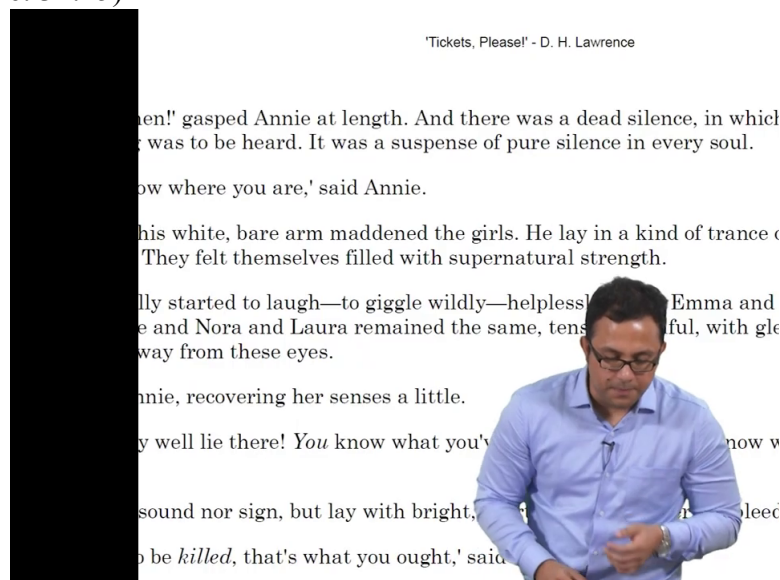
'Now, then, my fellow!' gasped Annie at length. 'Now then, now...'

At the sound of her terrifying, cold triumph, he suddenly started to struggle as an animal might, but the girls threw themselves upon him with unnatural strength and power

The word unnatural is important, right that cuts, undercuts complete rationality and domesticity which we saw at the beginning. It is now completely unnatural and irrational in quality. That is part of the subversion package. That is part of the retaliation narrative, the unnaturalness of it.

With unnatural strength and power, forcing him down.

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'Yes now, then!' gasped Annie at length.

And there was a dead silence, in which the thud of heart-breaking, heart-beating was to be heard. It was a suspense of pure silence in every soul.

'Now you know where you are,' said Annie.

So this is an act of emasculation.

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Now you know where you are. You have been emasculated, and now, this is again a superficial question. Tell us whom you are going to marry, as a broken man. I am here to reject you right away, to make the

(Refer Slide Time: 34:50)

"Tickets, Please!" - D. H. Lawrence

...en!" gasped Annie at length. And there was a dead silence, in which  
... was to be heard. It was a suspense of pure silence in every soul.

...ow where you are,' said Annie.

...his white, bare arm maddened the girls. He lay in a kind of trance c  
... They felt themselves filled with supernatural strength.

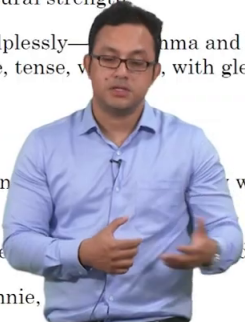
...lly started to laugh—to giggle wildly—helplessly—...mma and  
...e and Nora and Laura remained the same, tense, v... with gle  
...way from these eyes.

...nnie, recovering her senses a little.

...y well lie there! *You* know what you've done... w

...sound nor sign, but lay with bright, averted

...o be *killed*, that's what you ought,' said Annie,



emasculation complete and clinical in quality.

So that clinicality is important for us to underline.

The sight of his white, bare arm maddened the girls. He lay in a kind of trance of fear and antagonism. They felt themselves filled with supernatural strength.

Suddenly Polly started to laugh, to giggle wildly, helplessly and Emma and Muriel joined in. But Annie and Nora and Laura remained the same, tense, watchful, with gleaming eyes. He winced away from these eyes.

So you know the gaze is very important over here. He is being completely reified as a defeated animal in that collective gaze of retaliation. He wants to avert that gaze, he wants to evade it. He winced away from those eyes.

'Yes,' said Annie, recovering her senses a little. 'Yes!'

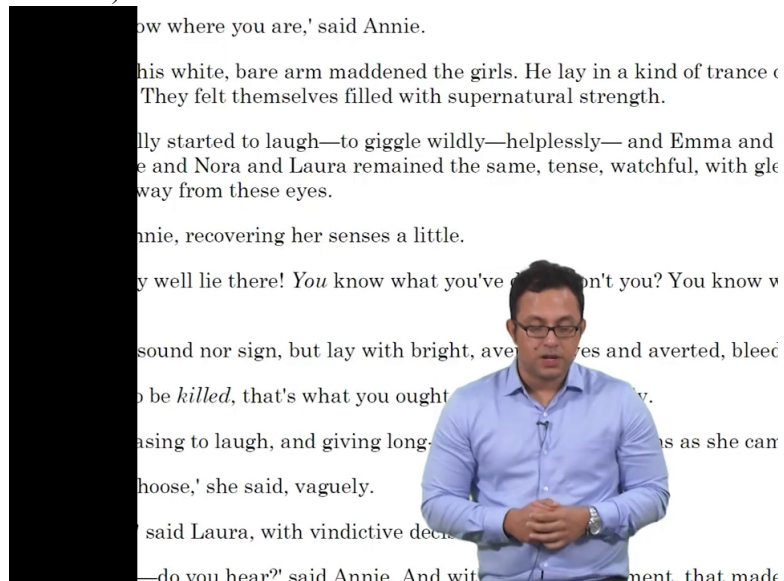
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You may well lie there. You know what you've done, don't you? You know what you've done.'

He made no sound nor sign,

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but lay with bright, averted eyes, and averted, bleeding face.

The word averted appears twice and you know we have seen already how, when you are in the company of writers like Lawrence, any reputation needs to be unpacked, averted. He wants to avert it. He wants to escape. He cannot face the gaze. It is just torture for him. It is too violent for him.

'You ought to be killed, that's what you ought,' said Annie, tensely.

So killed becomes a very symbolic act over here. It could be symbolic of castration, emasculation, any kind of disembodiment at play.

'You ought to be killed, that's what you ought,' said Annie, tensely.

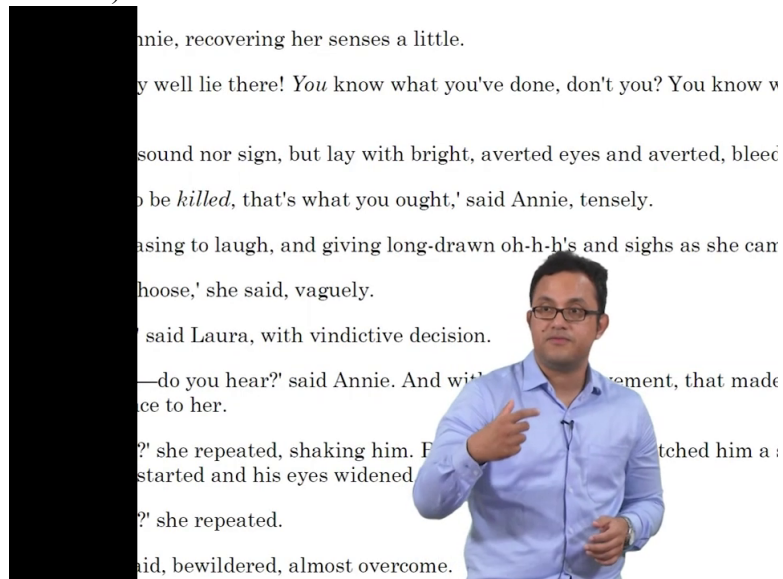
Polly was ceasing to laugh, and giving long-drawn Oh-h-hs and sighs as she came to herself.

'He's got to choose,' she said vaguely.

'Oh, yes, he has,' said Laura, with vindictive decision.



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So, you know that vindictive quality is important for us to underline. It is a vendetta. It is a spectacular vendetta which was being played out against this person.

'Do you hear—do you hear?' said Annie. And with a sharp movement, that made him wince, he turned his face to her.

'Do you hear?' she repeated, shaking him.

So this is very much part of a torture narrative at play, right. They want a particular response out of him only to negate it immediately, right. That is the whole point of torture. They do not want to hear, this knowledge is not what they are after really. They want a response which to negate as part of the torture mechanism, as it goes on.

Right.

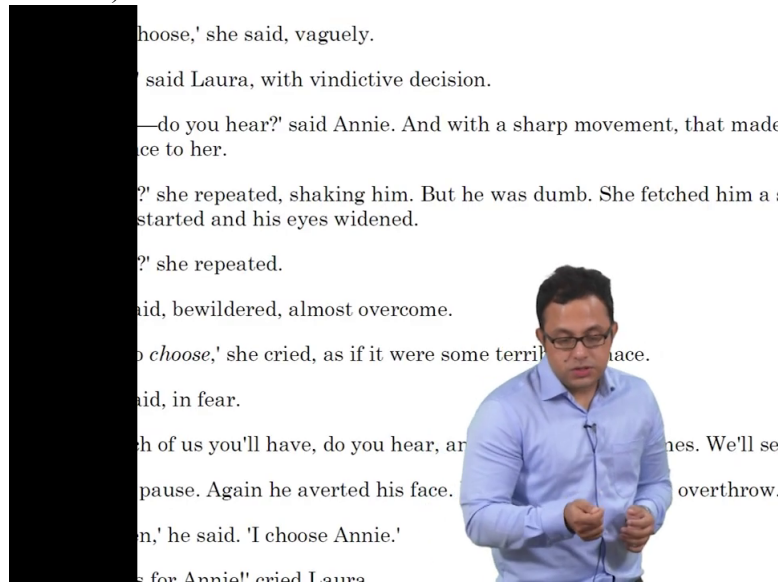
'Do you hear?' she repeated, shaking him.

But he was dumb. She fetched him a sharp slap on the face. He started, and his eyes widened.

'Do you hear?' she repeated

'What?' he said, bewildered, almost overcome.

(Refer Slide Time: 37:15)



'You've got to choose!' she cried, as if it were some terrible menace

The word menace is interesting over here. That is very much part of theater of cruelty, a theater of absurd rhetoric which we know traditionally, menace.

'What?' he said, in fear.

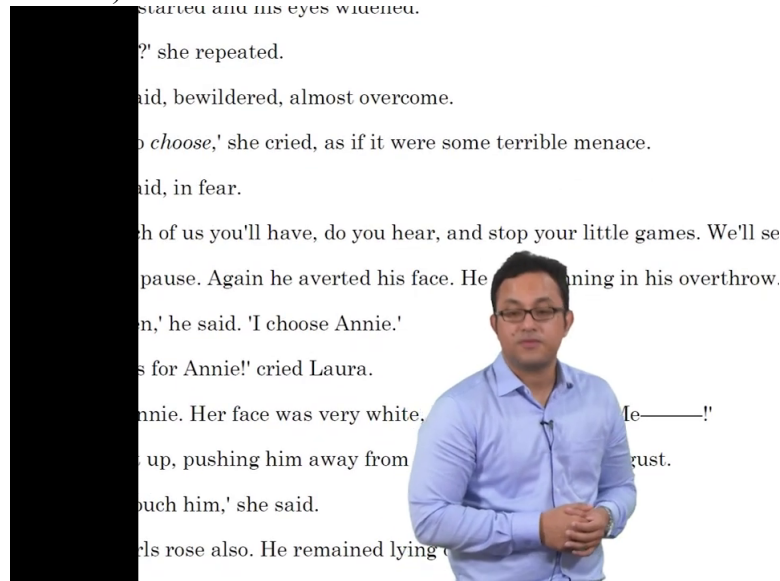
'Choose which one of us you will have, do you hear? And stop your little games. We will settle you.'

There was a pause. Again he averted his face. He was cunning in his overthrow. He did not give in to them really, no, not if they tore him to bits.

'All right, then,' he said, 'I choose Annie.'



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'Three cheers for Annie!' cried Laura.

'Me!' cried Annie. His face is very white. Her face is very white. Her eyes are like coal.

Interesting, the word coal comes in a completely different register. We saw the beginning of the story how the coal was very much part of the landscape, real matter, right. So this is presumably Nottingham or any part of Northern England, a lot of references to the collieries have been made, which is much part of the landscape narrative which is laid out for us as the tram movement was described.

But now coal appears over here as a metaphor. So the shift from matter to metaphor is interesting for us to observe. Her eyes are like coal now. Her eyes are like coal.

'Me!' Then she got up, pushing him away from her with a strange disgust.

'I wouldn't touch him,' she said.

The other girls rose also. He remained

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lying on the floor.

'I don't want him—he can choose another,' said Annie, with the same rather bitter disgust.

'Get up,' said Polly, lifting his shoulder. 'Get up.'

He rose slowly,

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"Tickets, Please!" - D. H. Lawrence

him—he can choose another,' said Annie, with the same rather bitt

Polly, lifting his shoulder. 'Get up.'

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tinued in silence to dress their hair an ... as if

a strange, ragged, dazed creature. The girls eyed him from a distance, curiously, furtively, dangerously.

Again, I mean eyeing him from a distance becomes important. It is a long shot now. But he is dwindled as a creature essentially, right. The girls eyed him from a distance, curiously, furtively, dangerously. The word is important, that word is very important over here. The gaze is still very dangerous, it is violent in quality.

'Who wants him?' cried Laura, roughly.

'Nobody,' they answered, with derision.

It is a collective rejection, right. It is a collective denouncement; it is a collective emasculation which is pronounced over here with, Nobody. So nobody wants him.

'Nobody,' they answered, with derision.

And they began to put themselves tidy, taking down the hair and arranging it. Annie unlocked the door. John Joseph looked around for his things. He picked up the tatters and did not quite know what to do with them. Then he found his cap and put it on and then his overcoat. He rolled his ragged tunic into a bundle and went silently out of the room into the night.

The girls continued in silence to dress their hair and adjust the clothing as if he had never existed.

Right, so we are back to this domestic homely setting. We are back to this waiting room of the tram depot which has suddenly become a battleground of vendetta and you know subversion and retaliation. But now, he has dressed up again, he has put on his overcoat, his greatcoat, his back to being a tram conductors and he heads back, he heads back into the night.

And the girls go by being tram conductors and they dress up and everything is silent. And the girls continue to dress in silence and adjust the hair and the clothing as if he never existed.

Right, so that becomes very important ending. But of course, it is very open ended, ending because we are not told what is going to happen the morning after, when he comes by as a tram inspector. Will they continue to be the tram conductor, the girls?

With this, will this particular episode have a permanent; you know mark on

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the relationship between John Joseph and the tram conductors? Or will it just be an episode to be forgotten, and they will go back to the old structure again.

That we are not told but we are given a very graphic episode of violence and retaliation which probably has a permanent effect in terms of

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"Tickets, Please!" - D. H. Lawrence

him—he can choose another,' said Annie, with the same rather bitter  
Polly, lifting his shoulder. 'Get up.'

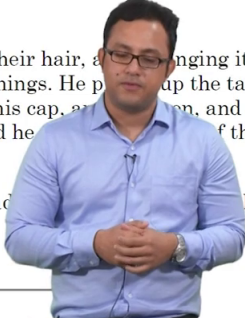
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continued in silence to dress their hair and adjust their things, as if



retaliating or avenging the harassment at work, the exploitation at work which, you know this particular person as a predator had carried out for a period of time.

So this is a very important story, not (41:08) if you are reading from a position of, perspective of feminist

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him—he can choose another,' said Annie, with the same rather bitter  
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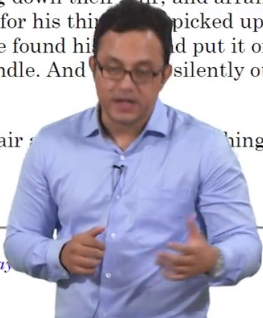
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writings especially as I mentioned, is very topical and relatable to some of the debates we are having today about you know workplace conditions, gender equations, harassment, exploitation etc, right.

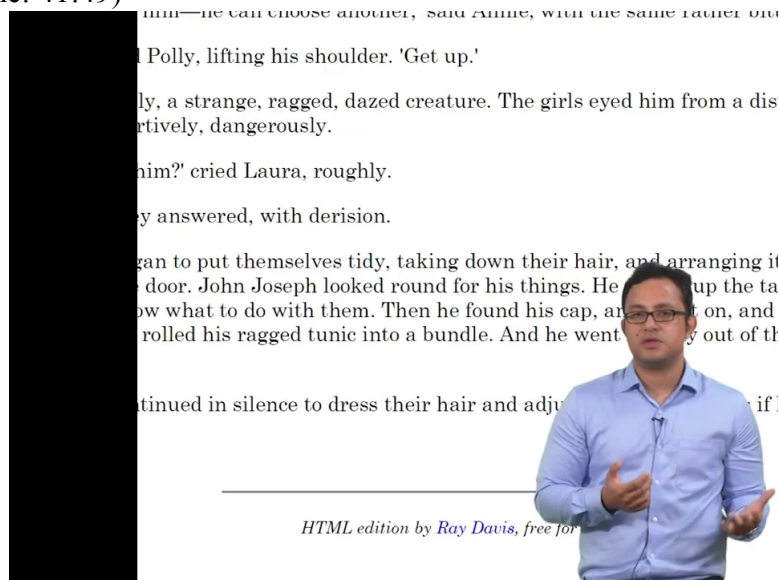
And the setting of the story is very important. The War is never mentioned directly but it is something of a spectral presence throughout, we are given description about crippled men, paralyzed men.

We are not told what paralyzed them or what crippled them but the very setting is giveaway (Refer Slide Time: 41:41)



in terms of the demography at play. And what is also important is we are not told if John Joseph had any injury, or

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John Joseph was paralyzed, we are not given any information about him in terms of his health.

So even his masculinity is debatable, his masculinity is a gray area. Why was he not in a war? Why does he continue being the tram inspector when everyone presumably is at the War, recovering from the War.

So he is supposed to be healthy, he is supposed to be a strong man but his very health and strength become a marker, perhaps an indicator of some kind of weakness which is probably carried as a result of which he is a tram conductor/inspector and not in the trenches, right.

That is the question which does not get answered but it is very much there as part in narrative. Ok so that concludes our reading of this story. So now we have some discussions. I am sure you can have some comments and suggestions from your end which will make it interactive, if possible. Any take on the story generally and then you can have a more specific reading, may be.

So

(Refer Slide Time: 42:44)



what is your general impression of the story? What about the title, Tickets, Please! Could tickets be a metaphor over here, for what?



(Refer Slide Time: 42:58)



Ticket to what?

(Refer Slide Time: 43:02)



(Professor – student conversation starts)

Student: Consent.

Professor: Pardon?



(Refer Slide Time: 43:08)



Student: Consent

Professor: Ok,

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excellent. Consent can become a very important factor, anything else?

Student: As a rhetoric, he said he is not actually asking for your consent but probably weeding it out of your....

Professor: Right

Student: Rather than actually asking

Professor: Exactly, so rhetorical strategies, not really asking

(Refer Slide Time: 43:27)



your consent, just taking it, Tickets please. So when you ask Tickets, please, you are not really asking money you pay for your tickets. It is assumed that you pay for your tickets. So the question of consent becomes important. Anything else?

Student: Also

(Refer Slide Time: 43:41)



maybe like structural inequality, right, like when we describe him walking out in the night with the women, there is no like; there is no coercion that is mentioned covertly.

Professor: Right

Student: Because he is their superior and obviously you know if you are working under him there is an element of power imbalance.

Professor: Absolutely

Student: That is also attributed to.

Professor: Absolutely yes.

Student: It is not that, you know he is assaulting them in the regular sense.....

Professor: yeah

Student: Because of the imbalance, choice is limited.

Professor: Absolutely. So it is question of choice, question of saying no,

(Refer Slide Time: 44:08)



the question not being able to refuse, these become very important over here. And we are told repeatedly by the girls coming over and he makes the choice and people stop coming to services, either mothers intervene, take them off the duty.

So we have this very covert, sinister narrative at play which does not get spelt out and it is metaphorically encoded, we are told that you know they walked with him. And walks with him becomes euphemism of may be some kind of other activity which does not get mentioned but that is very much there, covertly, the power imbalance and the impossibility to reject him at a micro level.

Anything else?

(Refer Slide Time: 44:46)



Any other general impression about the story?

Student: About the permanence that you said, which the last sentence, like whether it is permanent or not, I think this question of permanence does not really come usually in Lawrence's works.

Professor: Yeah

Student: Because Lawrence's works deal with how the deepest desires or the impulses of human beings get, like they get out in violent, vindictive and very visceral form of expression. And they are very much in the moment.

Professor: Right

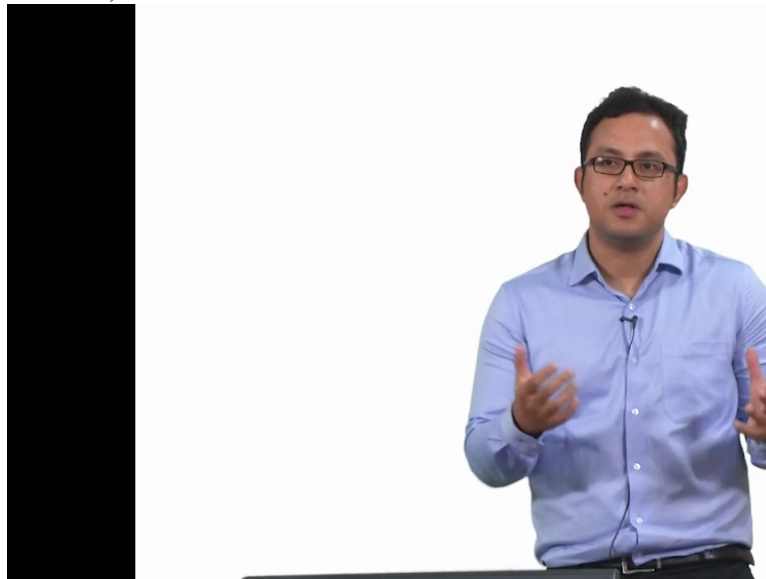
Student: In the moment as expressions or as responses to certain situations

Professor: Right

Student: Without any thought on, like what will be the permanent ...

Professor: Exactly. Very good point. Because you look at Lawrence's whole work,

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it is entirely about episodic quality, the psychological situatedness which is deeply described. So the dimension is depth, not surface, correct.

So, you are not given a temporal frame to narrativise, to occupy, or to make a meaning out, you are given an episode and we are supposed to delve into it to all the psychological complexity. Therein lies the cutoffness about Lawrence's writings it is just deep and into a particular situation.

So question of permanence becomes little redundant in the end. That is not a key question, that is not something that, I mean it is a common sensical question. What would happen to them later? Would they come back as tram conductors? Will he come back as a tram inspector? That is not what the narrative is aiming after, really for one.

Or juxtaposition, that is not part of the cordial intent. That is completely redundant, that question yes.

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Any other general impression about the story which you found useful or significant?

Student: Also I think when you were reading last to last class; you know when Annie goes to fair

Professor: Right.

Student: and she says, you know it is good thing to have a boy, I mean... When you are at a place like this or something like that.

Professor: Yes.

Student: And boy is in single quotes.

Professor: Yeah.

Student: So you know it is also like, you feel the presence of the narrator there.

Professor: Yeah.

Student: So the word boy is very, the narrator wants you to have a certain kind of reading of this text.

Professor: Right.

Student: It is not just that she is thinking boy.

Professor: Yeah.

Student: It is because of the quotes; you know the author is also saying something.

Professor: Yeah.

Student: I think throughout the story, the narrator is also, you feel the narrator. It is not just; you know the absence is...I think the presence is very significant.

Professor: Ok

Student: That kind of reading of the text.

Professor: So it is not (( ))(47:14)



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of narrator. It is very much there as a palpable presence. He does make his presence felt. But also it is equally important for us to understand that the linguistic register over here is very carefully chosen.

This is a very working class register, right. It is very unsophisticated, crude metaphors which are played because the setting of the story or the people who populate the story belong to a certain linguistic register which is, you know, which has got correspondence with the class register.

And Northern England, traditionally they are sophisticated, traditionally less posh. And his whole idea of the tram entering the city and becoming something else. The incompatibility of the tram as a vessel in a city becomes important. The tram is seemingly much more at home in the fair, in the rural landscapes than when it enters the cityscape so that shift in linguistic register is important over here.

But you are quite right. The word boy seems to be something of a narratorial intrusion. So narrator makes his presence felt perhaps but wants to suggest something to you rather than an act of pure focalization.

So we talked about how does it focalized through Annie but it may not be pure focalization. There may be bit of intrusion on the part of narrator in terms of telling you something as a

reader. He is supposed to be maybe a cue you supposed to pick up and interpret as a reader.  
Any other?

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Student: There is like a hierarchization between, like a holistic emotional relationship is above pure carnal desire.

Professor: Yeah

Student: It is interesting to read it again, bourgeois and working class interpretations of what a relationship should look like.

Professor: Right

Student: It is very interesting how it is juxtaposed in the story against the class narrative.

Professor: Right, yeah. It is very interesting mapping

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together.

Student: How is it juxtaposed?

Student: Same in bourgeois also

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Student: Yeah but I feel is where aspiration towards the bourgeois class is coming out in different ways. And I think one of the ways in which it does come out is the desire for holistic and emotional relationship over something which is purely physical

Student: Or something which is purely of sensitizing that you also want the same thing in terms of what other class want.

Student: I did not think sensitization but I guess

Professor: Yeah

Student: And yeah it is interesting how John Joseph also aspires for that kind of lifestyle through his satorical choices...

Professor: yeah

Student: but does not want it through these ways.

Professor: Yeah so the instruments of aspiration

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are very different. That is a very good point. And that...

Student: Marriage

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being a very bourgeois

Professor: Yeah

Student: Institution

Professor: True, true

Student: And the mention of marriage in the story, even as a metaphor

Professor: Yeah

Student: This is interesting

Professor: Yeah, very interesting point.

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The instruments of appropriation are very different. I mean one is sartorial...and the other is...

Student: And I think it is very gendered.

Professor: True

Student: Because women's aspirations here

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are through marriage and as essentializing is it.... It sounds in my head but,

Professor: Yeah

Student: Yeah

Professor: No,

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it is very clearly mapped out in terms of gendered difference. The instruments, the means of aspiration are very different.

Student: Ok

Professor: So for John Joseph to be a gentleman the sartorial preparation is good enough for him perhaps but for the females over here, it is a different kind of route towards that aspiration. So that is something which we get in the story, yes, very good point.

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Student: Do you see there is a drawback of what Lawrence is trying to do? Because as a story like you said, it needs agency of the game and trying to get power back. Like she said the aspirations are gendered. So at some levels, you know certain structures are being adhered to. Like...

Professor: They will like, get decimated in the end,

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right when they supposedly throw the question at him, would you marry one of us? And...

Student: Because you know like that they were offended. Like the vendetta



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is happening because there was no permanence offer. The relationship is transit and that is their problem.

Professor: Yeah

Student: Like I understand how they getting back but I guess the aspiration is still there.

Student: Yeah. It is like ascribing femininity to an aspiration for a permanent relationship.

Professor: Right

Student: Associating it with the woman instead of the male category.

Professor: Yes, that is very a valid reading, I guess. So very fact that

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you know the incident happens in a marriage for a woman and dress for the man. That tends to be, that tends to give away the bias of the writer perhaps towards a certain extent, yes. Any other point before we conclude

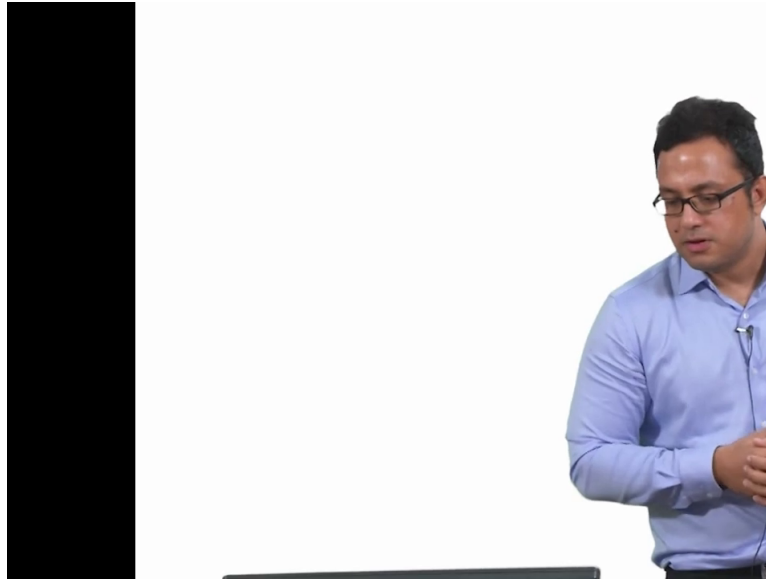
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this story?

Ok then

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so thank you very much for your interactions. So we conclude Tickets, Please! with this. And move on to our next text in the next lecture. Thank you.