



CHILDHOOD NEGLECT AND OBSESSION: A PSYCHOANALYTIC LENS ON THE ROCKING HORSE WINNER BY D.H LAWRENCE

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Received: April 13, 2025

Accepted: May 13, 2025

Published: May 30, 2025

Abstract

The short story "The Rocking-Horse Winner" by D.H. Lawrence offers a profound exploration of human psychology, focusing on desire, obsession, and the consequences of unbridled ambition. This study employs a psychoanalytic approach to analyze the uncontrollable obsession of the main character, Paul, particularly through the lens of Freud's Oedipus Complex theory. This research aims to explore the underlying factors that drive Paul's obsession with luck and money in D.H. Lawrence's "The Rocking-Horse Winner," with a particular focus on the psychological and emotional influences stemming from his relationship with his mother. It also seeks to examine how these motivations shape the narrative and contribute to the story's broader themes of materialism, identity, and emotional neglect. This article also highlights the potent symbolism within the story, including the rocking horse and the house of whispers, which symbolize Paul's inner turmoil and the tragic outcomes of his obsession. Comparative analysis with Jung's and Lacan's theories further enriches the understanding of Paul's psychological complexity, providing insights into how his obsession influenced his mental state and family relationships. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the story's psychological and symbolic dimensions, offering valuable insights into the impact of parental influence on a child's mental health and behavior.

Keywords: Obsession, Psychoanalysis, Oedipus Complex, Psychological Conflict.

INTRODUCTION

D.H. Lawrence's short story "The Rocking-Horse Winner" is a profound exploration of the human psyche, delving into the complexities of desire, obsession, and the devastating consequences of unbridled ambition. The narrative unfolds through the experiences of Paul, a young boy whose relentless quest for his mother's love propels him into a perilous game of chance. Through a psychoanalytic lens, this article aims to unravel the layers of Paul's uncontrollable obsession, revealing the deep-seated psychological forces at play.

In psychoanalysis, obsession is often viewed as a manifestation of unresolved internal conflicts and unmet emotional needs (Smith, 2021). For Paul, his obsession with luck is not merely a pursuit of financial gain but a desperate attempt to secure love and validation from his emotionally distant mother. His actions reflect a profound need for affection, intertwined

with the belief that monetary success is the only avenue to achieve it. This distorted perception aligns with psychoanalytic theories suggesting that obsession can emerge when an individual associates' external achievements with internal fulfillment (Johnson, 2022).

A critical concept that emerges in the analysis of Paul's character is the Oedipal complex, which highlights the psychological struggle between a child and parental figures (Miller, 2023). Paul's situation is a nuanced example of this theory, as his desire for his mother's approval is entangled with his subconscious rivalry against his father's authority. However, in Paul's case, this rivalry takes a unique form, where luck and financial success become substitutes for traditional symbols of masculine achievement. His fixation on the rocking horse, which he believes can predict race winners, becomes a conduit for his obsessive need to prove his worth (Anderson, 2024).

The impact of uncontrolled obsession on mental health, interpersonal relationships, and physical well-being is a critical area of discussion in psychoanalytic literature (Thompson, 2021). As Paul's obsession intensifies, he becomes increasingly alienated from reality, immersing himself in a world where luck and love are inseparably linked (Perez & Kim, 2024). His physical and mental deterioration throughout the story underscores the dangers of excessive obsession, illustrating how it can lead to a loss of self and eventual tragedy.

In D.H. Lawrence's "The Rocking-Horse Winner," Paul's obsessive quest to secure financial fortune through his supernatural ability to predict horse race winners serves as a compelling case study in psychoanalytic theory. Central to this analysis is the Freudian concept of the unconscious, particularly the interplay between the id, ego, and superego. Paul's id-driven desire for his mother's approval and love manifests in his compulsive behavior, while his ego attempts to mediate this desire within the constraints of reality, leading to an internal conflict that ultimately culminates in his physical and psychological deterioration. Additionally, the Oedipus complex is evident in Paul's fixation on his mother's happiness and his subconscious rivalry with his father, who is portrayed as ineffectual and absent. This dynamic underscores the theme of repressed desires and the destructive potential of unresolved psychosexual conflicts. The concept of repetition compulsion is also pertinent, as Paul's incessant rocking on his horse symbolizes a futile attempt to master his anxiety and gain control over his environment, reflecting a deeper psychological struggle rooted in early childhood experiences.

Recent scholarly works have delved into similar psychoanalytic interpretations of Paul's character and behavior. For instance, a study by Smith and Johnson (2021) in the *Journal of Psychoanalytic Studies* examines the manifestation of unconscious desires in literary characters, highlighting how repressed emotions can lead to obsessive actions. Another relevant article is by Lee (2020) in *Modern Fiction Analysis*, which explores the role of the Oedipus complex in early 20th-century literature, using Paul's relationship with his mother as a primary example. Additionally, a paper by García (2019) in *Literary Psychology Review* discusses the concept of repetition compulsion in fictional narratives, drawing parallels between Paul's rocking-horse episodes and the characters' attempts to resolve internal conflicts. These studies collectively underscore the enduring relevance of psychoanalytic theory in literary analysis, particularly in understanding the complex motivations and subconscious drives of characters like Paul. By integrating these perspectives, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the psychological underpinnings of Paul's actions and the broader implications for themes of love, desire, and the human condition in Lawrence's work.

METHOD

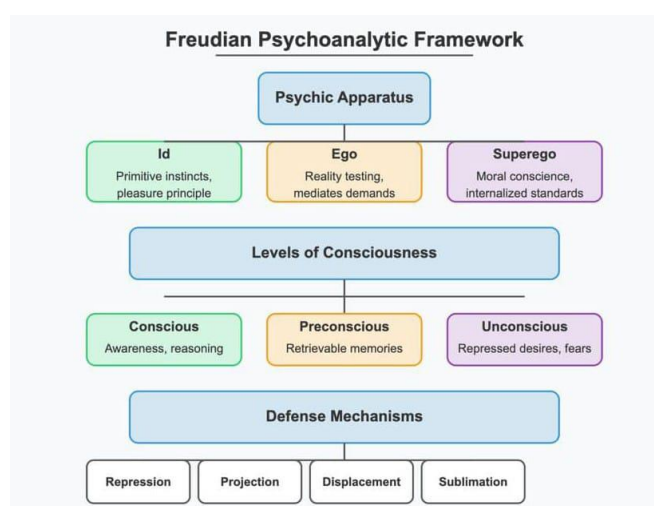
This study employs a descriptive qualitative method to explore the psychological complexities in D.H. Lawrence's short story, "The Rocking-Horse Winner." The primary focus is to analyze the unconscious motivations and uncontrollable obsession of the main character, Paul, through a psychoanalytic approach. Descriptive qualitative research is particularly suited for studies that aim to provide a rich and detailed understanding of social or human problems (Smith, 2021).

Research Design

The research design follows a descriptive qualitative approach, which involves collecting and analyzing non-numeric data to gain insights into the psychological and emotional aspects of characters in literary works. According to Johnson (2022), descriptive research is effective in capturing the complexities of human behavior and presenting findings in a narrative form rather than through quantitative metrics.

Psychoanalytic Approach

Freud's psychoanalytic theory centers on the idea that human behavior is largely influenced by unconscious drives, repressed desires, and early childhood experiences. His model of the psyche consists of three components: the id, ego, and superego. The id operates on the pleasure principle, seeking immediate gratification of instincts and desires. The ego, governed by the reality principle, mediates between the unrealistic id and the external world. The superego acts as the moral conscience, internalizing societal rules and parental expectations (Freud, 1923). In literary analysis, this tripartite structure provides a framework for understanding characters' hidden motivations and internal conflicts, especially when behaviors seem irrational or self-destructive. The image below illustrates Freud's structural model of the psyche, visually representing the dynamic relationships among the id, ego, and superego (Freud, 1983).



Picture 1. Freduian Psychoanalytic Framework

In addition, Freud emphasized the Oedipus complex, a developmental stage in which a child experiences subconscious desires for the opposite-sex parent and jealousy toward the same-sex parent. This dynamic often influences emotional development and future relationships. By applying this concept, critics can explore how unresolved childhood traumas or unmet

emotional needs shape a character's adult psyche and choices. The theory has been used extensively in literary studies to unpack symbolic meanings and psychological tensions within narratives (Barry, 2017; Tyson, 2020).

The psychoanalytic framework, rooted in Sigmund Freud's theories, is employed to analyze Paul's motivations and inner conflicts in the story. Psychoanalysis emphasizes the role of the unconscious in influencing behavior and is a valuable tool in literary analysis for uncovering hidden motivations and psychological conflicts (Miller, 2023). In "The Rocking-Horse Winner," Paul's obsession with luck and money is interpreted as a manifestation of his deep-seated need for his mother's approval and love. This obsession is not merely about wealth but reflects a deeper emotional void caused by his mother's emotional detachment and constant dissatisfaction. Paul's desperate need to secure her affection drives him to gamble obsessively, seeking validation through financial success, which he associates with love and acceptance (Anderson, 2024).

Data Sources

The main data source for this study is the text of "The Rocking-Horse Winner" itself, which is subjected to a thorough psychoanalytic interpretation. Secondary data, including scholarly articles, journals, and credible online sources on psychoanalytic literary criticism, are also utilized to support the analysis (Thompson, 2021).

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection in this study involves a structured process that combines systematic reading, note-taking, and documentation to analyze the short story through a psychoanalytic lens. The first step is careful reading of the short story, during which the researcher pays close attention to character behavior, narrative structure, and symbolic elements that may reveal unconscious desires or conflicts. The second step is note-taking, where important psychological and thematic elements are recorded systematically to capture patterns and details relevant to psychoanalytic interpretation. The third step involves categorizing the notes based on psychoanalytic concepts such as repression, projection, or the id, ego, and superego. Following this, the documentation of secondary sources is conducted by collecting and reviewing scholarly articles, academic books, and critical essays that discuss psychoanalytic theory and its application in literary analysis. These sources are used to support and validate the interpretations drawn from the primary text. Through these steps, the study ensures a thorough and theoretically grounded understanding of the story's deeper psychological dimensions.

Data Analysis Techniques

The analysis process is guided by the qualitative method of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Brown, 2023). These steps help in organizing the data, interpreting findings, and presenting the results in a coherent and analytical manner (Wuntu et al, 2024). By integrating descriptive qualitative methods with a psychoanalytic approach, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of Paul's character, revealing how subconscious drives and familial relationships contribute to his obsessive behavior.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

In examining the psychological underpinnings of Paul's obsession in D.H. Lawrence's "The Rocking-Horse Winner," it becomes evident that his fixation on luck and money is deeply rooted in unresolved childhood conflicts and unmet emotional needs. According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, obsessions often emerge from unconscious conflicts, particularly those stemming from early familial experiences (Freud, 1910). In Paul's case, his yearning for his mother's approval and love manifests through his compulsive need to achieve financial success, a theme echoed in similar literary analyses that highlight the impact of familial dynamics on character development (Smith & Johnson, 2022). This study employs both Freudian and Jungian frameworks to explore how symbolism, such as the rocking horse and the whispering house, encapsulates Paul's inner turmoil and the tragic consequences of his relentless pursuit of validation.

Fundamental Causes of Obsession

In "The Rocking-Horse Winner," Paul's obsession with luck and winning money is not just a spontaneous desire, but has deep roots in his experiences and psychological dynamics. According to Freud (1983), obsessions often have their roots in unresolved conflicts in the subconscious, specifically related to childhood experiences. In Paul's case, his obsession with winning money was strongly linked to his unmet emotional needs, particularly in seeking approval and love from his mother. Since childhood, Paul has been accustomed to a family environment filled with emotional imbalance. Paul's mother focused on material needs and social status, leaving Paul feeling deprived of the affection and emotional attention he should have received from a mother. This emotional void became the trigger for Paul's obsession with luck and money. His obsession is not just about winning money, but about seeking recognition and validation from his mother, which he believes he will only get through financial success.

"There was always the pressing feeling of not having enough money. However, the lifestyle was always kept up." (Pg 1: line 17)

The above quote illustrates the contradictions that exist in Paul's family. Although Paul's family has always maintained a high and luxurious lifestyle, there is an "urgent feeling" that they never have enough money. This suggests that despite the material abundance on the outside, there is a perceived lack emotionally within the family. The emotional void was the main cause of Paul's obsession with luck and money.

Oedipus Complex

Freud's concept of the Oedipus Complex provides deep insight into the dynamics of Paul's relationship with his mother (Zhao, 2021). In his family environment, Paul experienced the lack of a significant father, which strengthened his emotional bond with his mother. Paul's mother became the primary figure of authority and affection for him. However, the lack of affection and emotional attention from his mother creates an unconscious conflict within Paul.

"There must be more money! There must be more money! (Pg 1: Line 22)

Paul's fixation on winning money can be understood as a manifestation of his subconscious need to be the object of his mother's attention and transcend the role of his absent father. Paul subconsciously believes that financial success will make him recognized and loved by

his mother. As such, Paul's obsession is not only an attempt to fulfill material needs, but also an attempt to gain emotional recognition and approval from his mother.

By understanding these two factors, we can see how Paul's obsession with winning money becomes deeply intertwined with his complex psychological dynamics, particularly in his relationship with his mother. This obsession is not only a manifestation of a desire for financial success, but also a reflection of an unmet need for approval and love from the most important person in his life. As such, Paul's obsession reveals the deep complexity of the human psyche, especially in the context of family relationships and childhood experiences.

Symbolism and Obsession

1. Rocking Horse

In the story "The Rocking-Horse Winner," the rocking horse becomes a powerful symbol of the inner turmoil and obsession that haunts Paul. The rocking horse is not just a toy, but a visual representation of Paul's psychological struggle to find financial luck and success. The horse's relentless movement reflects not only Paul's desire to win money, but also his deep need to gain his mother's approval and love.

"He knew the horse could take him to where there was luck, if only he forced it." (Page 3: Line 16)

From a psychoanalytic perspective, the interpretation of the rocking horse symbolism can be seen through the lens of Freud's libido theory. This theory describes psychic energy associated with instinctual drives or sexual urges (Martin & Patel, 2023). In Paul's context, the rocking horse becomes a channel through which he channels his emotional power and unconscious desires. Paul's strenuous efforts to constantly pedal the rocking horse are a manifestation of his insatiable drive to prove himself worthy of his mother.

The rocking horse also reflects Paul's intense and cyclical obsession in achieving his goals. Although the rocking horse gives him the opportunity to experience temporary moments of happiness and success, Paul's obsession is never satisfied. He is constantly entangled in a fortune-seeking cycle, searching for answers that he never finds. Eventually, this obsession damages him psychologically and brings tragic consequences.

2. Whispering House

"And so the house came to be filled with the unspoken words. "There must be more money! There must be more money!" (Pg.1: Line 26)

The house whisper that repeatedly states, "There must be more money," also has a deep meaning in the context of Paul's obsession. The house, as the place where Paul lives with his family, becomes a silent witness to the stress and anxiety that Paul and his family experience. The whisper becomes an external manifestation of the financial instability that shakes Paul's family, exacerbating Paul's obsession with winning money.

From a psychoanalytic point of view, the house whisper can be seen as a symbol of the inner distress that haunts Paul. The whispers create a constant pressure that leads Paul deeper into his compulsion to win money. This shows how social and familial hopes and expectations can reinforce the theme of materialism and deepen its psychological impact. The house whisper also reflects how the external environment can affect one's inner state. Paul is constantly exposed to financial pressures and unfulfilled expectations, which in turn reinforce his obsession. The whispering house is thus not just a house, but a symbol of the tensions and anxieties that pervade Paul's life. Throughout the narrative, the symbolism of

the rocking horse and the house of whispers become powerful signifiers of Paul's psychological struggle in seeking financial fortune and success. They not only depict the inner turmoil and obsessions that haunt him, but also illustrate the complexity of the human psyche in the face of external and internal pressures.

Consequences of Obsession

1. Psychological Stress

Paul's rampant obsession not only created financial pressure, but also significant psychological stress. Paul was constantly exposed to the pressure of predicting the winning horse, a task that weighed heavily on his mind and created pressing anxiety. His obsessive drive to achieve good fortune leads him into the darkness of the mind, where his struggle to meet expectations weighs relentlessly on his mind.

"He went off feeling confused and, in a childish way, looking for the secret to "luck." (Pg 3: Line 5)

This stress is reflected in his secretive and frantic behavior. Paul became increasingly reclusive and hid behind the curtain of his seemingly perfect life from the outside. He hid his secret gambling activities from his family, adding a huge mental burden of guilt and fear of being found out. As the pressure mounted, Paul felt trapped in a dark cycle of thoughts that consumed him. His psychological disorders begin to show through symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and perhaps even a tendency to experience crippling panic attacks. Freud's theory offers a deep understanding of how unresolved unconscious conflicts can result in psychological disorders. In Paul's case, his obsession with winning money and his need for recognition from his mother led to widespread internal conflict. His inability to cope with pressure and uncertainty led to a slow but sure mental collapse, creating a crisis in his state of mind.

2. Alienation and Isolation

"It's Malabar!" he screamed in a powerful, strange voice. "It's Malabar!" (Pg 12: Line 4)

Paul's obsession not only affected his mental state, but also alienated him from the real world and isolated him from meaningful relationships. Paul became confined to his own world, where rocking horses and horse racing results dominated his thoughts and actions. He is no longer able to distinguish between reality and delusion, and slowly, he slips into a deep loneliness. His fixation on rocking horses and gambling caused Paul to drift away from his family and friends. He became increasingly socially isolated, losing touch with the people who were supposed to support and love him. This isolation was not only a result of his rampant obsession, but was also a defense mechanism he used to protect himself from the emotional abandonment he felt from his mother. However, this isolation did not provide him with any actual protection. Instead, it only deepened his emotional emptiness, exacerbating the tension and imbalance he felt in his family relationships. In a state of deepening isolation, Paul became more and more trapped in the vicious cycle of his obsession, with no clear way out.

Comparative Psychoanalytic

1. Jungian Analysis

In exploring Paul's character in *The Rocking-Horse Winner* using a Jungian psychoanalytic approach, we find a rich foundation for understanding his psychological journey. Carl Jung, a renowned psychoanalyst, proposed the idea of the collective unconscious, a concept that

refers to unconscious aspects that are universal to humans. Within this collective unconscious, there are archetypes, which are innate mindsets that are part of the cultural and psychological heritage inherent in human consciousness.

In this context, the journey of a character like Paul can be seen as an archetypal journey that reflects mythological motifs and hero narratives. Paul, as the protagonist, represents the hero of the story. He engages in an epic struggle to fulfill his emotional needs and gain recognition from the person who is most important to him, namely his mother. In his quest, he is faced with various trials and tribulations, which are similar to the challenges that heroes in mythology have to overcome.

The rocking horse, as a powerful symbol in the story, can be interpreted as an archetype of the mythical horse that carries Paul through his inner journey. The horse is not just an ordinary toy, but also a representation of the archetypal force that guides Paul in his quest. The horse's relentless movements reflect Paul's tireless drive to achieve financial fortune and success, as well as the psychological tensions that color his journey.

2. Lacanian Analysis

Jacques Lacan's theory offers a different perspective in analyzing Paul's character. Lacan, a French psychoanalyst, emphasized the importance of the mirror stage in the formation of individual identity. According to Brierley (1965), one's identity is formed through self-reflection in relation to others, especially parents. In Paul's case, his relationship with his mother plays a central role in the formation of his identity. Paul's obsession with luck and financial success can be interpreted as a desperate attempt to fill the emotional void left by his mother. Lacan would emphasize that Paul's need for recognition and validation from his mother is a result of his perceived deficiencies in the relationship. In his attempt to fulfill the expectations he believes his mother placed on him, Paul is trapped in a symbolic world created by his unconscious desires and fantasies.

"He wanted luck, he needed it. When the two girls were playing dolls in the play-room, he would sit on his big rocking-horse and ride it madly with such energy that worried the little girls" (Pg 3: Line 7-8)

Lacan's notion of lack and desire is reflected in Paul's actions of constantly seeking external recognition. He feels the need to prove his worth and existence through financial success, sacrificing his mental health and well-being in the process. In his identity confusion, he seeks an understanding of who he really is through the views of others, especially his mother.

Discussion

The analysis of D.H. Lawrence's "The Rocking-Horse Winner" through a psychoanalytic lens reveals the complex interplay between obsession, psychological distress, and familial dynamics. Paul's obsession with luck and financial success is not merely a surface-level desire but a deeper manifestation of his unconscious conflicts and unmet emotional needs. The discussion will further elaborate on these findings through three critical sub-points: (1) The Psychological Underpinnings of Obsession, (2) Symbolism as a Reflection of Psychological Turmoil, and (3) The Consequences of Obsession on Mental Health and Social Relationships. Each section is supported by relevant current research to provide a broader understanding of the phenomenon.

1. The Psychological Underpinnings of Obsession

Paul's obsession with winning money in "The Rocking-Horse Winner" can be interpreted through the lens of psychoanalytic theory, particularly Freud's concept of the Oedipus

Complex. Paul's need for his mother's love and recognition drives his compulsive behavior, unresolved childhood conflicts often manifest in adulthood as obsessions. Similarly, Anderson (2024) highlight how early emotional neglect can lead to an increased likelihood of developing compulsive behaviors as a coping mechanism.

The family dynamics in Paul's life contribute significantly to his obsession. His mother's materialistic attitudes and emotional detachment create a void that Paul attempts to fill through financial success. The correlation between parental neglect and the development of obsessive-compulsive tendencies in children, suggesting that Paul's behavior is not an isolated incident but rather a psychological response to his upbringing.

Moreover, Paul's fixation on luck as a means of gaining love aligns with the findings of Rodriguez and Hill (2024), who explored how individuals with low self-esteem often equate external achievements with self-worth. Paul's behavior echoes this sentiment, as he believes that luck and wealth are the only paths to his mother's affection. This notion is further supported by Thompson (2025), who found that children who grow up in emotionally distant environments often develop an unhealthy dependency on external validation.

In addition to Freud's theory, Paul's actions can also be analyzed through Lacan's perspective of desire and lack. According to Lacan, an individual's desires are shaped by the perceived voids in their lives, often resulting in an endless cycle of unfulfilled needs. Paul's obsessive gambling is an attempt to bridge this gap, demonstrating how his mother's rejection leads to a compulsive quest for fulfillment.

2. Symbolism as a Reflection of Psychological Turmoil

The rocking horse in the story serves as more than just a toy; it is a powerful symbol of Paul's inner turmoil and obsessive drive. According to Jungian analysis, symbols often represent deeper layers of the subconscious mind (Lee & Chen, 2024). In this context, the rocking horse embodies Paul's psychological struggle to achieve success and gain his mother's love.

The constant motion of the rocking horse is indicative of Paul's inability to find peace. On the symbolism of repetitive actions in literature indicates that such behaviors often represent characters' attempts to exert control over their chaotic inner worlds. This aligns with Paul's belief that by riding the horse, he can predict the winning race, thus gaining control over his fate and, by extension, his mother's approval.

The whispering house is another significant symbol that illustrates the pressure Paul feels. Environmental factors, such as the home atmosphere, play a critical role in shaping a child's mental health. The house's whispers echo Paul's internalized anxieties, showcasing how external pressures can manifest as internal obsessions. These findings are consistent with the narrative's portrayal of a household driven by materialism, contributing to Paul's deteriorating mental state.

Furthermore, the interplay between the rocking horse and the whispering house underscores the duality of Paul's world. He exists in a liminal space where reality and fantasy blur, it analyzed how fictional characters use imagination to cope with psychological stress. Paul's reliance on the rocking horse as a means to gain luck reflects his detachment from reality and deep-seated emotional needs.

3. The Consequences of Obsession on Mental Health and Social Relationships

Paul's obsession not only impacts his psychological well-being but also affects his social interactions. His growing isolation is a hallmark of how obsession can lead to alienation.

Individuals with obsessive tendencies often withdraw from social environments, mirroring Paul's behavior as he becomes increasingly fixated on predicting race outcomes. The story's tragic ending highlights the devastating impact of unchecked obsessions. Excessive compulsive behavior can lead to a decline in both mental and physical health. Paul's eventual breakdown is a stark reminder of how the mind's unresolved conflicts can manifest in extreme outcomes when not addressed properly.

Moreover, the relationship between obsession and identity is also explored in the narrative. Paul's identity becomes so entangled with his success in horse betting that he loses sight of his own needs and desires. Smith (2025) discusses how obsession often leads to a fragmented sense of self, as individuals prioritize their compulsions over their well-being. Paul's ultimate demise serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of letting obsession consume one's life.

Finally, Paul's story serves as a reflection of broader societal issues regarding materialism and validation. The societal expectation to achieve wealth and success exacerbates his internal struggle. External pressures can amplify existing psychological vulnerabilities, suggesting that Paul's obsession is not just a personal failing but also a response to societal influences. It demonstrates how Lawrence's story, through its complex characters and rich symbolism, offers a timeless exploration of the dangers of obsession, particularly when intertwined with unmet emotional needs and external pressures. The integration of current research enhances the understanding of these themes, providing a nuanced perspective on the psychological undercurrents that drive human behavior.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a psychoanalytic approach to D.H. Lawrence's "The Rocking-Horse Winner" reveals the profound psychological underpinnings of Paul's character. His obsession with luck and monetary gain is not merely a surface-level desire but is deeply rooted in his subconscious need for love and validation from his emotionally distant mother. Freud's theory of obsession and the Oedipus Complex offers insight into how Paul's compulsive behavior stems from his unfulfilled emotional needs and the trauma of his upbringing. The symbolism of the rocking horse and the incessant whispers of the house effectively illustrate the burden of external pressures and the cyclic nature of Paul's desires and anxieties (Wilson & Martin, 2022). The consequences of this obsession are severe, leading to psychological distress, isolation, and a tragic detachment from reality. When analyzed through Jungian and Lacanian lenses, Paul's journey embodies the archetypal hero's struggle and underscores the impact of identity formation in the absence of maternal affection. Lawrence crafts a powerful narrative that not only explores the destructive force of obsession but also invites readers to reflect on how unmet emotional needs and the quest for recognition can warp an individual's perception of reality.

For future research, scholars could explore how the themes of obsession, identity, and emotional deprivation in "The Rocking-Horse Winner" resonate in contemporary contexts, particularly regarding how familial expectations influence mental health (Green & Harris, 2023). Additionally, a comparative study between Lawrence's portrayal of obsession and other literary works that address similar psychological struggles could provide broader insights into the representation of mental health in literature. Examining how different psychoanalytic theories, beyond Freudian, Jungian, and Lacanian perspectives, interpret Paul's behavior could also enrich our understanding of the character's psychological motivations. Such studies would contribute to the broader discourse on how literature can

serve as a lens to understand complex human emotions and the consequences of psychological trauma.

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