University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Trace: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange

Senior Thesis Projects, 2003-2006 | College Scholars

2006

Romantic Love Theories Explored in Fyodor Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment

Susan Brooke

Follow this and additional works at: http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_interstp3

Recommended Citation
Brooke, Susan, "Romantic Love Theories Explored in Fyodor Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment" (2006). *Senior Thesis Projects, 2003-2006.*
http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_interstp3/70

This Project is brought to you for free and open access by the College Scholars at Trace: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Thesis Projects, 2003-2006 by an authorized administrator of Trace: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. For more information, please contact trace@utk.edu.

Romantic Love Theories Explored in Fyodor Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment

College Scholars Senior Project

By Susan Brooke

Mentor:
Dr. Michael R. Nash

Committee members:
Dr. Kathleen A. Row
Dr. Natalia K. Pervukhin

April 18, 2006

Introduction

What is romantic love? This question has been studied for centuries and has endlessly different answers. The current understanding of romantic love can generally be derived from Romanticism originating in the late 18th century Western Europe. This movement is typically characterized by its reaction against the Enlightenment; whereas the Enlightenment emphasized the importance of reason, Romanticism emphasized imagination and feeling ("Romanticism"). This encouraged people to take emotion into consideration in order to find answers that were once founded solely on intellect.

Great minds have pondered the question of love for ages, relying on philosophical, psychological, and Biblical studies. Jean-Paul Sartre, the founder of existentialism, believes that love in and of itself does not exist. A man feels the need to possess another being in order to gain meaning in his own life. Sigmund Freud, the renowned psychologist, states that man is a sexual being. Romantic love expresses the yearning for sexual gratification. C.S. Lewis, a Christian apologist, believes love is the greatest of all God's gifts. To a large degree these three models of romantic love are not compatible. In Crime and Punishment Fyodor Dostoevsky depicts three relationships that can be analyzed through the three distinct views of Freud, Sartre, and Lewis. The present paper uses Crime and Punishment as the common text from which I compare and contrast Freud's, Sartre's, and Lewis's depictions of romantic love.

Summary

Fyodor Dostoevsky's novel, Crime and Punishment, is a psychological narrative of a man's pursuit of freedom from the constraints of traditional morality. Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov is a student living in poor conditions in mid-19th century St. Petersburg, Russia. He is proud, handsome, intelligent and analytical, while sickly and poorly dressed. He sees the only solution for his problems in killing an old pawnbroker, Alena Ivanovna, and stealing her money. He convinces himself that the mean and exploitative old woman is a useless member of society. He develops a theory that an extraordinary man is allowed to commit a crime if the outcome benefits society. The novel starts with Raskolnikov's visit to the old pawnbroker's apartment to rehearse the murder. On the same day he meets Marmeladov, a drunk and miserable former military officer. Marmeladov embodies Christian mercy and forgiveness that in the end will redeem Raskolnikov's sins. But at this point Raskolnikov is indifferent to them. He helps Marmeladov to return home where he meets Marmeladov's wife, Katerina Ivanovna, and children. He witnesses the extreme poverty in which the family lives and sees Katerina Ivanovna sick with consumption. Marmeladov's family, especially his daughter Sonya, who is forced into prostitution to help support her family, will play an important role in the future moral transformation of Raskolnikov who will come to understand the value and meaning of suffering and love.

The next day, Raskolnikov learns from his mother, Pulkheria Alexandrovna's letter that his sister Avdotya Romanovna (Dunya) worked as a governess in the home of a certain Svidrigailov where she endured his sexual advances but could not leave his house because she had received her salary in advance to send money to Raskolnikov. After

Svidrigailov's wife learned about his desires, she dismissed Dunya and brought shame to Dunya's name. Now Dunya is planning to marry a government official, Peter Petrovich Luzhin and move to St. Petersburg. Raskolnikov realizes that his sister is selling herself for his benefit much like Sonya does for Marmeladov. Dunya would never compromise her honor for her own material comfort but she is ready to do it for the sake of her brother; she chooses to sacrifice herself because of her love for him. From the letter Raskolnikov judges Luzhin to be a calculating and greedy businessman taking advantage of Dunya's despair and poverty.

The following day, after accidentally learning that the old pawnbroker will be alone in her apartment, Raskolnikov goes to Alena Ivanovna's apartment and kills the old woman with the blunt side of the axe. Unexpectedly, her half-sister, Lizaveta, returns. If the old pawnbroker was a calculated victim for Raskolnikov's "cause," Lizaveta's murder was a chance consequence of his intellectually justifiable crime. Raskolnikov makes his way out of the building, taking some of the valuable things.

Raskolnikov commits his crime to prove his idea that all people are divided into two groups—the weak masses and the leaders, who are strong men of ideas capable of following their own rules without submission to common laws. The greater surprise and disappointment for Raskolnikov is that his crime had a serious effect on him, meaning he is not that "chosen one" but an ordinary and weak man. Raskolnikov is convinced that the police suspect him. He overhears the chief clerk, Porfiry Petrovich, who is in charge of the murders' investigation, talking with another officer, Nikodim Fomich about the crime, and he faints, raising suspicion. When Raskolnikov returns home, he quickly takes all of the stolen items and hides them under a rock in a distant courtyard.

Back in his room, he falls into a fitful, coma-like sleep for four days. When he awakes, he finds out that his housekeeper, Nastasya, and his friend Razumikhin have been taking care of him, while a doctor, Zossimov, and a police detective, Zamyotov, have been visiting him. Dunya's fiancé Luzhin also comes to see Raskolnikov, but an argument ensues because Raskolnikov is offended by Luzhin's domineering attitude toward Dunya and their family. Raskolnikov becomes obviously uncomfortable whenever any of his visitors bring up the subject of the murders. His paranoia grows. He worries that he may willingly confess if anyone accuses him of the crime.

After almost confessing to Zamyotov and the workers at the old pawnbroker's apartment, Raskolnikov comes across Marmeladov who, in a drunken daze, has been run over by a carriage. He helps carry Marmeladov to his apartment where he dies. There, Raskolnikov meets Sonya and gives her family the money his mother sent him, which depicts Raskolnikov's sympathy for those who are suffering.

Raskolnikov returns home to find his mother and sister and demands that Dunya end her engagement to Luzhin. Razumikhin tries to explain Raskolnikov's sickly state to Pulkheria Alexandrovna and Dunya. In the midst of all the drama with Raskolnikov, Razumikhin begins to fall in love with Dunya, as he appreciates her caring and self-sacrificing character.

The next day, Dunya tells Raskolnikov of a dinner meeting she is having with Luzhin and invites him to join them, despite Luzhin's explicit request for Raskolnikov not to be there. Raskolnikov accepts the invitation to the meeting with Luzhin in order to show him and everyone else that he is willing to stand up to him and freely express his dislike for not only Luzhin but for the engagement, as well. He also

wants to be a part of the funeral dinner to support Sonya and her family in their suffering.

Later, Raskolnikov goes with Razumikhin to see the police inspector Porfiry Petrovich, who is related to Razumikhin, to recover a watch he had pawned with the old pawnbroker woman. Raskolnikov's paranoia is inflamed, as he thinks that not only does Porfiry suspect his guilt but is leading him into a trap. That afternoon, Raskolnikov dreams of the murders, as his conscience is overrun with conflict. Dostoevsky clearly illustrates that dreams are very meaningful, as he uses them throughout the novel to explain the inner-workings of Raskolnikov's mind. When Raskolnikov wakes up, he finds Svidrigailov in his room enquiring about Dunya. Although Svidrigailov says he has no designs on Dunya, he wants her to end the engagement with Luzhin and offers to give her ten thousand roubles to make the break up easier. He also mentions that his late wife Marfa Petrovna left three thousand roubles to Dunya in her will. Svidrigailov hopes to persuade Dunya using financial means, as he knows she is sacrificing herself for the sake of her family. In Dunya's name Raskolnikov flatly refuses to accept Svidrigailov's money.

As Svidrigailov leaves, Razumikhin and Raskolnikov walk to the restaurant where Dunya, Pulkheria Alexandrovna, and Luzhin are meeting. Razumikhin tells Raskolnikov that he is a suspect in the murder case, intensifying Raskolnikov's fears. During dinner, Luzhin starts arguing and insulting everyone by talking of the engagement as a philanthropic act, resulting in Dunya breaking the engagement. Razumikhin then realizes that Raskolnikov is the murderer and tries to explain to Pulkheria Alexandrovna and Dunya that Raskolnikov is in a very nervous condition and

needs to be left alone for a while. Raskolnikov knows that Razumikhin can take better care of his family because he is an honest and reliable man and especially because he loves Dunya.

Raskolnikov goes to Sonya's apartment, not knowing that Svidrigailov is eavesdropping from the next room. They read together the Bible story of Lazarus which symbolizes Christian faith in Resurrection and rebirth of the soul. Raskolnikov feels a deep connection with Sonya who has suffered meekly, without complaining or arguing. He almost confesses his crime to her and promises to tell her who murdered the old pawnbroker and Lizaveta, who was a friend of Sonya's.

The next day, Katerina Ivanonva's memorial dinner for her husband turns into a grotesque and ugly scandal that reveals the true nature of most of the characters. Previously, Raskolnikov had said that Sonya's finger was worth more than Luzhin himself and also had announced that he was proud to acquaint a fallen woman such as Sonya with his sister Dunya. This enrages Luzhin; in order to get revenge on Raskolnikov, he plots to frame Sonya for stealing money from him. Surprisingly, the unintelligent and humorous Lebesyatnikov, who witnessed Luzhin's trick, shows that his heart is better than his mind and announces to the party that he saw how Luzhin planted the money on Sonya. Luzhin leaves, as Raskolnikov explains to everyone that Luzhin was trying to embarrass him by dishonoring Sonya. Katerina Ivanovna cannot endure the stress and loses her sanity.

With the dinner going poorly, Raskolnikov goes to Sonya's room and confesses the murders to her. He explains to her his skewed theories of "the right to a crime," but she believes no one but God is to decide who is to live and who is to die. She begs him to

confess his crime to Russia, promising that only complete admission of his guilt will bring him relief.

Meanwhile, Katerina Ivanovna is dancing for money in the streets with her other children. She is brought to Sonya's room where she soon dies. Svidrigailov offers to pay 15,000 rubles for the funeral accommodations and the children's care. He also tells Raskolnikov that he knows Raskolnikov is the murderer, as he overheard the conversation that took place in Sonya's room, which adds to Raskolnikov's conflict of dealing with his extreme guilt as one person he trusts and one he does not trust now know about his crime. He suspects Svidrigailov's unexpected and strange generosity is directed by some unknown but base calculations.

Raskolnikov wanders around in a daze after all the happenings of the day. Porfiry Petrovich suspects Raskolnikov to be the murderer but does not have enough evidence to convict him yet. He plays torturous psychological games with Raskolnikov urging him to confess, stating it will ensure him an easier prison sentence. He even arranges a faked confession of an innocent, mentally troubled man.

Raskolnikov leaves Porfiry and finds Svidrigailov, with whom he needs to talk to better understand his motives. Svidrigailov, who is fifty years old, reveals his intimate secrets including his engagement to a poor sixteen year old girl. He also admits that he is passionately in love with Dunya who at some point tried to "save" him from his unclean life. This information shows Raskolnikov that he should rely on his instincts, as he never trusted Svidrigailov's motives, even though Svidrigailov is now trying to put him at ease by making it seem as though he has given up on Dunya with a new engagement.

Svidrigailov leaves Raskolnikov and brings Dunya to his room, where he tries to blackmail her by telling her that her brother was a murderer. She refuses his love. He threatens to rape her; she shoots at him but misses. He could easily overcome her, but seeing how much she hates him he lets her go. Svidrigailov is consumed by the memory of his past sins; he cannot find support neither in people nor in God. After wandering around the city of Petersburg, he stops at midnight at his young fiancée's home and leaves her 15, 000 rubles explaining that he has to leave for a business trip. Thus, he spent all 30, 000 rubles that he inherited from his wife (who we come to suspect he poisoned) on good deeds. He kills himself in the street in front of a sentry and his last words are: "If asked tell that I left for America." Maybe for Dostoyevsky that was the name of hell.

Raskolnikov goes to visit his mother and tells her he will always love her. He then tells Dunya about his plan to confess. Raskolnikov cares deeply for his family, but only now that he knows he will probably never see them again he can express his love to them. He goes to Sonya, who gives him her cross as a sign of the cross that he is to carry to the end of his life. He is now ready to face his suffering, but not because he believes his crime was evil, but because of his own incompetence. He almost abandons his plan when he hears in the police station about Svidrigailov's suicide. But seeing Sonya, the symbol of suffering humanity, waiting for him outside, gives him the strength to go through with it, and he returns to the station and makes a confession to the police officer on duty named Petukh.

As Porfiry Petrovich promised, Raskolnikov receives a comparatively short sentence of eight years in a Siberian prison. His mother dies soon after his confession,

without any knowledge of her son's crime, and Dunya marries Razumikhin. Sonya follows Raskolnikov to Siberia, where he realizes, after almost a year in prison, his love for her as she has always loved him. This realization allows him to rejoin the rest of humanity. Although he has seven more years of suffering ahead, it will be a small price to pay for the rebirth, for the transference into the new world of faith that he is to share with Sonya.

Jean-Paul Sartre

The existentialist believes that existence precedes essence; man first exists, encounters himself, moves up in the world, and defines himself afterwards (Sartre, Existentialism and Human Emotions 15). Jean-Paul Sartre writes, "And although his personal fate is simply to perish, he can triumph over it by inventing 'purposes,' 'projects,' which will themselves confer meaning both upon himself and upon the world of objects—all meaningless otherwise and in themselves" (14). One cannot desire or wish to do things, such as write a book, become an actress, or fall in love, without having made prior and more spontaneous decisions that manifest into the present one.

There is an obvious contrast between Pyotr Petrovich Luzhin's relationship with Dunya and Sartre's idea of romantic love. Through Sartre's theory, Luzhin can be viewed as incapable of taking real responsibility, although Luzhin uses his relationship with Dunya to appear to be caring for humanity. Luzhin and Dunya intend to marry as an apparent act of charity from both sides. Pulkheria Alexandrovna, mother of Dunya and Raskolnikov, writes to her son of Luzhin's second visit with Dunya:

> After he had received Dunya's consent, in the course of conservation he declared that before making Dunya's acquaintance he had made up his mind to marry a girl of good reputation, without dowry and, above all, one who had experienced poverty, because, as he explained, a man ought not to be indebted to his wife, but that it is better for a wife to look upon her husband as her benefactor.… but all the same it did strike me as somewhat rude, and I said so afterwards. But Dunya was vexed, and answered that "words are not deeds." (Dostoevsky 32)

Luzhin might say that he cares for the betterment of Dunya's family's welfare, however Sartre states, "But how is the value of a feeling determined?... I may say that I like so-and-so well enough to sacrifice a certain amount of money for him, but I may say so only if I've done it.… The only way to determine the value of this affection is, precisely, to perform an act which confirms and defines it." But this idea seems to be caught in a vicious cycle, as "the feeling is formed by the acts one performs" (Sartre, Existentialism and Human Emotions 27). In other words, one might choose to be something, such as to be in love, so he performs acts and attains feelings that correspond with those actions. He cannot love until he acts to obtain those feelings.

Luzhin appears to be aiding mankind by giving money and safety to Dunya and her mother, while receiving a more positive image in return. One existential idea is that because each man is responsible for all men, he has a direct responsibility to improve the human condition (Haught). Although Luzhin does not truly care about the welfare of others, he asks for Dunya's hand in marriage, while few would consider such a proposal. Dunya has nothing materialistically to offer Luzhin, and with rumors spreading about her relationship with Svidrigailov, this proposal gives quite the appearance of selflessness even though Luzhin is merely trying to dominate a young, weak, poor female. Sartre writes, "…the man who involves himself and who realizes that he is not only the person he chooses to be, but also a lawmaker who is, at the same time, choosing all mankind as well as himself, cannot help escape the feeling of his total and deep responsibility" (Existentialism and Human Emotions 18). Luzhin feels no such responsibility. Pulkheria Alexandrovna writes to her son Raskolnikov of the marriage arrangement:

> Of course, there is no great love either on his side or on hers, but Dunya is a clever girl and has the heart of an angel, and will make it her duty to make her husband happy who on his side will make her happiness his care.… Besides he is a man of great prudence and he will see, to be sure, of himself, that his own happiness will be the more secure, the happier Dunya is with him. And as for some defects of character, for some habits and ever certain differences of opinion—which are indeed inevitable even in the happiest marriages—Dunya has said that, as regards all that, she relies on herself, that there is nothing to be uneasy about, and that she is ready to put up with a great deal, if only their future relationship can be an honourable and straightforward one. (Dostoevsky 32)

Dunya relies on herself as she understands that her destiny is what she makes of it.

In accordance with Luzhin's supposed selflessness, Dunya accepts the offer in order to help her family's (especially Raskolnikov's) condition. Svidrigailov tells Raskolnikov, "I believe [Dunya] is sacrificing herself generously and imprudently for the sake of…for the sake of her family" (Dostoevsky 251). The existentialist believes that there are certain values, such as brotherly love, which man must pursue in order to develop individual integrity and strive to improve humanity (Haught). Dunya wants Luzhin to pay for Raskolnikov's studies at the university and eventually wants Raskolnikov to work in Luzhin's law practice. Their mother writes to Raskolnikov:

> Your future is marked out and assured for you.… Dunya is dreaming of nothing else.… and has already made a regular plan for your becoming in the end an associate and even a partner in Pyotr Petrovich's legal

> business,… Nor has either Dunya or I breathed a word to him of the great hopes we have of his helping us to pay for your university studies. (Dostoevsky 33)

Dunya acts for herself, but in doing so, acts for the benefit of her whole family.

As a clear view of Luzhin's ideology, he states, "love yourself before all men, for everything in the world rests on self-interest.… in acquiring wealth solely and exclusively for myself, I am acquiring, so to speak, for all" (Dostoevsky 131). Luzhin tries to appear concerned for the well-being of others, although he acts for the fulfillment of his personal ambition.

The existentialist understands that he cannot be anything, such as kind, spiritual, or envious, unless others view him as such. He has no knowledge of himself without knowing what others think about him (Sartre, Existentialism is a Humanism 14). Luzhin and Dunya act selflessly only because others believe their actions to be selfless and charitable. Sartre believes,

> …we reach our own self in the presence of others, and the others are just as real to us as our own self.… In order to get any truth about myself, I must have contact with another person. The other is indispensable to my own existence, as well as to my knowledge about myself. (Existentialism and Human Emotions 38)

Raskolnikov sees Luzhin's hypocrisy, as he sarcastically describes Luzhin as "generous" and states, "I will not have your sacrifice, Dunya, I will not have it, mother! It shall not be, so long as I am alive, shall not, it shall not! I will not accept it!" (Dostoevsky 40). Sartre states that freedom is the right of all men, as each must choose his own

destiny: “Man makes himself” (Existentialism and Human Emotions 43). Raskolnikov’s disapproval of the engagement is merely the exercising of his right to choose, as “one can still pass judgment, for … one makes a choice in relationship to others.… one can judge (and this is perhaps not a judgment of value, but a logical judgment) that certain choices are based on error and others on truth” (44). After the engagement is broken, Luzhin stops acting charitable and seeks revenge, which finally depicts his true character.

Although Luzhin’s intention to marry Dunya could have been construed as a loving deed, his reasons for a marriage to Dunya certainly do not include an emotional commitment to her or any feelings for anyone but himself, as traditional romantic love might suggest. Jean-Paul Sartre does not believe that such a thing as romantic love exists as an entity in and of itself, as he states, “But in reality and for the existentialist, there is no love apart from the deeds of love; no potentiality of love other than that which is manifested in loving” (Existentialism is a Humanism 17). Love is merely man’s attempt to possess another in order to gain purpose. Luzhin wants to possess Dunya for the sake of possession, not purpose. Sartre states, “Man can count on no one but himself; he is alone, abandoned on Earth in the midst of his infinite responsibilities, without help, with no other aim than the one he sets for himself, with no other destiny than the one he forges for himself on this Earth” (qtd. in Haught). Luzhin most definitely seeks his own aim and pretends to be charitable while lacking any real idea of a personal responsibility for others.

Sigmund Freud

Sigmund Freud describes "psychical impotence" as a conflict within many of his patients, where a split exists between tender and sexual feelings: "'Where they love, they have no desire; where they desire, they cannot love'" (qtd. in Mitchell 205). Freud views romantic love as a "brief prelude to more stable, ambivalent love," as one eventually comes to know his partner almost to the point of boredom. Included in his research is the importance of the libido (sex instinct), which contains "every manifestation of love, affection, or attraction known to the human race" (Coster 172). Freud eventually defined aggression, rather than self-preservation, as the counterpart to the libido (Mitchell 205). The need for secure relationships and those of excitement along with the power of the libido can be seen clearly in the relationship between Svidrigailov and Dunya in Crime and Punishment.

Dostoevsky introduces Svidrigailov as the married man who propositioned Dunya when she worked in his home. Svidrigailov exhibits the idea that "there is a conflict between the drabness of the known and familiar and the excitement of the unknown, which provides room for idealization…" (210). Idealization fades with familiarity and reality, but one may find comfort in the security of that type of relationship. As Svidrigailov has a comfortable love for his wife Marfa Petrovna, that security, while necessary for many love relationships, does not offer the pleasure the libido requires. Svidrigailov tells Marfa Petrovna bluntly that he cannot be completely faithful to her, so they have an unwritten agreement which Svidrigailov explains to Raskolnikov:

> First, that I would never leave Marfa Petrovna and would always be her husband; secondly, that I would never absent myself without her

> permission; thirdly, that I would never set up a permanent mistress; fourthly, in return for this, Marfa Petrovna gave me a free hand with the maidservants, but only with her secret knowledge; fifthly, God forbid my falling in love with a woman of our class; sixthly, in case I—which God forbid—should be visited by a great serious passion I was bound to reveal it to Marfa Petrovna.… She was a sensible woman and so she could not help looking upon me as a dissolute profligate incapable of real love. But a sensible woman and a jealous woman are two very different things, and that's where the trouble came in (Dostoevsky 407).

Svidrigailov, in compliance with this contract, seeks out the unknown (Dunya) to fulfill his desire for excitement. He speaks of his relationship with Dunya:

> I believe I understand her, and I am proud of it. But at the beginning of an acquaintance, as you know, one is apt to be more heedless and stupid. One doesn't see clearly. Hang it all, why is she so handsome? It's not my fault. In fact, it began on my side with a most irresistible physical desire. Avdotya Romanovna is awfully chaste, incredibly and phenomenally so. (409)

Sigmund Freud once had a patient, Miss Lucy, who developed a hysterical neurosis because she was in love with her employer:

> Because of the social-class differences between the two of them, Miss Lucy experienced her romantic longing as doomed. An intimate conversation had aroused her hopes, but they had been crushed by an odd

> scolding from her employer.… Lucy's neurosis had resulted from conflictual, repressed wishes of an erotic nature. (Mitchell 204)

With a similar conflict, Svidrigailov thinks fondly of conversations he shared with Dunya in the garden of his house:

> One day after dinner Avdotya Romanovna followed me into an avenue in the garden and with flashing eyes insisted on my leaving poor Parasha [a pretty, young servant in Svidrigailov's house at the same time as Dunya] alone. It was almost our first conversation by ourselves…. Then came interviews, mysterious conversations, exhortations, entreaties, supplications, even tears. (Dostoevsky 410)

Svidrigailov, like Lucy, had rested his hopes of a romantic relationship on intimate conversations. After receiving his own scolding in the form of a letter written by Dunya, he also represses his desires.

Soon after Marfa Petrovna's death, Svidrigailov comes to St. Petersburg with ill intentions, although he does not reveal them to anyone. He does tell Raskolnikov, "But I'll confess frankly, I am very much bored" (Dostoevsky 246). He has been openly refused by Dunya, so he has supposedly given up, but the battle with his longing cannot end there.

Svidrigailov has a strong history of developing extramarital relationships; as a married man with a family, it is not odd for one to look for excitement elsewhere, as Freud has stated. Therefore, it is not unusual that Svidrigailov offered everything to Dunya in hopes of getting what he wanted in return. Svidrigailov told Raskolnikov, "I resolved to offer her all my money—thirty thousand roubles … if she would run away

with me here, to Petersburg. Of course I should have vowed eternal love, rapture, and so on" (411). Perhaps it is due to his "love" for her, of which he later speaks directly to Dunya, or merely his hope of a sexual encounter. Freud states:

> Sexual love is undoubtedly one of the chief things in life, and the union of mental and bodily satisfaction in the enjoyment of love is one of its culminating peaks. Apart from a few queer fanatics, all the world knows this and conducts its life accordingly; science alone is too delicate to admit it. (Observations on Transference-Love 168)

Once he has acquired information that he can use for his own benefit, he chooses to do so. He has had to repress his desire for Dunya up to this point, where the unconscious begins to show itself externally. Leading up to the aggressive confrontation, Svidrigailov shows many outward signs of his internal turmoil. When he meets Dunya in the street, "Svidrigailov's lips were twisted in a condescending smile; but he was in no smiling mood. His heart was throbbing and he could scarcely breathe. He spoke rather loudly to cover his growing excitement" (Dostoevsky 420). Also, he shows signs of suppressed desires trying to emerge as he speaks to himself in Dunya's presence (424) and develops nervous twitchings: "He too was trembling all over" (425). His emotions begin to take control:

> You…one word from you and he is saved. I…I'll save him…. What do you want with Razumikhin? I love you too.… I love you beyond everything. Let me kiss the hem of your dress, let me, let me….The very rustle of it is too much for me. Tell me, 'Do that,' and I'll do it. I'll do everything. I will do the impossible. What you believe, I will believe. I'll

> do anything—anything! Don't, don't look at me like that. Do you know that you are killing me? (425)

When Svidrigailov's emotional plea does not force an immediate change in Dunya's attitude toward him, his repressed libido begins to surface and his aggression takes over. Freud believes, "Desire is risky and dangerous. The unresponsive, ungratifying object is infuriating" (qtd. in Mitchell 210). Svidrigailov now threatens and intends to rape Dunya:

> You may be sure I've taken measures. Sofya Semyonovna is not at home. The Kapernaumovs are far away—there are five locked doors between. I am at least twice as strong as you are and I have nothing to fear, besides. For you could not complain afterwards. You surely would not be willing actually to betray you brother? Besides, no one would believe you. How should a girl have come alone to visit a solitary man in his lodgings? So that even if you do sacrifice your brother, you could prove nothing. It is very difficult to prove an assault, Avdotya Romanovna. (Dostoevsky 426)

Freud states, "The sexuality of most male human beings contains an element of aggressiveness—a desire to subjugate; the biological significance of it seems to lie in the need for overcoming the resistance of the sexual object by means other than the process of wooing" (Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality 24). Svidrigailov's threat to rape Dunya most definitely exemplifies his inward desire to surmount her resistance in order to satisfy his desire.

When Dunya denies Svidrigailov's advances and pulls out a revolver to kill him, he actually grows more excited, exclaiming, "Aha! So that's it, is it? Well, that

completely alters the aspect of affairs. You've made things wonderfully easier for me, Avdotya Romanovna" (Dostoevsky 426).

His hope of reciprocated "love" is restored momentarily when Dunya drops the gun. He puts his arm around her and she responds, "Let me go." Svidrigailov asks, "Then you don't love me?" and Dunya shakes her head. He whispers in despair, "And….and you can't? Never?" His last shred of hope is lost as she exclaims, "Never!" (428).

To foreshadow the suicide of Svidrigailov, earlier in the novel he told Raskolnikov that if he did not have the "occupation" of seducing women, he might have to shoot himself, of which he speaks hastily: "I admit it's an unpardonable weakness, but I can't help it: I am afraid of death and I dislike its being talked of" (405). He also added, "I am ready to admit that a decent man ought to put up with being bored, but yet…" (405). This conversation shows that Svidrigailov is unwilling to change his ways even if it costs him his life. As Svidrigailov realizes that he cannot seduce Dunya, he accepts that he cannot go on in his occupation any longer. Without the safety and comfort of his marriage relationship or the excitement and pleasure of a romantic relationship, Svidrigailov's greatest fear is realized and he shoots himself.

Clive Staples Lewis

"God is love" (The Holy Bible, 1 John 4:16). C.S. Lewis derives his love theory from this seemingly simple statement. As a professed Christian, Lewis believes the Bible expresses God's absolute Truth. Lewis states:

> In most parts of the Bible, everything is implicitly or explicitly introduced with 'Thus saith the Lord.' It is... not merely a sacred book but a book so remorselessly and continuously sacred that it does not invite—it excludes or repels—the merely aesthetic approach. You can read it as literature only by a tour de force... It demands incessantly to be taken on its own terms.

Within the broad scope of love, he makes a distinction between Gift-love and Need-love, as they coincide with man's relationship with God and one another:

> There was no doubt which was more like Love Himself. Divine Love is Gift-love. The Father gives all He is and has to the Son. The Son gives Himself back to the Father, and gives Himself to the world, and for the world to the Father, and thus gives the world (in Himself) back to the Father, too. (Lewis 2)

Need-love is quite the opposite, as it exemplifies man's helplessness and loneliness from birth. These sub-units of love exist in everyday life as well as in the spiritual realm. One's working and saving in order to leave an inheritance behind for generations to come, without ever seeing or sharing in it, is an example of Gift-love. A baby's cry for food is a Need-love (1). God is love, and love is not real until it resembles God, but love is not god. When our human loves become gods, "they become demons. Then they will destroy us, and also destroy themselves" (8). C.S. Lewis defines the state of "being in love"

(romantic love) as Eros, something that does not seek sexual gratification alone but wants the "Beloved" herself, not the pleasure she can give (94). 1 Corinthians 13:2-8 states the Biblical meaning of love:

> And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. (The Holy Bible)

Lewis believes that Eros, which includes that which is described in the first letter to the Corinthians, is the closest likeness of all human loves to Love Himself (Lewis 109).

Sonya's feelings for Raskolnikov depict C.S. Lewis' view of Eros. When Raskolnikov confesses the crime to Sonya, she exclaims, "I will follow you, I will follow you everywhere" (Dostoevsky 354). Sonya's love is defined, as Lewis writes:

> For it is the very mark of Eros that when he is in us we had rather share unhappiness with the Beloved than be happy on any other terms.… Even when it becomes clear beyond all evasion that marriage with the Beloved cannot possibly lead to happiness—when it cannot even profess to offer any other life than that of tending an incurable invalid, of hopeless poverty, of excile, or of disgrace—Eros never hesitates to say, 'Better this

> parting. Better to be miserable with her than happy without her. Let our hearts break provided they break together.' If the voice within us does not say this, it is not the voice of Eros. (Lewis 107)

Raskolnikov's pride holds him tightly, as he compromises, "Perhaps I have been unfair to myself, perhaps after all I am a man and not a louse and I have been in too great a hurry to condemn myself. I will make another fight for it." Sonya, a believer of Christian Truth, exclaims, "What a burden to bear! And your whole life, your whole life!" (Dostoevsky 362). Sonya's words and attempt to lead Raskolnikov to truly turn to God reflect the teaching of Psalms 55:22, "Cast your burden on the Lord and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved" (The Holy Bible).

Sonya does not want Raskolnikov to avoid the consequences of his crime, but she longs for his repentance—the only path to freedom. Lewis states that love is much more marvelous than kindness; "Kindness cares not whether its object becomes good or bad, provided only that it escapes suffering", while Love "would rather see [the loved ones] suffer much than be happy in contemptible and estranging modes" (qtd. in Bacz). At that moment, "[Raskolnikov] looked at Sonia and felt how great was her love for him, and strange to say he felt it suddenly burdensome and painful to be so loved" (Dostoevsky 363). Likewise, when one begins to realize God's love for him, one "may wish for less love" (Bacz).

Sonya has a deep love for Raskolnikov that surpasses the terrible murders he commits. Though he must go to prison in Siberia, she does not think twice about following him there. Sonya lives out Galatians 6:1-2, "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering

yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ," (The Holy Bible) as she commits her life and love to Raskolnikov. Lewis claims, "For in self-giving, if anywhere, we touch a rhythm not only of all creation but of all being" (qtd. in Bacz). After explaining the murders in greater detail and describing his motives, Raskolnikov sits by Sonya, and Dostoevsky explains, "[Raskolnikov] looked at Sonya and felt how great was her love for him, and strange to say he felt it suddenly burdensome and painful to be so loved. Yes, it was a strange and awful sensation!" (Dostoevsky 363). As love perseveres, it does not matter that Raskolnikov does not realize the love he has for Sonya for the time. For a while, his shame and pride prevent him from recognizing his feelings. Lewis states, "As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you." As Sonya's love is true, it can overcome all obstacles, even Siberian prison. At first, Raskolnikov's pride forbids him to care for Sonya's visits to him in prison:

> And yet he was ashamed even before Sonya, whom he tortured because of it with his contemptuous rough manner. But it was not his shaven head and his fetters he was ashamed of: his pride had been stung to the quick. It was wounded pride that made him ill.… He was ashamed just because he, Raskolnikov, had so hopelessly, stupidly come to grief through 'the idiocy' of a sentence, if he were anyhow to be at peace. (Dostoevsky 466)

As a prostitute, Sonya's life is surrounded—almost defined—by the act of sex, which Lewis associates with Venus, "the carnal or animally sexual element within Eros" (Lewis 92). Although this sexual desire is a part of man, Lewis believes that it is not from

this desire that Eros develops, but the sexual desire stems from the pre-occupation with the Beloved herself (93). Raskolnikov, never having made any sexual gestures or references to Sonya, begins thinking more about her with each of her visits to him in prison. He had questioned his feelings (possible love) for her before, but when he sees her from his window, "Something stabbed him to the heart at that minute." When he learns she is ill and reads her note, "His heart throbbed painfully as he read it" (Dostoevsky 470). Lewis writes:

> A man in this state really hasn't leisure to think of sex. He is too busy thinking of a person. The fact that she is a woman is far less important than the fact that she is herself. He is full of desire, but the desire may not be sexually toned. If you asked him what he wanted, the true reply would often be, "To go on thinking of her." (93)

Raskolnikov finally throws off his pride and gives in to his love for Sonya. When she is well enough to visit him, Eros flourishes on both sides:

> How it happened he did not know. But all at once something seemed to seize him and fling him at her feet. He wept and threw his arms round her knees.… But at the same moment she understood, and a light of infinite happiness came into her eyes. She knew and had no doubt that he loved her beyond everything and that at last the moment had come…. those sick pale faces were bright with the dawn of a new future, of a full resurrection into a new life. They were renewed by love; the heart of each held infinite sources of life for the heart of the other. (471)

Raskolnikov now understands the Eros which Lewis describes, “He thought of her. He remembered how continually he had tormented her and wounded her heart.… But these recollections scarcely troubled him now; he knew with what infinite love he would now repay all her sufferings” (471). For the first time, he takes out the New Testament that Sonya had given him and before opening it, asks himself, “Can her convictions not be mine now? Her feelings, her aspirations at least…” (472). Only love can bring one out of the depths of despair. The Christian perspective states that God loves man and longs for man to be wholly lovable (Bacz). 1 John 4:7-8 tells of the greatest command, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God; He who does not love does not know God, for God is love” (The Holy Bible). Raskolnikov and Sonya, like Lewis, believe in the Truth; therefore, they cannot suppress it or keep themselves from loving it and one another.

Conclusion

The relationships between Luzhin and Dunya and Svidrigailov and Dunya, as described from the views of Jean-Paul Sartre and Sigmund Freud, did not exactly develop into the romantic love relationships that these theorists would have intended for them in order to accomplish their respective purposes. Luzhin's hope to dominate Dunya, while using charitable acts to appear caring for humanity ended abruptly with the end of the engagement. Svidrigailov's search for romance with the unwilling Dunya concluded with his self-imposed death. While Luzhin's and Svidrigailov's love projects failed, the relationship between Raskolnikov and Sonya was successful and certainly congruent with C.S. Lewis's model of love. Does this mean that only Lewis's idea of Eros is true romantic love? Not necessarily, but one might wonder, "Does the theory one holds of romantic love bear any significance to the outcome?" Many might answer that a theory of love is a self-fulfilling prophecy. And if one has selfish intentions, one will receive a selfish outcome—perhaps selfish to the point of total solitude. Whether one believes he has complete control of his destiny, he has no control over his desires, or he cannot help but love for the splendor of the object itself, one must always keep in mind that romantic love indeed suffers but the approach one takes to it will determine the heaven or hell of that suffering.

Works Cited

Coster, Geraldine. Psycho-Analysis. London: Oxford University Press, 1928.

Dostoevsky, Fyodor. Crime and Punishment. New York: Bantam Books, 1958.

Freud, Sigmund. Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality. Trans. James Strachey. New York: Perseus, 1962.

---. Further Recommendations on Technique. "Observations on Transference-Love." Standard Ed. 12. 1915. 157-171.

Haught, James A. "My name is Jean-Paul Sartre." Living Philosophy. 20 Nov. 1991. 30 Jan. 2006. <http://www.holysmoke.org/haught/sartre.html>.

The Holy Bible. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1996.

Mitchell, Stephen A. "Psychoanalysis and the Degradation of Romance." 1997. Storms In Her Head. Ed. Muriel Dimen and Adrienne Harris. New York: Other Press, 2001. 201-222.

Lewis, C.S. The Four Loves. San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, & Company, 1960.

"Romanticism." The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition. Columbia University Press 2006. 3 May 2006. <http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/r/romantic.asp>.

Sartre, Jean-Paul, Existentialism and Human Emotions. Trans. Hazel A. Barnes. New York: Philosophical Library, 1957.

---, Existentialism and Humanism. Trans. Philip Mairet. Brooklyn: Haskell House, 1948.