

Angie, hondo, and
the sense of
fulfillment: analysis of
characters and
gender rol...



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It is within human nature that we find ourselves striving for something more for someone we love. The drive for the love and beauty of a relationship comes from the environment that molds who one becomes and what they strive for. In *Hondo*, by Louis L'Amour, Angie Lowe remains isolated from any potential aspect of love, as she is alone with only her son and her ranch in the middle of the western desert. The infamous Hondo Lane is the renowned desert nomad; with multiple talents he's developed with being among the Apaches and adapting to desert lifestyle. In which his environment conditioned his behavior, but left a vital piece of him missing. Angie and Hondo foster a relationship that exposes their desire for one another they both can't help but feel. Hondo needed a woman as Angie who could love, nurture, and care for, ever so compassionately. Angie's character was what could complete what Hondo lacked, and it was Hondo who could fill in the blanks of Angie's life.

Angie's was constituted by traditional gender roles that consumed most of the abilities possible. In addition, Angie had been abandoned by her husband and only had a son to look after. Who would take care of her and fill in the pieces that she couldn't. Angie's living standard fit into the cult of true womanhood, in which she had never ventured outside of her ranch and feared the thought of it. Hondo acts as Angie does reciprocally to his nomadic lifestyle. He obeyed the ideals of a patriarchy, yet not entirely without Angie. Angie sought for what Hondo carried admirably, and developed a love that was driven by her need for Hondo's qualities she desperately needed. The two required one another to complete themselves within the ideals of a traditional relationship, without the other, they would

remain incomplete. Louis L'Amour uses traditional gender roles to demonstrate that a family structure is needed in order to complete individuals such as Angie and Hondo. Hondo's self fulfillment cannot be complete without the nurture of a submissive woman. Angie attained an element Hondo lacked and could only gain from a woman. He had all the flawless aspects any western man could ever strive for, but a piece had been missing, he lacked his full potential. The answer had always been Angie, who, next to Hondo could conclude the need for a woman and a family. " And he, Hondo Lane, what did he have to pass on? ... And he sat here ready to die...for what? He left behind him nothing. A few people would remember him for a day or an hour. A man needed something on which to build. A man without a woman, without a home, and without a child was no man at all. Johnny. If there had been no son of his own, he could at least have given Johnny what he had learned." (L'Amour, 130). Hondo would have attained all the ideal and sought out for qualities in a man if he had died, but wouldn't have passed on the Lane legacy for future generations to remember him for. " A few people would remember him for a day or an hour." (L'Amour, 130). Yes, one would only remember the name of a man for so long, but what retains all its meaning and significance is having it passed down. With Angie, the name had the possibility of remembrance; both her and Jonny would keep the Lane name. Without this, Hondo would die a man incomplete, and die solitary if no family structure surrounded him. " A man without a woman, without a home, and without a child was no man at all." (L'Amour, 130). Hondo needed Angie, who could take control of a woman's primary responsibilities, and without this figure of a woman to stand by Hondo would stand alone.

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Although the woman is seen as the depended one upon a man, Hondo did too depend upon Angie to support his ability of power within the family. Angie had a piece of her Hondo would thrive upon if managed to be grasped. Angie's possession of an incomplete family with Johnny was what Hondo stood in desperation for, which meant a position for Hondo's presence was open for completion of the family and the continuation of the Lane legacy. Hondo is absent of any patriarchal dominance while in the desert apart from Angie. The remote desert came with the absence of what Hondo really desired. He was far from any chance at Angie and what he was truly searching for. He displaced himself into a desert with hazardous environments and unknown people. Without the accompany of a woman and no direct reason for his travels, Hondo remained lonesome and awaited the presence of Angie. " ' Any settlers out of the north basin since I been away? Lately?' ' A few.' ' Handsome woman? Fair? With a small boy, maybe six years old?' ' No all middle-aged or elderly people... He was no man to be thinking about a woman. He had never lived with a woman... he wouldn't know how to...It was one thing with a squaw. After a while you knew them. But a girl like Angie, now, that would be different." (L'Amour, 78-79). Hondo can't help but contemplate Angie's safety and well-being at every given moment. Inside him, his unconscious echoes, it's unlike a man to think about a woman to the extent he is, but he can't prevent the inevitable emotions felt for Angie. According to the morals of a traditional gender role Hondo would be violating what defines a man's role. " ' Any settlers out of the north basin since I been away? Lately?'" Hondo shouldn't be concerned with Angie's safety but his learn for her overrules his obligations. By separating Hondo and Angie L'Amour acknowledges the need they both have for one <https://assignbuster.com/angie-hondo-and-the-sense-of-fulfillment-analysis-of-characters-and-gender-roles/>

another. Although Hondo would in turn, have to oblige by the demands and requirements set by being a father figure and a husband, it would fulfill his desire for a family structure in which he would govern. " He had never lived with a woman... he wouldn't know how to" The responsibilities were set, but Hondo's constant recall of Angie meant there was a stronger passion with his relationship with Angie than his reputation as an authoritative nomad. Hondo understood that without Angie he would have nothing to stand by or call his own, which unveils Hondo's will to leave the responsibilities of the cowboy for supporting the role of a husband and father. The desert had only offered labor and unanticipated warfare that could take a life if it wanted.

Hondo desired a life with something to have a gain from and Angie offered the role of a mother and wife that he could. " It was one thing with a squaw. After a while you knew them. But a girl like Angie, now, that would be different." (L'Amour, 78-79). Angie was a woman built with strong morals for the responsibility of a woman, and expected a man's job, and a woman's to create something of itself together. Therefore Angie was a wife who could support the position of a wife and mother as well as keep the role of the husband spotted as the head of the house. Angie believed in these morals by understanding how woman and man function with one another within a family household. Angie has no chance of survival without the presence and security that Hondo offers. Angie has responsibility of Johnny, the ranch, and the keeping her house in good shape. There's not a moment where she can spend doing otherwise, if someone were to threaten her and Johnny's safety there would be no possible tactic for her to defend herself. For the short while Hondo resided at the ranch with Angie she developed the comfort of

being at ease and finally situating a sense of protection that Hondo established through his sense of control and authority. With Hondo Angie was capable of taking responsibility of what she should had to do with her child and the house. While allowing Hondo to work outdoors with the horse, while everything feels protected and sheltered with Hondo looking after Angie.

However, with this gone Angie returns to the lifestyle of endangerment with possibility of Apaches threatening her land and well-being. She was back to being alone and dependent on herself, without any sense of comfort or safety from the powerful character of a husband. " A woman's task was to keep a home, to rear her children well, to give them as good a start before moving on. That was why she had stayed. That was why she had dared to remain in the face of Indian trouble. This was her fireside...Now it was threatened. The very thing that had saved their lives might turn her son from the life that should be his." (L'Amour, 91-92). Angie, alone, and vulnerable with only her son has the opportunity for any attack from an Indian, as they plea their power over Angie, through their identification as men. She is labeled, as an insignificant aspect of the desert that only occupies the land of Apaches. " That was why she had dared to remain in the face of Indian trouble. This was her fireside... Now it was threatened." Angie stayed to protect and reserve her land, but also to provide the lifestyle every little boy should have growing up into a man in the west. " A woman's task was to keep a home, to rear her children well, to give them as good a start before moving on." Her obligations as a woman should be within the house and with her son, but without a husband to pick up the roles of a man, she must now

take that upon herself in addition to the other tasks required to complete each day. Angie never ventured past the house, as it would be a risk at her safety and never occurred to her as a woman's job. It was men who would have the power and ability to travel outside of the house within the patriarchal society these characters lived in. " Her proper sphere was the home; she would not venture beyond that sphere because to do so would be considered unwomanly. Women who had these characteristics were idealized and considered worthy of every form of masculine protection and gallantry... for example various versions of the ' helpless female", whose abilities are limited to such " womanly" domains. (Using Concepts from Feminist Theory to Understand Literature, 89) Angie's sphere was the home and that's where she decided to stay because it was unwomanly venture past that. It was not her position to do what was seen as masculine and so she was incomplete in that area where a man had to be filled in. " Various versions of the ' helpless female", whose abilities are limited to such " womanly domains." L'Amour presents Angie as this woman who is this helpless and vulnerable without Hondo, which is the reason for her desperate need for him. All she is truly capable of is what traditional gender roles put in her in place to be, the mother, and wife, whose responsibility is within the house where she is most safe and in her radius of where a woman can go.

Angie and Hondo's roles within traditional gender role ideals stimulate the need they create for each other. Hondo consistently takes on the position as the guardian through his masculinity L'Amour institutes with his character. Angie as well, ideally obligates herself to the feminist toil that outlines her position in society. In exchange, both Angie and Hondo require the equally

opposite role of themselves to keep one another in fine checks and balances. Therefore, Angie and Hondo's persistent desire equated the two characters due to their strong compatibility according to their gender statuses as the helpless woman and dominate man. The instant attraction motivated their choices, behaviors, and thoughts that all lead to how their chapter would end with one another based upon what they needed to thrive in a patriarchal society.