

Discussion Questions for *Of Human Bondage*

1. To what or whom does the bondage in the title refer?
2. Philip changes his mind several times about the meaning of the rug which Cronshaw gave him. Does he ever come to a definitive understanding about what the rug means?
3. Mildred is described as being thin, cold, lacking in emotion and vulgar. Despite this description, Philip falls in love with her. Why?
4. Why does Philip abandon Nora?
5. Philip appears to have a difficult time making permanent friends. At various points in the novel, he parts from Cronshaw, Mcalister, Lawson, Griffiths, Hayward and Miss Wilkinson. Why does he abandon these people?
6. Philip dreams of traveling to Spain, the Far East, and other exotic destinations. He gives up these ideas after he meets Sally in the National Gallery. Does he give them up because he plans to marry Sally, or is there another reason?
7. What is Philip's relationship to his aunt and uncle? Why does he believe that his uncle is a hypocrite?
8. How does Philip's club foot affect his views of life? Is he justified in thinking that it has held him back?
9. Is the profession of doctor a good choice for Philip? Why or why not?
10. Why does Philip succumb to his bad fortune after losing his money in stock trading, rather than looking for work immediately? What breaks him out of his lethargy?