

Conceptualizing Homosexuality and Heterosexuality: A Critical Study of Sarah Waters

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Sarah Waters, the writer of the post world war period, is a powerful woman who with her novels on the recent genre of lesbian historical fiction has attracted world attention. The plainness in her works is her strength and confidence. Waters is primarily a novelist of causes who uses words for creating a world of reality. This woman writer, born in Neyland in 1966, has written four famous novels which deals with lesbian themes and has won several awards. Being a British writer, she fills the background and themes of her novels with a British atmosphere. She also portrays contemporary reality with an unparalleled honesty and depth. The female experience, takes on positive affirmations through Waters by expressing a unique female consciousness and a female tradition in literature. This British writer with her four famous novels has unmasked the female experience in life and relationships.

After three much-loved novels about Victorian underworlds and young women discovering and reinventing their identities, Sarah Waters has turned to the second world war and its aftermath for her fourth. *The Night Watch*, Waters' fourth novel, was published in February 2006. This is the story of four Londoners- three lesbian woman and a gay young man with a secret past. Set in the background of the World War II leads strange alliances between the characters in the work. The book therefore has a sustaining power of movement and a profound, insightful picture of life emerging from love in wartime to the loneliness in the post World War period. *The Night Watch* is a powerful study in homosexuality. Waters' skills are psychological, and she excels in portraying the nebulous undercurrents in human relationships which surface in sudden and unexpected ways. She focused on the mental and social breakdown that grasped the society during World War II. From the vantage point of space she sees the war, humankind and its manifold problems, and tries to discover the significance of sexuality in life. The homosexuals who were pathologised as a perverse or deviant type, a case of arrested development, a suitable case for treatment and also an aberration from a heterosexual norm is included in the mainstream sexuality by Waters, thereby considering them the normal. With her intuitive understanding of human nature, Waters' probes into the psychological state of heterosexuals and homosexuals who consider each other the deviant. In the work she projects the idea that each individual, even if 'normal' or 'abnormal', has a right to social space, but adds an important caveat - that the rights of others should not be infringed.

The stories tells about three lesbian women - Kay Langrish, Helen and Julia Giniver; a straight women, Viven Pearce; one man, Duncan Pearce, with his secret past that notes him a 'queer' and their secrets, shames and scandals that connect them despite their different experiences. The three lesbian women maintain a triangle love between them that serves as the main focus of the story. Kay is a woman, wealthy, friendly and caring, who worked as an emergency response ambulance worker during the war along with Mickey, her friend. She spends long nights cleaning up after air raids, sometimes rushing victims to the nearest hospital and other times collecting corpses. She was in love with Helen whom she rescued from an air raid from under the rubble. Helen, who was Kay's lover, ran a match-making agency for individuals who have lost their loved ones or disappointed to see the change in

their loved ones due to war. Before this job, Helen worked for the government in a division that assists those who have lost their belongings in the war. It is at that time she becomes acquainted with Julia, a published writer and the person who loved Kay. Helen falls in love with Julia but feels it hard to disclose the truth to Kay who is loving, caring and protective. But later Helen lives with Julia and Kay left alone. Viv who worked with Helen in the match-making agency has a relation with Reggie Nigri, a married military man. Duncan, Viv's brother is a man with secrets about his past and has spent some years in prison. His connection with Alec, his 'boy friend' and Robert Fraser, his cellmate, explains him to be a queer. Coincidence plays a significant role in the unfolding of past events as their lives are shown to overlap. This use of coincidence has been a feature of Waters' novels.

Heterosexuality is institutionalized as a particular form of practice and relationships, of family structure and identity. Waters has made a triumphant march into the familial relations through Viv, Duncan, their father and Mr. Mundy. The relation maintained between Duncan and Mr Mundy dictates the mildness of a father-son relation. With an unerring eye for detail, Waters documents Duncan and Mr Mundy, an arthritis patient, as regular visitors of Mr Leonard. Kay who always stands by the window as a means of passing time feels an irresistible joy when she sees them making their slow way up the street. The softness and consideration between them is their understanding of each other during Duncan's imprisonment. The image of togetherness, stability and loyalty, focus on individuals as a whole and the image of ideal family relationship in which family members spend time together and enjoy each other's company. When Viv spends her Tuesday evenings with Duncan and Mundy she enjoys the family atmosphere and Duncan when with her sister, Viv, feels the sense of belonging.

But Duncan is also afraid of his father who dislikes his relation with Alec. Duncan thinks while talking with Alec: "His father was deaf as a bloody post; but he had a sort of radar in him, were Alec is concerned" (448). Even if spoiled during childhood he is not understood when grown up: the real drawback of a patriarchal society. Father acts as the authority in the family and gains respect through fear created in the family members. In the patriarchal society in which men dominate, the son or the daughter is normally ruled by the father and the child lives subservient to the male head. The parents have choices in raising their children. They can assume the role of martyr or police officer or can present themselves as human beings who have more experience than their youngsters. This affects the children in an adverse way in which they feel reluctant to disclose their thoughts and secrets to their parents. Alec also decides to suicide when he was called to join the war that he himself hates. When he opens his opinion in his family he was struck on face by his father. His opinion and decisions proved to be worthless and the only way he found to defeat forced death was by killing himself. His disturbed mind thus found solace in sharing his thoughts with Duncan.

Heterosexuality is a domain of male power. It is seen not as an individual's preference, but as a socially constructed institution which structures and maintains male domination; it shows women the way through which she is supposed to travel from womanhood into marriage and to motherhood. Waters explores the truth on femininity by presenting believable complex human relationships which anyone identify with, irrespective of gender or sexuality. She also cleverly subverts sexual stereotypes. Stereotypes usually cancel the operation of power within society by characterizing inequalities as natural differences of ability or inclination. The heterosexual lovers in *The Night Watch*, Viv and Reggie, first meet in the toilet of a train. They engage in a conversation and he reveals to her that he is stuck in an unhappy marriage, and had a very limited time to go home to meet his new born daughter before leaving for the front line. Reggie, the ticketless military man, pleads Viv to help him hide in the bathroom with her to escape from the sight of the guard. It is in his earnestness and honesty that she falls in love with him. Viv feels good about herself

when Reggie adores her beauty and praises his luck for being with such an angelic figure. She considers him direct, friendly and honest. Without much thought Viv decides to continue their relationship. She is tempted to believe that the relationship will realize her fantasies and transform her life. Tactfully, men use the technique of adoring women or lending her the state of a goddess thereby creating a strong impact on her and making women obey men: a cheerful and diplomatic way used by male folk. Reggie feels thankful to Viv when she saves him and uses the situation to his benefit.

Human beings need recognition and affection. Love fills this basic need. Loving enables people to fulfill their need for creativity and self-revelation. But in the case of Reggie, it is not his sincere need for understanding, companionship or emotional support. On the other hand, Viv was in need of mental support because of the bad luck that struck her family and her father's pitiable condition. Reggie only needed romanticized sexual relationship secretly with a woman so that he could continue it throughout his life without being responsible at the same time enjoying. Reggie with his romantic advances finds place in Viv's mind. Thus, a product of the patriarchal society, Viv proves herself a female with a weak identity. Waters examines the fragility in the character of a female when she is in contact or in love with a male.

In love, committing oneself to another person involves the determination to develop a relationship where experiences cover many areas of personality, where problems are worked through; while conflict is expected and seen as a normal part of the growth process. Although the man enters a woman the act is only satisfying a primitive urge, and thus experiencing the fulfillment of that urge. The intimacy that Viv and Reggie shares is only a fulfilment of such a basic urge and a mutual agreement made on the basis that one will not be a burden to the other. Even in sexual intercourse they are very keen in keeping themselves safe from pregnancy and related problems. Viv is confident that Reggie is very careful when they have sex each time. When both of them share and accept each other they share physical intimacy.

In the modern age, marriage and parenthood are rarely viewed as a necessary, and individuals who do not choose these roles are no longer considered social deviants. Especially during the world wars, when lesbian and gay movements emerged as an important movement, heterosexuality was considered a burden and even a trap in which male and female is given responsibilities which restrict their freedom. In the post world war period, society views being single as an optional rather than deviant life style. Viv has made a choice in her life making herself free from the responsibilities of a married life. Viv and Reggie always enjoy lovers' affection. She meets Reggie at anonymous hotels once every five weeks; whenever Reggie is permitted leave from Wales. Waters pictures Viv as a woman not only that of the patriarchy but a changed 'new woman' who has experienced and altered her ideas thereby trying to develop her own identity. Viv belongs to a broken family and wishes to have an undisturbed self chosen life.

Widespread responses to women's declining chances to marry are presented by the emerging pattern of single women's affair with married men. For the woman who would like to marry, but hasn't or the woman who values independence and career over conventional domesticity, a partial, but often rather lengthy sexual and passionate relationship seems preferable to autonomous singlehood or a series of temporary relationship with married men. Through her heterosexual character Waters shows Viv's relation with Reggie as a rational solution to Viv's dilemma; how to meet her emotional, sexual and compassionate needs in the absence of marriage. Waters states that women whose work demanded a great deal of time and energy found married man an appealing alternative. Furthermore, married men were perceived as more stable, attractive, and willing to express feelings than were unmarried men. Women entered the relationship with a sense of personal efficacy born of the feminist movement. Intimate relationships which may have appeared risky to previous generations of

women now appear safe, as in the case of Viv, because contemporary women see themselves as having control over the direction, intensity and duration of the relationship. Viv finds it hard to maintain her identity as a separate self. Because of the distance and seeming independence built into the relationship, the affair with Reggie seems one way of resolving the tension between her identity and intimacy.

Pregnancy, the classical limitation of an unsanctioned relationship, in Viv's life was a test of purity in their relation. The structure of relationship maintained gave most power to man, and woman felt most of the power to the man, and women felt this dependency and lack of control keenly. While working as a typist, one day Viv finds her period one month late, and realizes she is pregnant with Reggie's baby. Motherhood, the only act that manifest in humans, forms the cosmic wonder of creation. Motherhood brings an inner awareness. But it also brings with its own a share of responsibilities and worries. The physical reality of giving birth is often complicated, violent and bloody. Viv dislikes being pregnant primarily because she is an unmarried woman. Moreover, Viv hesitates to be involved in the institution of marriage. She is conscious of the society around her and also of her youthful body. Pregnancy and its related problems would create shapelessness stretching of skin, lose of strength and flexibility in Viv. She disliked the disturbance in her. She feels sick and by the symptoms understands that she is pregnant. She is not ready to accept the fact that the romance in Reggie would create such a disorder in her life.

There was no mistake, she knew it. She thought, *I can't be. I can't!* Her mind was racing. For if she was, then it must have happened not this last time with Reggie, but the time before; and that was already a month ago- No, she thought. She wouldn't believe it. She said to herself. *You'll be all right.*

(235-36)

Later Viv contacts Reggie and informs him of her state. They plans abortion and go to the office of a dentist, Mr Imrie, who performs clandestine abortions on the side. He does unsafe abortion which might have resulted in the death of Viv. Women seeking to terminate their pregnancies sometimes resort to unsafe methods, particularly where and when access to legal abortion is being barred. This type of abortion is a procedure carried out by persons lacking the necessary skills or in an environment that does not conform to minimal medical standards or both. This type of abortion remains a public health concern today due to the higher incidence and severity of its associated complications, such as incomplete abortion hemorrhage and damage to internal organs. Viv feels severe pain in her stomach and was able to sense the blood flowing out of her while leaving the doctor's office. She goes with Reggie to a flat which Reggie says is that of Mike, his friend. The rigorous entry into the details of pregnancy, abortion, its pain and seriousness by Waters makes the readers perceive the strange and sublime experience that a female undergo.

When the situation becomes critical Reggie calls the woman downstairs. The lady tells him to call an ambulance as Viv has become pale due to loss of blood. Suffering from a massive hemorrhage Viv was on the brink of death. Kay and Mickey who were on duty come to attend the case. They take Viv to the ambulance and were explained by Reggie as a miscarriage. Before they put Viv in the ambulance, Reggie apologizes, and later on, the women realize that he had fled. On the way to the hospital, Kay communicates with Viv and understands that she was an unmarried woman and it was an abortion by puncturing the wall of the womb. Viv explains to the women her situation and begs them to remain silent. She becomes afraid that the doctors will learn about the abortion and scorn her for being an unwed woman. Kay slips her gold ring, which she never took off, on Viv's finger and leaves. She tells the nurses that Viv suffered a miscarriage during one of the air raids and her womb might have been punctured as a result. Thus Viv was saved.

Waters wants to establish that a mind has no erasing technique to remove memories of love and passion and there is no such thing as getting over it, that it is an empty metaphor too, because a wound might heal but the scar remains, the gesture remain, the words remain, the smell remains, nothing can ever be erased. She also shows the meanness of spirit of a society that is insensitive to pure and loyal romance, sexuality, friendship, passion and lust for no good reason. Waters *The Night Watch* is populated by women who feel themselves as failures. Many of them are young women losing out in love, being reminded of their age, not wanting to have children, going through a miscarriage and generally being thoroughly unhappy. The heterosexual woman characters, major and minor, expresses not a feminist angst, a rage against uncaring men, but something more like a distaste for being a woman.

The work as a whole is constructed in a heterosexual atmosphere. Waters is extraordinarily keen in including the heterosexual love scenes to its extreme details so that the new homosexual society within the heterosexual worlds will be viewed with an awakening sense of awareness and exploration. A very romantic lover, Reggie, is aware that kissing and foundling are highly effective stimulants and techniques of arousal and is virtually limitless, involving all areas of the body. Reggie finds real pleasure in his relationship with Viv. Man has often learnt to use the relation that will bring happiness and fulfillment. The traditional notion of sexuality as an irresistible urge that comes from the body is the organized sense of heterosexual sex desire. This traditional notion seems to echo that once men have been sexually aroused then they can no longer be held responsible. But the modern concept of body and sexuality revolutionized this idea and stresses the need of trained and disciplined bodies. Reggie fixes time and arranges hotel rooms for them to have sex. He has arranged it in his mind made a plan of it and executes it. Desire is not a feeling that comes from space; it has a target, an object that is focused. Thus there is always connection between thought, desire and action.

Reggie, the equal responsible partner in Viv's pregnancy, abandons her at the time of urgency. The over bleeding in Viv would even have resulted in her death and the fear of responsibility made Reggie withdraw in such a cruel and unexpected manner. Love may somehow be present in their contraceptive relationship; conjugal love is not expressed by it. Contraceptive lovers are constantly haunted by the suspicion that although the act in which they share could indeed be for each one of them a privileged giving of pleasure, it could also be a mere selfish taking of pleasure. It is logical that their sexual acts be troubled by a sense of falseness or hollowness, for they are attempting to find the uniqueness of the love relationship on an act of pleasure, which tends ultimately to close each one of them sterilely, is on him or her. They are refusing to find that relationship on the truly unique sexual dimension of loving co-creativity, capable in its vitality of opening each of them out, not merely to one another, but to the whole of lie and creation.

Waters along with her same-sex love characters asserts that heterosexuality is not natural or normal. It is socially organized and controlled for the benefit of a group. Female and male, when with their same sex, enjoys more freedom and equality that will never be built between people of different sex. Thus, Waters brilliantly explains with equal vividness a complex of sexuality and the disastrous war associated with the psychological values each individual possess. Waters' three lesbian characters and Duncan, the queer, is the main focus of the story. Depicted in the reverse order of age, the plot has a suspense hidden in itself. The true meaning and color of their relationships are clear only to the very last. Her homosexual characters have to manoeuvre the dominant patriarchal order of the time to have their voice heard. On the analysis based on the laws and principles of the lesbian and gay studies the triangle love among the three lesbians is established. There are many aspects that confirm Waters' initial expression of depth.

Waters makes the reader feel the presence of independent and autonomous woman who has an identity of her own. Lesbians are naturally considered the outcast in a society, the deviant group. People strongly believe that lesbians the wrong doers and the wrong they commit is their choice. Thus, the wrong choice of the lesbians projects their mental disorders. And they are isolated and viewed as strange humans with negative, brutal and shameful thoughts. But Waters questions the concept of homosexuals as deviants, living according to their choices. She, through *The Night Watch*, proves homosexuality as a genetic problem, a state obtained through birth. Sexual desires are determined during birth and their deviant sexuality is not individual's crime.

Lesbians act as heterosexual lovers, having strong emotional feelings and romanticized thoughts. Helen, when alone, is reminded of Julia and loves to hear her. As a lover, her deep intimacy for Julia makes Helen love and even think of Julia with strong sexual preference. At the same time, Helen is jealous of Julia spending her time with Ursula Waring, the interviewer of the *Radio Times*. While Helen called Julia she speaks briskly and tells Helen that she is waiting for another call. Helen assumes that Julia is waiting for Ursula's call and becomes disturbed. In lesbian relationship sexual jealousy is a notable factor. They are aware of their personal potentials and naturally feel jealous towards the partner. Their intimacy and attention when directed towards another person of their own sex make them feel irritated and suspicious. Intimacy is not at its depth in homosexual relations and suspicion is the aftermath of it. They are naturally ignorant of the magnitude of the problem. But what is obvious is that the frustrated woman, who knows the potential of the other, thwarts initiatives to make a united and better life with the other woman.

Helen is totally dissatisfied with her job and finds it exhaustive. Studies prove that homosexuals in work environments are less committed to the organization. Helen experiences less job satisfaction and less belief in support from the society. Hall studies lesbian woman having a notable level of uncertainty about making a career choice. Helen feels discriminated and lonely during her working hours. She enjoys the Saturday morning baths with Julia. That was a routine in their life and afterwards a walk outside.

Homosexuals also have a better sexual self-understanding and show less guilt regarding sexuality in general. Kay loves and even understands Helen sexually and emotionally and this is identified through an instance on Helen's birthday. Helen, in a depressed moment thinks of her fine days with Kay when they were in love; especially her birthday on which Kay gifted her the most beautiful pyjama she has ever seen in her life. Seeing the gift Helen said, "It's beautiful. Too beautiful! It must have cost a fortune! Wherever did you get it?" (290). She fondly remembers Kay's love, affection and caring that she has experienced. Kay admires her beauty, cares and recognizes her and this interdependency and acknowledgement from the part of a lover makes her life a peaceful one. But, by the time, Helen gets acquainted with Julia and goes with her to her house and restaurants without Kay's knowledge. While being with Julia, Helen has searched for the cause that attracted Kay. Their friendship and intimacy grows faster and deeper on the nights Helen is left alone by Kay who is busy on her duty. On one such night, she realises the fact that it is not Kay who was in love with Julia but viceversa. Kay only loved Helen whom she had rescued from under the rubble on a bombing night and makes her partner. This fact makes it difficult for Helen to disclose her love for Julia to Kay. When Helen and Julia share nights, they begin to share thoughts of Kay. Julia remarks:

'Kay wants a wife,' she said. She smiled. 'That sounds like a children's game, doesn't it? Kay wants a wife. She always has. One must be the wife with Kay, or nothing.' (330)

But Helen's lonely night are engaged and made lively with Julia and at last she leaves Kay.

Helen and Julia often have picnics to Regent Park. During one such picnic, Helen meets Ursula Waring. Helen compares herself with Ursula and feels mischief in Julia's eyes. She experiences a feeling of distrust towards Julia when Ursula tells about one of her visits to Julia's house which she has not known. According to studies, homosexual women are less open and less satisfied with their relationships, although they do not love their partners less. Trust, which is always a basis factor that strengthens any relation, is in unstable position in Helen's and Julia's relationship. Even if they love each other, there are secrets that create distance and misunderstanding in them. Psychology plays an important role in homosexuality. This psychology leads to many mental problems in them. The indifferent society in which they live provides a negative background. Once when Helen returns from her work she finds the house empty without Julia. She suspects her to have gone to Ursula "she might be with Ursula Waring," said a gnomish voice, from a dark, grubby corner of Helen's mind (132).

An exceptional study has focused specifically on the allocation of household labour among gay, lesbian and heterosexual couples. Lesbian couples tend to share tasks compared with lesbian couples. Finally, in contrast with the married couples, gay couples and lesbian couples are likely to split tasks in such a way that each performs an equal number of different tasks. Helen and Julia share their household tasks and Helen gets agitated when Julia comes late at night. She makes food, waits for Julia putting the two served plates into the oven and washed all the dishes herself. Later without finding Julia she eats her food alone, standing up. When Julia arrives late at night, a little drunk, she shouts at Julia and asks where she was. She disposes that she was with Ursula for an afternoon tea; they engage in serious discussion and Helen feels that Julia makes a fool of her. Julia accuses Helen, in return, of being jealous and complaints that she has no girl friend only because of Helen. Self-esteem has a central place in the psychological study of gays and lesbians. It is both a determinant and an outcome of various issues such as general disclosure, intimacy, problem-solving in relationships, and relationship satisfaction. Julia feels her self-esteem wounded when Helen doubts her. She is a writer and naturally feels offended when her freedom is infringed.

Finlay and Scheltema have showed that higher masculinity scores in lesbians is the result of higher self-ratings of independence compared to heterosexual women. Peters and Cantrell look at gender roles and social roles such as worker, daughter and intimate partner, and the potential conflicts between these roles in lesbian and heterosexual feminist women. Julia feels her freedom of having friends even of her own sex and her enjoying of life with alcohol and friends, being ceased by Helen's doubtful approach. Losing her temper she shouts at Helen:

Julia turned her head. 'Nothing. Nothing, Helen. It always amazes me that's all, that it should be you who have this fucking-this fucking fixation. Is there something about affairs? Is it like – I don't know- Catholicism? One only spots the other Romans when ones practiced it oneself?' (141).

This is Julia's reference to Helen's lesbian relation she has with Kay. This hurts Helen and she decides to hurt herself; a thought of suicide. She goes to the lavatory. She is in a frustrated state that she thought, "*I will burn myself, or I'll cut myself*" (143). In homosexual psychological studies of D'Augelli, lesbians have higher levels of depression, anger, anxiety, and symptoms of post-traumatic stress. This naturally results in suicidal attempts. Homosexuals develop a lifestyle of their own in which they find refuge in alcohol and drugs and also think of suicide and actually attempt it more often. Helen cuts her inner thighs using a razor and after sometime goes and lies with Julia. Noticing Helen's hands cold, Julia becomes disturbed pardons her and sleeps together. They love each other but the drift that has caused in their relation has not vanished totally.

Another problem that receives attention from researchers is that of physical appearance and eating disorders. Like heterosexual women, homosexuals seem to have lower

ideal weights and tend to be more preoccupied with their weight; this is suggested as a consequence of their shared desire to attract and please their own sex. Lesbians are supposed to be less concerned with their physical attractiveness and, consequently, are less dissatisfied with their bodies and less vulnerable to eating disorders. During a meeting with Mickey, Kay's pathetic situation makes Mickey ask Kay to stay with her which Kay refuses. After Kay is left by Helen, she stays in a house alone and the isolation has created a pathetic weak physical state in her. Her routine food is tea and tobacco as lunch and gin in plenty. She is never concerned about her food or health. She buries herself in the memories of Helen and feels it difficult to escape from the situation till death.

Gays also share similar features with lesbians. As homosexuals the same sex love has created similar problems in their life. Duncan is considered a gay in relation with his friend Alec. Even though he feels offended when Fraser calls Alec as "boy friend" of Duncan, it is true that Duncan was not able to live a life without Alec. Alec is called to the war and his escape from the situation is by committing suicide; Duncan prepares to die with him but just after Alec tears his throat Duncan's father enters the kitchen and saves Duncan, and Alec dies. Suicidal attempts by gays show their stress and the assumption that gays are more feminine than heterosexual men. Duncan also has a gay relation with Fraser on a day when he discloses his mental agony. But Duncan is never pictured as a gay sex lover by Waters. He feels reluctance towards women and is disturbed when the prisoners talk about sex with women, their body and men's sexual fantasies. The discovery of clitoral orgasm by Anne Koedt in her *The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm* has revolutionized the heterosexual norms of sexuality and paved way for lesbian sexuality. For heterosexuals coitus or sexual intercourse is the only appropriate sexual act. In lesbians these inappropriateness vanishes and enjoyment of sex between partners of sex drive becomes approved. Lesbians fear the concept of pregnancy and do not believe in the concept of motherhood. Homosexuals dislike women become pregnant and the excessive hormonal changes that results in several problems such as hair fall, weak health, ageing, altered body shape and loss of youthful beauty.

Another characteristic seen in homosexuals is cross dressing. Cross-dressers are commonly defined as individuals who wear clothing and take on an appearance and behavior appropriate for another gender but not one's own. Kay and Mickey are dressed in male clothes that people mistake them as small boys. Viv also mistakes them as men while taken to the hospital. Viv meets Kay after four years; when Reggie indicates the man in front of their car it is Kay in her male attire. Literature has historically cited sexual excitement as the primary motivation for cross-dressing. But more recent studies conclude that cross-dressing also enables individuals to express another aspect of their identity and to develop a cross-gender identity. The research that has been conducted on female cross-dressers concludes that they feel more comfortable in traditionally male clothing.

Sarah Waters conceptualizes heterosexuality and homosexuality by depicting the actual female experiences in a heterosexual society. She remodels her characters into a new form which discards the identity that society has formulated for women. Waters' homosexual characters in *The Night Watch* are at their attempts to create an altered society which accepts the new sexual life in which homosexuals will be considered normal sexual beings.

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