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Gender identity rebellion in Virginia Woolf's

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Abstract---Great authors have a reputation for being reluctant political allies. They adamantly insist on focusing on aspects of life that no ideologist ever bothers to address. Life never exactly conforms to doctrine, and their art appears to defy ideology completely or subversively in order to find methods to break free from its shackles. Woolf's attitude toward feminism provides readers with an essential example of this resistance. Though Virginia Woolf was extremely concerned about the difficulties of women, particularly literary women, she often disliked being associated with feminists. Instead, she pushes for the transcendence of sexual roles, urging readers to go beyond gender to gain a better knowledge of human existence. Woolf's thesis is echoed by Judith Butler's concept of 'Gender Performativity.

Keywords---ideology, attitude, Woolf's, gender performativity.

Introduction

The weird characteristic of human behavior may be traced back to God's creation of humanity's first parents. God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden after creating them. He also forbade them from eating the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. They just obeyed because they were blissfully unaware, and in their ignorance, they had no concept of good and evil. They were constantly together, and it was in their unity that they experienced exquisite delight. Eve was acting abnormally due to something in her. She desired to perform her work alone, away from Adam. It resulted not only in her succumbing to Satan's seduction, but also in Adam becoming a co-conspirator in her wrongdoing and disobedience to God. If she had not been separated from her Adam, and if Adam had responded negatively to her request, neither would have endured the humiliation of losing their heavenly habitation and bringing death to all mankind. Since then, human beings' attitudes and behaviors to one another in particular situations have constituted intrinsic qualities.

Every human being is subjected to a range of experiences involving his or her mental, bodily, emotional, and social activities during his or her existence on Earth. These experiences must be had by him at various stages of his growth, from birth to adulthood. As he matures, culture, society, values, morals, ethics, and genetics all have an impact on his behavior. His inclination to act according to his likes and dislikes has been engrained in him. Human thoughts and behavior must be decent and kind. It does not suggest that only the most polite and courteous individuals are the greatest to be around. On the BBC's Dinner at Noon broadcast, Alan Bennet claimed that "when people are on their way to work." On the BBC's Dinner at Noon show, Alan Bennet observed that "when individuals are on their best behavior, they aren't always at their best" (1988) because they behave in ways that are consistent with their attitudes and behaviors. Because youngsters are easily affected, they learn by mimicking their elders' words, actions, and demeanor. As infants get older, they intentionally cling to what they have learned via imitation. Parents should provide a good example for their sons and daughters to follow because what they do or say has an impact on their grown-up children's behavior. They will inherit all of their parents' excellent attitudes and behaviors if they respect their children's feelings, recognize their successes, encourage them, show true love and concern for them, and care for their well-being. Talent develops in serene environments suitable for such development in children, but character develops only in quiet settings." "Talent grows in peaceful areas conducive to such growth in youngsters, but character develops only amid the great river of human existence" (Goethe, Torquato Tasso. 45).

Everyone is accountable for the consequences of his or her actions and behaviors. He must recognize that every action will produce both positive and bad results. His positive attitudes and manners result in favorable effects, whilst his bad attitudes result in negative ones. If he ceases to be a good son to his parents and disobeys them, his son will behave in the same manner in which he has acted towards his parents, producing sadness since he has made his parents unhappy with his behavior. This sort of behavior is cyclical in human relationships. When a result, as the children get older, they will exhibit similar behavior, attitudes, temperaments, and responses to their parents. What they exhibit in their behavior is just their parents' personalities. Every human being has a natural urge to not only become rebellious, but also to behave in ways that go against the expectations of others. When Adam shared the forbidden fruit with Eve, he sinned. This trait had always been a part of his personality, and when given the chance, he showed it. As a consequence, every guy possesses both excellent and bad attributes. In his Pudd'nhead Wilson, Mark Twain says: Adam was but human-this explains it all. He did not want the apple for the apple's sake; He wanted it only because it was forbidden (135).

Every human being has a natural urge to not only become rebellious, but also to behave in ways that go against the expectations of others. When Adam shared the forbidden fruit with Eve, he sinned. This trait had always been a part of his personality, and when given the chance, he showed it. As a consequence, every guy possesses both excellent and bad attributes. In his Pudd'nhead Wilson, Mark Twain writes: The personality that finally emerges is largely formed by the environment in which man happens to find himself during his development, by

the structure of the society in which he grows up, by the tradition of that society, and by its appraisal of particular types of behaviour (27).

Attitudes are born out of emotions, which human beings experience and feel. Human beings' attitudes are determined by their emotions, which are reflected in their emotional behavior and responses. As a result, both emotions and attitudes influence their complicated and varied actions, and individuals are ultimately responsible for their reactions. There are men and women in the world who regard every inconvenience as an annoyance. Even waiting on a train is excruciating for such folks. They should remain upbeat in such situations, and they may even turn waiting into a hobby. Gender is not a natural identity. Gender, on the other hand, is performed and reinforced again and over again depending on societal conventions. This gives rise to the concept of gender as well as the illusion of two natural, necessary sexes. In other words, humans 'act' as women or men rather than 'being' women or men, resulting in the creation of gender divisions. If they deviate from practicing their gender correctly, they will face societal repercussions. If gender is performative, it is continually subject to slight changes and continues to define itself.

Gender and gender identity are inextricably linked. Gender as a performative identity does not allow for gender to be viewed as a fixed identity. So, in her work *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf questions the concept of gender identification by depicting the characters as bisexual with androgynous looks. Androgyny, according to Woolf, is the ability of a person of any sex to demonstrate the whole spectrum of human character qualities, despite societal standards and cultural attempts to identify some as exclusively feminine and others as exclusively masculine. "It is deadly to be a man or woman pure and simple: one must be woman-manly or man-womanly," Woolf writes in "A Room of one's own." (Woodfd, p.104)

Clarissa Dalloway has a complex personality. She does not have a definite gender identification. The feminine is typically connected with physical frailty and emotionality, whereas the masculine is typically associated with physical strength and self-reliance. However, Clarissa has so many inconsistencies and contradictions that it is difficult to link her with a certain gender identification. Clarissa reads poetry, and her perceived effeminacy in doing so alludes to a societal discourse. As a result, her act of reading poetry exemplifies the so-called feminine trait and tenderness. Clarissa's close friend Peter Walsh, who formerly loved her passionately, is also her former suitor. When Peter recalls Clarissa's rejection of him, he describes her as cold, cruel, and prude. In contrast to her previous depiction, she is shown here as a woman with so-called male qualities, such as heartlessness and coldness.

Clarissa also believes she has let down her husband, Richard Dalloway, in some manner. She also doesn't get along with her daughter, Elizabeth Dalloway. These two incidents, respectively, underscore her failing femininity as a wife and a mother. On the day of the celebration, Peter finally sees Clarissa after a long time apart. He spends the whole day convincing himself that he no longer loves Clarissa, but he is still drawn to her and longs for a rekindled romance. Even as he organizes his rage against Clarissa and tells her about his new found love, he is unable to hold it in and bursts into tears. Crying is usually associated with

women, but in this case, it is Peter, a so-called guy, who breaks down and weeps, which contradicts the stated standards of male gender. Woolf questions the concept of gender identity once more. Septimus Smith, a World War I soldier, is virtually a carbon copy of Clarissa. He admires nature's beauty, believes he is related to trees, and believes they should not be taken down. He and his wife, Rezia, also manufacture hats. "The leaves were alive, and the trees were alive." And the leaves, which were linked by millions of fibers to his own body on the seat, fanned it up and down; as the branch stretched, he, too, made that remark." (Woodf, p.29)

Woolf was dissatisfied with the binary concept of sexuality as homosexuality or heterosexuality. Such definitions emerge from labeling one side of the sexual experience as "other" or "unnatural," creating the impression that non-heterosexual sexual experiences are inferior. As a remedy to the hierarchies of knowing, the concept of androgyny emerges. As previously stated, gender identities are intrinsically linked to heterosexuality. The characters' androgynous features have undermined the believability of gender identities. When the importance of androgynous experience is acknowledged as a framework for dismantling harmful, repressive, patriarchal notions of sexual experience and orientation, the dichotomy of 'one' (heterosexual) and the 'other' (heterosexual) is broken down (sexual orientations other than heterosexual) will no longer exist. There will be no more stress and anxiety, but rather a welcoming and all-encompassing concept of experience that has no limitations for both men and women.

The tale shows the harm done to individuals when their identities and sexual experiences are suppressed by patriarchal conceptions of gender identity. People who do not fit within the socially constructed framework of gender identification have severe identity crises. Septimus and Clarissa are prime examples of the devastating effect of living in a culture that strictly defines identity and imposes it on people, compelling them to behave accordingly. Both men and women captivate Septimus and Clarissa. When Septimus marries Rezia, he is also acutely aware of his affections for a guy (Evans). As a result, he is perplexed by the duality of his sexual impulses. When society institutionalizes only one component of his sexual orientation, it takes a toll on his mind. Clarissa marries as a method of escaping her real sexual identity (bisexual), which is frowned upon by society. She begins a socially acceptable heterosexual relationship with Richard out of fear. She thinks back on her love affair with Sally and enjoys every second of it by remaining in a marriage relationship with him.

Septimus and Clarissa fulfil a societal obligation by going against their sexual preference, which results in a deadening of the self. It is not just with regards to sexuality that they are repressed, their personalities and aspirations are also restrained in this society where men are required to live up to the expectations required of him such as take part in a war and prove their masculinity, live a proportioned life, make commercial initiatives and women are expected to be angels of the house and not to overstep their bounds by aspiring for entering and making big in social space. In this novel, Septimus though being a male is disinterested in commercial pursuits and forcefully sent to war. His interest lies

in Shakespeare, poetry and hat making which are supposed womanly pursuits and is forced to go to war and make a man out of him.

Clarissa is socially ambitious, which is meant to be a male trait. Both of their aspirations contradict the society's predefined gender identities. Septimus and Clarissa struggle to reconcile the discrepancy between their inner yearnings and the outside self they display for the benefit of society. As a result, Clarissa's entire existence is filled with instability and uncertainty, and Septimus is pushed to the brink of suicide in order to rescue himself. So, by depicting Septimus and Clarissa as androgynous, Woolf labels the notion of gender identity a facade and questions it. She asserts that gender identity conventions are not fixed in stone nor a biological idea. It is after all social and cultural determinants which can be changed for the benefit of human kind.

She opposes feminist views such as Helene Cixous's that a woman must write as a woman and a man as a man. Woolf believes that such a sexual revolution may lead to sexual secession. One who criticizes a work of sex as a sex is simply expressing bitter preconceptions based on whether you are a male or a woman. To identify Woolf's point of view, justifications might be presented from her novel "Mrs. Dalloway." For example, Doris Kilman's mental process is exemplified by the following lines: "If she could hold her, if she could clasp her, if she could make her hers utterly and forever and then die; that was all to see Elizabeth turning against her; to be felt repulsive even by her – it was too much; she could not stand it. The thick fingers curled inwards." (Woolf pp.145). Kilman's sensual coarse vulgar gay longing for Elizabeth may be found in these sentences. The following sentences express Clarissa's desire: "Then came the most wonderful moment of her entire life, passing a stone urn with flowers in it." Sally came to a halt, plucked a flower, and kissed her on the lips. The entire planet may have been flipped upside down! The others had vanished, leaving her alone with Sally." (Woolf, p.42)

In contrast to Kilman's lines, they are a highly emotional description of Clarissa's private time with Sally. We may draw from these two instances that, while they both belong to the feminine gender and share the same sex drive as a common denominator, they approach it in quite different ways. Clarissa's sentiment has a romantic undertone, whereas Kilman's has a sexual undertone. Kilman exhibits characteristics of the so-called masculine gender, whereas Clarissa exhibits characteristics of the so-called feminine gender. So, expecting a woman to write like a woman or a man to write as a man, according to Woolf, would be absurd. By clearly dismissing the distinctive experiences of women as the primary topic of great literature in her essay on George Eliot published in 1925, Woolf speaks out against creating walls between the so-called genders. Her rejection of explicitly feminist ideals is much more apparent in her piece "Three Guineas." She states, Let us create a new ceremony to commemorate this new occasion. What could be more appropriate than destroying an ancient term, a cruel and wicked word that caused much harm in its day and is now obsolete? The term that is indicated is "feminist." According to the dictionary, that word denotes "one who advocates for women's rights." Since the one right, the right to live, has been established, the term has lost its significance. And a meaningless word is a dead word, a rotten word. (Woolf, p 101-102)

When the term "feminist" is obliterated and the air is cleaned, Woolf sees men and women cooperating for the same goal rather than engaging in sexual separatist. Woolf deconstructs the concept of gender identity once further with these enumerations. One of the central ideas of second wave feminism is the promotion of "sisterhood." Woolf was a key figure in the first wave of feminism. Some of the instances she gives in her work appear to indicate that she had recognized the challenges that the notion of sisterhood would encounter in the future, which is none other than women competing with each other, isolating them and preventing them from battling their shared oppressor. "The bizarre thing, in retrospect, was the purity and sincerity of her feelings for Sally." It wasn't like having feelings for a man." (Woolf, p.41)

Clarissa explains in these lines that she and Sally shared something significant since they were both women. She didn't feel competitive with Sally, but rather close, protective, and full of joy and freedom. This story leans toward sisterhood rather than lesbianism. Clarissa only has this feeling of sisterhood with Sally, not with the other women in the narrative, and especially not with Kilman. Kilman frightens her and she despises her. Clarissa describes her deep loathing for Kilman as "it rasped her, nevertheless, to have this horrible creature seething about in her!" to hear branches snap and sense hooves placed deep into that leaf-encrusted woodland, the soul." (Woolf pp.18)

She, too, holds a grudge towards Clarissa. In this novel, Clarissa is considerably more terrified of Kilman than of the men in her life. She sees her as an envious entity that has infiltrated her home like a snake. Her friendship with Kilman appears to be undermining the female comradeship that sisterhood idealizes. Even though the cause for the class difference might be attributed to their antagonism, Clarissa does not appreciate the sensation of sisterhood with persons from her own class. Lady Bruton, the daughter of a general and an upper-class woman, is the Dalloways' acquaintance. She is more interested with British society than with relationships. Clarissa and her don't have anything in common. Lady Bruton does not invite Clarissa to the luncheons she hosts, despite the fact that Clarissa wishes to be there. She, on the other hand, invites Richard to come over. Woolf appears to have foiled the then-future concepts of sisterhood and female comradeship against males in her novel "Mrs. Dalloway." All of these examples demonstrate how Woolf rejected the weight of unqualified feminism. Humanity's consciousness will be lost in the pondering of gender's role. That is why Woolf believes in the transcendence of feminism itself in order to identify the underlying issue of recognizing the dignity of human existence in its inherent freedom.

In this work, Woolf convincingly demonstrates how deceptive the outward self is concerning the inside self. Woolf's use of interior monologues provides significant insights into the characters' secret, inner lives and shows the true identity of people that lies concealed beneath the pretensions of societal positions. Mrs. Dalloway and Septimus are both ardent and sensitive when it comes to the solitude of their souls. Clarissa maintains a veneered demeanor. She keeps her worries contained and manages them in a somewhat organized manner. Septimus' worries, on the other hand, are uncontrollable. They're too hectic and overbearing, and it's beginning to show. Clarissa is deemed normal since she does

not express it, but Septimus is labeled mad because it is evident outside. However, the pain experienced by both of these people is essentially the same. Bradshaw was forced to commit suicide since he was closer to Septimus than he was to Clarissa. Clarissa's inability to commit suicide does not imply that she is unaffected. As a result, this feeling of balance and conversion, whether male or female, shatters people's lives. As a result, Woolf subverts gender identity once more.

In this setting, Edmund Husserl, a German philosopher, developed the concept of phenomenology. Phenomenology is the study of a person's lived experiences in the world, which is viewed as the ultimate source of all meaning and value. The path to a presupposition-free society begins with abandoning the 'natural attitude' of daily knowledge, which presupposes that things are just there in the external world. Philosophers should concentrate on what is inherent in awareness itself, without making assumptions about its origin, qualities, or supports. By writing *Mrs. Dalloway* as a phenomenological book and utilizing it to reveal features of human beings, Woolf questions the presumptions of the so-called masculine and female genders. Woolf did not shy away from criticizing heterosexual married relationships. Mrs. Dalloway depicts how the sexualities of married persons are not dictated by their marital status through the characters of Septimus and Clarissa, since both of these characters have the same sex desire in the novel despite their heterosexual marriages. "The Marriage Plot Is Inevitable: Modernist Novels and the Cultural Imperative to Marry," writes Davida Pines in the introduction to her monograph "The Marriage Plot Is Inevitable: Modernist Novels and the Cultural Imperative to Marry." (See Pines pp.1).

Despite the sexual flexibility and marital unhappiness that it involves, the novel "Mrs. Dalloway" affirms heterosexual marriage as a useful societal institution in the end. Clarissa's testimony below demonstrates this point. "It was because of Richard; she had never been happier." (Woolf, page 181) Woolf appears to be emphasizing the enormous confines of normalcy that the notions of "Proportion" and "Conversion" entail, which pushes individuals to surrender to heterosexual partnerships. At the same time, the novel's exposure of the repercussions of forced heterosexual marriages highlights how hazardous these regularizing forces are for the individuals who encounter them in many forms in their daily lives. Clarissa is uninterested in Richard and nearly regrets marrying him. Clarissa chooses Richard as her partner because he can provide her a conventional life that is less dangerous than a passionate life that Sally may offer. In the instance of Septimus and Rezia, the situation is quite pathetic. Not only Septimus, but also Rezia, suffers as a result of this coupling.

Rezia feels both humiliated and terrified by his behavior and his suicide threats. Septimus is a damaged guy who is unable to have a good connection with his wife. Despite her best efforts to heal him, Rezia is unable to read his anguished psyche. Only after his suicide did Rezia fully understand his contempt for the physicians' "human character" (as Septimus refers to it). Clarissa, Richard, Septimus, and Rezia's marriage relationships are maintained via silence and suicide. As a result of these ties, Woolf focuses on how proportion and conversion perpetuate normal heterosexuality through nonnormative means such as silence and death. Though the heterosexual marriage life is maintained, it does not

provide Clarissa and Septimus with much joy or happiness, regardless of their so-called gender identity. By challenging the concept of heterosexual marital life, Woolf also challenges the legitimacy of gender identification. Woolf demonstrates an indiscriminate embrace of 'everything' in this story. Ideology is the totality of a person's thoughts, beliefs, expectations, and assumptions. Louis Althusser, a French Marxist philosopher, specifically discusses how ideology occurs throughout society and the important role it plays in molding our ideas, actions, and relationships, as well as the social creation of meaning. By inverting gender identity in this work, Woolf highlights the destructive hidden influence of ideologies on society and reveals the revolutionary powers of artistic practice

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