Couples Therapy: Gender and Sexuality in The Sun Also Rises

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**Abstract**

"Isn't it pretty to think so?" The ambiguity of this question, posed by Jake Barnes in the last line of The Sun Also Rises, is a reflection of the novel's evolving definition of what constitutes a relationship. As the focus of Hemingway criticism has slowly broken from tired discussions of misogyny a space has opened for considering the complex ways his writings address questions of gendered identity. Through this lens critics have asked exactly what kind of man and women Jake Barnes and Lady Brett Ashley represent. For decades critics and scholars have viewed this final line as having a negative connotation, signifying the death of love not only in the novel, but in the era. However, this reading fails to take into account the evolving gender roles the Brett and Jake represent. My essay looks at the novel's protagonists not simply as Brett or Jake, but also as Brett and Jake. Through this lens it becomes clear that Hemingway's portrayal of these characters is not one of the "bitch-goddess" and a defeated male, but of two people who, through their rapidly evolving gender roles and sexuality, are uniquely suited to be side by side when the rubble of the fiesta comes crashing down around them, not merely as friends, but as the only relationship that can truly exist.

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The Sun Also Rises book. Read 12,850 reviews from the world's largest community for readers. The quintessential novel of the Lost Generation, The Sun Als... After a while, your eyes start to glaze and your attention wanders: you begin to take in the Belle Époque interior, the cute waiter, the way the afternoon sun casts interesting patterns on the white tablecloth — anything that is more interesting than the dull main narrative. I just didn't care for any of them, and that Brett woman is a biatch. We will also explore various theoretical perspectives on the subjects of gender and sexuality. 12.1. The Difference between Sex and Gender. Figure 12.2. In the past, some anthropologists used the term berdache to refer to individuals who occasionally or permanently dressed and lived as the opposite gender. The practice has been noted among certain Aboriginal groups (Jacobs, Thomas, and Lang 1997). Samoan culture accepts what they refer to as a “third gender.”