



ISSN (Paper) 1994-697X

(Online) 2706 -722X



Sexual Oppression in Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook

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Abstract

The Golden Notebook for Doris Lessing encompasses a complicated sketch that is adopted to show the complexity of life as represented by its characters. However, the concept of this piece of fiction are concerned with oppressed and submissive women. In this novel, the patriarchy of capitalism is depicted, which is for women – by no means disadvantageous. The way people is portrayed by it, is distinguished by male-dominance. This society shows the way women able to show their identity within male-defined relations. According to this assumption, this article deals with the society's standpoint according to feminism ideas, to locate the facades of sexual oppression and how female/woman characters show their resistance to destabilize structure of oppression. The outcome argued that the sexuality is a notable façade of oppression. Here, women's oppression and exploitation by male-dominance that shows discrimination against women as being inferior. In this novel, female characters must cope with a social and institutional form of burden. As a result, these oppressed women can make use of their power and their strife to gain self-identity. Such gains are achieved against the patriarchy

of capitalism. The conclusion/ the outcome shows that Doris Lessing approves what has argued that sexuality is a façade of women's oppression. However, Doris believes that this aspect of females' lives can constitute a part of female power to destabilize the structures of oppression, which have been the main reason in weakening women's personality.

Keywords: Oppression, Sexuality, Identity, Doris Lessing, The Golden Notebook.

Introduction

The famous writer, Lessing the offspring of British parents. She was born in the state Kermanshah, Persia, October 22nd, 1919. A daughter of Alfred Cook Tayler, who was employed at the Imperial Bank of Persia in Tehran. When Doris was five years, her family moved to the town of Banked in the Southern Rhodesia. The appearance of Lessing's first work 'The Grass is Singing' in 1950, was considered a great fame work in literature. The literary studies of Doris are totally astonishing. Lessing shows number of more than eighteen novels, ten collections of short-stories, a number of plays, poems or literary poem and some non-fictional works and an autobiography Going Home. (Arora, 1989)

Her most famous novel is The Golden Notebook, which depicts ideas that concern women's role mid-20th century of Western culture and feminism. However, Lessing has denied the essentiality of feminism in her novel. Lessing in her writing, meticulously scrutinizes themes that is related to sexual oppression of women, their subjugation, their position in society, as well as these women strive to be self-identified and autonomous. The Golden Notebook is an attempt of showing colorful image of the world that has dominated gender-based discrimination. This society is really associated or joined with a male-dominance, where doors of women's autonomy have closed. Lessing has genuinely reflected the personal anguishes and traumas in her works. Such a reflecting of personal anguishes and traumas resulted in the ending of her marriage, which constitutes a major theme in her works. Therefor technique is seen as a passion for Doris and her writings is featured with the real vision of future.

In discussing the artist's role, Sahgal (1970) said that a writer "has a mission.... he has created the vision of the future, he has a dream of his own and to suggest possibilities from it, I think it's the artist's job the writer's job specifically in any society to show the way" (p.3). Doris Lessing is influenced by the times of the WWII and as an outcome of the brutality of the war, its destruction and violence, the way the civilization has declined, the

way the society has fragmented. The recurrent themes in Lessing's novels. A remark of Lessing's fiction, in which it has its encyclopedic range. She has well-treated complex subjects such as the writer's block and schizophrenia, as well as she has dealt with inner space. Michael Thorpe (1978) observed that Lessing is accomplished, versatile and illuminating white African writer in English we have seen, or are likely to see." (p.104).

As accused of her being associated with her personal problems in her writings and using the term autobiographical, Lessing is often applied by way of adverse criticism. Florence Howe (1973) says that: "Doris Lessing's life is the source of her fiction." (p.420). yet, Lessing can face this accusation saying:

"I get impatient with this thing about 'Autobiographical.' You can write about anything you have not experienced, or imagined – it has to your experience, your imagination. Writers pick up ideas that are in the air like an invisible wavelength of ideas" (p.23).

The Novel: The Golden Notebook

Doris Lessing (1973) in the prologue to 'The Golden Notebook', Lessing can set her own case more formally saying that:

"Writing about oneself, one person is writing about others, since your problems, pains, pleasures, emotions--and you're extraordinary and remarkable ideas – can't be yours alone. They deal with the problem of 'subjectivity' . . . into something much larger: growing up is after all only the understanding that one's unique and incredible experience is what everyone shares." (p. 13).

This novel is depicting Anna Wolf's identity. Yet, allocating "the fragmented consciousness of a woman/ female whose impulses as a writer, a socialist, and a person are to unify her personal, social, and fictive experiences" (Spilka, 1975, p.223). The characters of women are explained as "New Women" who stand as separate and unique, because of the shared experiences among them. Such women suffered the same (i.e. being oppressed and subjugated). But, they "increasingly aware of their status in an essentially masculine world" (Schlueter, 1973, p.77).

In this world, oppressive system is characterized by their subject matter to patriarchal and capitalistic relations, in which the societies of such world are dominated and defined by its members' identities. Here, the depiction of male character is shown as animal-like creatures by which that dominate women differently as much as possible. Relations of sexual oppression are appeared as having significant role in such situations in which women's identity is shaped. The excellence that Lessing achieved in delineating political,

psychological and personal issues has led to study them strongly perceptive and deeply insightful. Lessing's peculiar understanding of human relations, and her emphasis on gender oppression of woman in a male-dominated society, makes her be closer in real life.

Review of Literature

Women's position and status in any society – to some extent – are considered or regarded as a sign of the progress. This view is well-articulated in Juliet Mitchell's words (1976), as the "index of human advance." (p. 379). In all democratic countries, equality between the sexes has playing a fundamental role of the social or political ideologies. The concern of feminists has associated with forms of oppression against women. In according to Bunch (1987) feminism, is not simply "a laundry list of so-called women's issues such as childcare and equal pay." (p. 204).

The social disadvantages of women have emphasized by some feminists to seek a change and improve the circumstances that surround women's improvement. This improvement is for equally paid jobs, equal education, and equal distributions of opportunity and financial and legal independence for women. While people seek an eradication of the moral and spiritual dominance of one sex over the other and end gender discrimination. In Lessing's writing, the existing struggle or conflict can seek mutuality and harmony in life. As she is asserted, she does not want to separate female world, but to organize the entire world combines female virtues and morality with male culture for saving it from catastrophe and doom. In the light of feminists' tradition, Lessing's works state that femininity is constructed culturally, not biologically.

Recently, the forms of females' oppression are female infanticide, rape, wife battering, family violence and dowry-related deaths. Practically, women's position and status are still very bad. Even those women are economically independent are no better. Their endurance of burdens is considered or regarded as doubled as per job and of household. For household, they can contribute to workplace, as her treatment happens to be as being inferior. The whims of other family members such as a husband or children are no exceptions of the aforementioned as women have subjected to their husbands' happiness, which is supposed to be the ultimate purpose of woman's life. In America society as a liberated country, women can suffer sexual harassment from their superiors in offices.

Raising Awareness towards Women's Liberation

In the 20th century, women's increasing awareness towards their injustice cause women to stand – via their voice – as opposed to oppression and inequality. Such as situation, caused these oppressed women/ female to revolt against male domination. It is also a main/ the basic cause to the emergence of women's emancipation movement to uplift women in society. In this regard, women can gain their first right when 'A Vindication of the Rights of Women' printed in 1792. Mary Wollstonecraft narrated this manifesto as a really demand for equality of opportunities for women educationally, economically and politically. Wollstonecraft said that "taught from their infancy that beauty is woman's scepter, the mind shapes itself to the whole body, and roaming round its gilt cage, only one arriving in adoring its prison" (p. 131).

John Stuart Mill is strongly advocated women's emancipation, and in his book *The Subjection of Women* (1869), Mill showed/ explained great interest concerning the matters that have been called for by Wollstonecraft states that the urgent need to improve women's education saying that a woman to be dignified, her power of earning is dignified as well. Mill is of the belief that oppressed women was caused by the system condemning it as "domestic slavery". During the period of the industrial development, the emergence of the American Feminism wave in 1800 "provided the context for the first collective assault on traditional ideas about women's place" (p. 24). The present view is proved women's demand for equality in various spheres.

The growth of educational opportunities, in urban areas specifically made women become aware of their justices. To quote Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, "We are necessity of finding and being judged by our own standards as free human beings, voluntarily accepted; we are determined to face the faces of life, to fight the battle of our sex and take the risk" (p.57).

Beauvoir's 'Le Deuxieme Sexe' (1949) and by 1956 the English translation which is appeared to be a chief impact on emancipation of women. Beauvoir is among the first feminists. 'The Second Sex,' de Beauvoir literary studies girls' schooling, female sexuality, marriage, prostitution, and house-work, calling them an unsatisfied kind of work.

Women's failure to occupy their proper position of human dignity as self-determining existents has not circumscribed women's successes. But, it also assisted in rising persistent social patriarchy that affects their sexual relations with men. Men or the male see themselves as the 'subject' and 'absolute' while women are seen as other':

“She is called ‘the sex,’ by which is meant that she appears essentially to the male as a sexual being. For him she is sex - absolute sex, no less.... she is the incidental, as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject or the subject matter and he is the Absolute - she is the other” (p.16)

For de Beauvoir, women’s being subjugated continues and therefore, “we are exhorted to be women, remain women, become the female or women” (p.13). De Beauvoir is of the argument that women’s liberation is concerned with finding professional autonomy and financial independence. She concludes that women/ the female are free from the bonds of slavery. Despite the myths, women/ the female are not weak; nor is there everlasting aggression between the sexes.

The idea of Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* in 1962 is considered as a storm for the American society. In this literary book, the concepts feminism is dated, which had impacted the society tremendously. The book or the literary book is also based mainly on the interviews with Friedan’s classmates, fifteen years after graduation from woman’s college. This book has the challenges for the belief that a woman’s position and status are at her home. As a results, she has fulfilled her responsibilities of motherhood and domesticity. She defines the feminine mystique or the incommunicable quality writing in the preface:

“There was a strange discrepancy between the reality of our lives as women and the image to which we are trying to conform, the image that I can come to call the feminine mystique” (p.9).

Finally, Friedan declares that,

“For woman, as for man, the need for self-fulfilment – autonomy, self-realization, independence, individuality, and self-actualization – it is really an important as the sexual need, with as real serious consequences, when it is thwarted. Woman’ sexual problems are, in this sense, by-products of the suppression of her basic need to grow and fulfil her potentialities as a human being (people), potentialities or the real which the mystique of feminine fulfilment Ignores” (p.282).

In 1969, Kate Millett’s *The Sexual Politics*, believes/ thinks that to free women, and means to free them from long-established subordination, which can bring us to the great deal closer to humanity” (p .363). The idea of oppression of women is traced or related to both individual male malice and to the social structure of patriarchy. As the problem has identified, a woman’s identity was expected to merge with and grow from her role as a wife and a mother. Female and children can grow up with indoctrination which the support

covertly, this ideal as the good woman to aspire for; and they can believe that it is this cultural condition which is the culprit, not any inherent biological differences.

However, as Mitchell and Oakley (1976) explained the

“Concept of sisterhood shows much more than sharing work or responsibility. It can involve are definition of the value and status of personal experience. The personal becomes the political; that is, the nature of women's oppression can be analyzed through the medium of accounts of private experiences” (p. 11).

The basic aim of different or various group feminists is the same (i.e. to liberate women from male oppression promote women’s rights). However, the radicalism people can suggest that woman should not be a slave person in biological advantages. As Angela Weir and the character, Elizabeth Wilson explains that women freedom is an umbrella movement a broad church can be accommodated as a form of feminism (p.148).

Socialist feminists’ writers explain the perception that women’s attitudes or behaviour as inferior is rooted in society. They can explain the operation of hierarchical sexual ordering of the society within the class of society such as the upper, lower and the middle. For these feminists’ writers who rebel against the capitalist system itself will not mean a transformation of the patriarchal ideology. It will struggle or conflict against capitalism and patriarchy. The power of women or the female in society as they can see it, is existed in four basic structures: those of production, sexuality and socialization of children.

Marilyn French states in hers *Beyond Power: On Women, Men and Morals* has presented similar opinions or views opinion in a different way. She shows/ explains feminism as “a political movement is demanding access to the rewards and responsibilities of the male world, but it is more: it can a revolutionary moral movement, aiming to use political power to transform society, to ‘feminize’ it”. Lynne Segal also (1987) in a similar way in her study is the *Future Female? Troubled Thoughts on Contemporary Feminism*, challenges the feminist orthodoxies on marriage, motherhood, and female sexuality. She can mention that understanding the power relations between both men and women or male or female means a deep look at the diverse patterns. Those real patterns or items of domination and exploitation in the home and at work culturally and politically. The character, Segal can indicate that saving the new world from destruction, is to give feminine values equal significance along with the masculine values.

Role of Feminist Literature in Liberating Women

The feminist studies/ woman studies can play its essential role or basic in foregrounding the feminine values. In feminist literature, woman's experience becomes occupies the core concern. Through this literature, women or female can search the myth that man is the typical of humanity. Then, woman or the female character is always presenting the passive. Therefore, female authors or writers are needed to record their own writing so as to provide centrality to woman in every way. Many authors state that the advent of women's liberation movement talked about women's injustice in the male-dominated society. Particularly, in the 19th century, women writers or female such as Jane Austen, and Woolf tackle some of the feminist and the social issues in their writings. The 20th century is dramatically witnessed a more apparent attempt for female to be speaker of their selves and of the real experience which is related to them.

From the feminist angles or sides, the literary figure, the character, Woolf is presented literature very significantly. For Woolf, literature is regarded/considered as a cultural product, which can be changed and open up new possibilities where their voice can be granted. From their side, women in their works, discovered it is the critical to show their feelings and emotions rather than actions. As their writing shows the differences or various in male and female experience in literature. Woolf (1965) state:

There is the obvious difference of experience in the first place; but the essential difference lies in the fact not that men reveal battles and the female the new- born of children, but that each relation describes itself. (p.26)

The playwright, Woolf is suggested or revealed the necessity of a feminine prose or a woman's sentence free from the limitations of grammar. It has a flexible style to show female experience. This prose can challenge the authority or the responsible of which is called grammatically correct sentence. This real convention of experiments with language is carried on by many women writers/ female writers such as Lessing. The modern literary critics like Showalter acclaims that women writers or female writers may present a vocabulary of portraying the female sexual behavior overtly. This vocabulary team will also explain them misogynistic male sexual issues. In astonishing condor, Lessing in The Golden Notebook shows the female sexual experiences, which can shock for a male reader or writer.

In resulting from the feminist literary movement or the studies of the 60s, a new approach to study literature evolved, which well- is known (famous) as feminist literary critique or Woman's Studies movement. Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1970) narrate or inform that women's oppression has politically and socially by patriarchal system. Sex is regarded or considered as a means of domination, which can present the way this ideology is present in the works of D.H. Lawrence, Miller and Genet. As an emphasis on the political nature of feminist criticism. The writer (1986) is defined the feminist criticism or feminist literary criticism as follows:

'Feminist criticism can be defined as the specific form of political discourse or the critical and theoretical practice or the real practice is acted to the struggle or conflict against and sexism, not simply a real concern for gender (male or female) in literature, at least not if the latter is presented as no more or less than another or other interesting critical approach on a line with a concern for sea-imagery or metaphorical of war in medieval poetry. This is of course, different political perceptions within the feminist camp. My personal point of view is simplified to insist that recognizable feminism criticism theory must / should in some way be relevant to the study of the social, Institutional and personal power relations between the sexes (p.204).

The author is distinguished or the real differentiated between the often-confused terms 'feminist' and 'femaleness'. Feminism or the feminist is described as "a political situation", femaleness as a subject -matter of biology a 'femininity' as a set of cultural aspects or forms which is defined/explain the characteristics. Insisting the necessary in analyzing the opposition between 'masculine' and 'feminine' values, the writer states the political force and reality of such categories. Working with women writers or the female do not essentially represent or present in patriarchal commitment. A political promise is regarded or regarded as the part of a feminist critic to fight or struggle against all forms of oppression against women. With the educational background, Lessing takes place to her women characters to show the conflict with a narrow-minded society and depict her struggle against such society. Though her novels or literary study which focuses on the suffering of women within marriage, yet there is trail to condition or real condition of her personality or privately along sexist lines before marriage.

In her novels, Doris presents the way women are brought up before marriage under strict traditions. When a girl (the lady) reaches or search her adolescence, she is recalled of her femininity. The double standards continue to operate throughout a woman's life start right

in her parents' home. Her individuality is prevented from being developed or presented. She is remembered by her mother that being a girl is destined for man. Thus, a woman or the female in a male-dominated society is conditioned into the emotional or cognitive traits of subordination and dependence (p.118).

Marriage as a Form of Oppression for Women

Sheila Rowbotham (1974) in her book *Women, Resistance and Revolution*, she is used the term “colonized” to present women’s oppression in the society. Row Botham cites “economic dependence,” “cultural takeover” and “the identification of dignity with resemblance to the oppressor” as some of the “similarities or differences which exist between the colonization of the underdeveloped country and female oppression and the oppression of woman” (p.201).

J. S. Mill (1974) is regarded or considered that marriage as the worst form of slavery for women. He reported that “no slave or black person is a slave person to the same lengths, and in so full or complete a sense of words, as a wife is” (p. 207). The idea of marriage is explained or studied by sociologists such as “cultural phenomenon which sanctions a more or less permanent union among partners conferring legitimacy on their offspring” (p. 127). Prior to marriage, the female or woman is made by her parents and after marriage, as Balzac mentions it “a wife is what her husband or lover makes her” (p.484). Earlier in her works, Lessing explains that marriage is portrayed or described as an institution that represses women’s emotions. For Lessing’s characters such as Turner, Martha, Ella and Anna, they are considered as the victims of gender-oppression. Yet, a refusal is presented by most of these women to accept the polarization of sexes. They intend/ wanted to define themselves away from men and to seek their own identity and individuality in their own way. Having realized that they can use and abuse, women rebel against and against the tradition of being submissive, their identity, individuality and consciousness, which are basics for women’s liberation.

Actually, the basic issue or the social issues for these oppressed women is to complete the emotional needs rather than to gratify their sexual urges in practicing their sexual freedom. In Lessing’s *The Golden Notebook*, the men who come to Anna and Ella are really married, however, they may look for sex intercourse to complete their marriage. Even in the tolerant western society, the wife’s sexual freedom is unacceptable and cause her persecution and

torture. In *The Golden Notebook*, the character, Paul feels jealous of his mistress Ella, thus he can accuse her of having relations with other men. He can use the phrase “your literary lunches” for her betrayals (p.24). He often accuses her of being as the eye at men whom she in fact “has not noticed” (p. 212).

In a simultaneous way, the character, Paul is in a sexual relation with Ella, besides his wife. Again, he has another affair with Stephanie, his colleague. However, he is obsessed with jealousy because of Ella’s love affairs. As far as his wife is concerned, the character, Paul is impervious to her emotional needs. She is nothing with him than, but an instrument of delivering and nurturing babies.

The character, Paul is abandoned his silence, submissive and homely wife, Muriel to sleep with his ‘smart, gay, sexy mistress’ Ella. When Ella addresses or mentions simple clothes, Paul informs her that she looks like a “severing school mistress”. However, the character, Ella can switch over of revealing clothes, such as low-cut blouses, the character, Paul feels jealous of her smart seductive looks. For man or female he likes his woman to be strong or hunt for him and cold to other men. Sexual pleasure or romantic relation is shown as a male privilege and woman’s claim is aroused his anger, and he denies feminine sexuality of the characters in society.

Simone de Beauvoir very effectively brings out the unfortunate state of women in marriage:

“It is the duplicity of the husband that dooms the wife or his beloved to a misfortune of which he complains later that he is himself the victim. Just as he wants her to be at once warm and cool in bed, he is required her to be wholly his and yet no burden; he wishes or desire her to find him in a fixed place on earth and to leave him free, to be always at hand and never importunate.; he likes to have her all to himself and not to belong to her; to live as one of a couple or to remain alone. (p.497).

The Double Standards

In the presenting, the double standards, hypocrisies and indifference of men against women are further exposed in *The Golden Notebook* in impressive manner. After leaving both his wife and sons, Richard is really married or be in love. Marion and has children from his second marriage. Nevertheless, Richard, still looks for sexual pleasure or desire with his secretaries and has a succession of girls. Marion, his wife or beloved is treated like a host for his high-class dinner parties. She is not as a human being who is need for man’s love. She can reduce to the status of a “nursemaid for the children” (p. 277) and occupies a “position as prisoner” (p.376) in her home.

When the character, Marion has complained about his girls or the female and the character, Richard asks her to be in love. And when a man explains his interest to her and is presented to marry, the character, Richard is obsessed by jealousy. Molly, Richard's first wife disappears because of his treatment of Marion as a "stupid and insensitive woman" (p. 49) and for his hypocrisies:

.....You were worried about her being unhappy? Said Molly, laughing contemptuously. 'No, your vanity was hurt. You can work really hard to make her in love with you again and again, it was all jealous actions and love and kisses until that moment she broke it off with him finally. And you think it's so unjust that Marion is unhappy and makes scenes and drinks more than is good for her. (p. 48)

Situation towards the concepts of Love and Marriage

The author Lessing's women can see at love affairs a basic need. Both marriage and remarriage for her women/ female is not to gratify their sexual urges or sex intercourse, but they strive for love that is supposed to be based on fully understanding, sharing and participation. But in a male-dominated society, as Friedan (1971) can state that "The concept of love affair is explained at least for women/female, as a complete merging of loss of discriminated 'togetherness', give up of individuality rather than a strengthening of it." (p. 280).

The concept of sex or sexuality is regarded as "essentially emotional" for women or the female characters as Ella states it in *The Golden Notebook*. In women "sex hunger" arises out of "emotional hunger". For female or women, the concept of sex or sexuality is not enjoyed unless love exists or happened. All men and male characters is depicted or portrayed by the author, Lessing, is largely irredeemable philanderers. Though these men or the male are can married, this would not prevent them to keep a number of affairs secretly. Being bored or boring with his wife, Paul, in *The Golden Notebook* the character, Paul is presented his nights with the character, Ella at her house. All thoughts or ideas are reacted /arrived to the warmth of his affair warmly and is not be imagined as living without him, at last Paul frees her, as he puts it, for "other boy-friends" (p. 208).

Two types of women or female are emerged in Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*. The self-reliant, individual and independent like Martha, Anna, and Ella who can reject the conventions and strive to find / discover their self-identity. The other who belongs their older generation, are characterized of being conventional and conforming to the traditional

values, like Mrs. Quest, Mrs. Maynard, Talbot in *A Proper Marriage*. Their belief or thought in real suffering is a key factor in their lives and have agreed their destiny according to these terms.

Segregation in human relationships is by the contemporary feminists or the presented as disposed for humanity. They can appeal for traditionalism to the old-fashioned values of mutuality. In this regard, Marilyn French (1986) is used the term “felicity” as the important connotation to all the qualities which can sweeten life for the idea of marriage” (p. 479).

Conclusion

The feminist literary movement or literature studies is studied literature in the light of its ideology. Literary texts are analyzed to discover women’s position, role and status in the text. It has found by the feminist critics that women’s relegation, repression and silence are fundamental issues in these texts. Therefore, the basic goal of feminist criticism is to reinterpret these works of both sexes for a better exposition of misconceptions and culturally conditioned responses. Feminist criticism plays the vital role in the political discourse that stands against patriarchy and sexual oppression.

As a result, this article or literary studies is studied Lessing’s *The Golden Notebook* from the Feminist perspective. In this novel, a resemblance of Lessing’s experiences in terms of themes, characters, situations. It is revealed the issues in concern as Lessing has perfectly handled woman’s question in a sexist society. Thus, the literary analysis of this novel is shown the fundamental experiences shared by all women or the female characters. These real experiences exceed class, gender, race, classes color, identity or ethnicity. Consequently, it further recommends the capabilities of the international and cultural friendship, comprehension and understanding.

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القمع الجنسي لدى دوريس ليسينغ في روايتها الكتاب الذهبي

رنا علي مهودر

المستخلص

يشتمل الكتاب الذهبي لدوريس ليسينج على وصف معقد تم اعتماده لإظهار تعقيد الحياة كما تمثلها شخصياتها. ومع ذلك ، فإن مفهوم هذه القطعة من الخيال يهتم بالنساء المضطهدات والخاضعة. في هذه الرواية ، يتم تصوير النظام الأبوي للرأسمالية ، وهو أمر غير موات بأي حال من الأحوال. الطريقة التي يصور بها الناس ، تتميز بهيمنة الذكور. يظهر هذا المجتمع الطريقة التي تستطيع بها النساء إظهار هويتهم في إطار العلاقات التي يحددها الذكور. وفقا لهذا الافتراض ، تتناول هذه المقالة وجهة نظر المجتمع وفقا لأفكار النسوية، لتحديد واجهات القمع الجنسي وكيف تظهر الشخصيات الأنثوية / النسائية مقاومتها لزعة استقرار بنية القمع. جادلت النتيجة بأن النشاط الجنسي هو واجهة ملحوظة للقمع. فهنا، اضطهاد المرأة واستغلالها من قبل هيمنة الذكور التي تظهر التمييز ضد المرأة على أنه أقل شأنًا. وفي هذه الرواية، يستلزم من الشخصيات النسائية التعامل مع شكل اجتماعي ومؤسسي من العباء. ونتيجة لذلك، يمكن لهؤلاء النساء المضطهدات الاستفادة من قوتهم وكفاحهم للحصول على هوية ذاتية. يتم تحقيق هذه المكاسب ضد النظام الأبوي للرأسمالية. وختاماً تُظهر دوريس ليسينج توافقها على ما جادل بأن الجنس هو واجهة لقمع المرأة. ومع ذلك، تعتقد دوريس أن هذا الجانب من حياة الإناث يمكن أن يشكل جزءاً من قوة الإناث لزعة استقرار هياكل القمع، والتي كانت السبب الرئيسي في إضعاف شخصية المرأة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القمع الجنسي ، الجنس. الهوية ، دوريس ليسينج ، الكتاب الذهبي.