

UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA NSUKKA

FACULTY OF ARTS

ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES

**DISCUSS GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN ANY TWO COMEDY
WORK YOU HAVE READ.**

COURSES: MODERN COMEDY: MOLIERE TO SOYINKA

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Gender in George Bernard Shaw's play *Arms and the Man*.

The term gender is those socially approved roles, behavior, actions and features that are considered socially fit for both men and women. Gender is those differences between men and women that deliberately gives favor to one group and disfavor to another. It defines human behavior and also self.

In studying of the text, *Arms and the Man*, gender or sexes is visible. Shaw, pictures gender role in characters like Catherine, Sergius, Petkoff, Louka and others. Louka portrays strong and in fact masculinity more than Nicola. She reveals her control through her interaction with Sergius, how she succeeds in controlling his feeling and winning his her over Raina and also Nichola.

Mrs. Petkoff also shows masculinity in controlling house hold works in absence of her husband Mr. Petkoff. She supported in the idea of giving Bluntschli a fugitive her husband's coat in other to save him.

Nicola is a principled male servant of Petkoff household and Louka is a beautiful maid and Nicola's fiancée. Nicola has his ambitions and wants to be a businessman, when he realizes that Sergius has romantic desire to Louka, he decided to have Louka as a customer rather than a wife. So he encourages her to be Engaged with Sergius. He prefer to have a customer like Louka in his business rather than worry about his engagement with her. He is ready to separate from

Louka and encourage her to do it only for his ambitions. On the other side, Sergius prefers Louka to Raina when noticed Raina's hidden secret of chocolate cream soldier, he announced his engagement with Louka who is a lady like Raina now. Again, Shaw says that Sergius uses Louka as a means for understanding Raina's secret when Raina refuses that Sergius should romance her, she leaves the room and Louka enters and tells Sergius Raina's secret without saying the name of his rival. Sergius tries to understand it while he accidentally bruises Louka's arm. He apologizes but Louka asks him to kiss her arm.

Here, Louka is viewed as ambitious and not satisfied with the level she is as a maid rather, she desires to do her best in order to attain that high class, while Nichola is contented with being a male servant, is considered good and principled. Captain Bluntschli is a runaway soldier who trickily filled his gun with chocolate cream instead of bullets, he comes back with Petkoff's coat because he likes Raina and is eager to meet her again and have a dialogue with her. Shaw further shows the impoliteness of Petkoff towards women when he blames his wife's chronic sore throat on washing her neck every day. He refuses to adopt to her wife's new system of ringing bell for calling, he prefers to shout the names of his servants.

Sergius pretends to love Raina because he wants to please social class of the Victorian period, but the fact is that he truly love Louka a female maidservant in Petkoff's household.

These are the gender roles or behaviors of the characters in *Arms and the Man*.

Sexuality in *Mandragola* by Nicholo Machiavelli

Sexuality according to Longman dictionary of contemporary English explains that it is thing people do, think and feel that are related to their sexual desires.

Sexuality is also sexual feelings and emotions towards people either male or female or to married people.

The *Mandragola*, is a comedy, tells the story of a young Florentine, Callimaco, who has sexual feelings for a married woman Lucrezia, who is barren for some years. This made the husband Nicia to be very ambitious to having a child; he is deceived by callimaco who is madly in love with his wife this infatuation made him to refuse going back to Florence until he gets what he wants.

In fact, Lucrezia's honesty is Callimaco's biggest problem, she is married to a lawyer, Messer Nicia, and Callimaco will have to corrupt this honorable woman in order to have her. To add to his problems, Lucrezia doesn't leave the house much. But he asserts that against all odds, he (callimaco) will try to fulfill his desire, this shows Machiavellian principle of getting what you want in any way or any how you want to.

He pretends to be a doctor and convinces Messer Nicia that he can give his wife a good drug that will make her conceive and have a child, because he is ambitious

and eager to have a child by all means he accepted. But, Callimaco tells him that when his wife takes the medicine (mandragola), that anybody that sleeps or have sex with the woman first will die.

Messer Nicia goes down to the street in search of any common man who will sleep with his wife and die, he finds somebody but it was Callimaco in disguise, he brought Callimaco instead. Now finally, he has gotten what he wants and desire. Funnily, Lucrezia, even after discovering about Callimaco's trick, continues in love with Callimaco, thereby deceiving Messer Nicia all the while.

This text portrays sexuality in all ramifications, though it is driven by selfish desire.