

**UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA**

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**DEPARTMENT OF ARTS EDUCATION (ENGLISH)**

**TOPIC**

**THE PRESENTATION OF GENDER AND  
SEXUALITY IN ANY TWO MODERN COMIC WORKS**

**AN ASSIGNMENT WRITTEN IN PARTIAL  
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF THE  
COURSE ELS 242(MODERN COMEDY)**

**BY**

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## **COMIC BOOK; LION AND THE JEWEL BY WOLE SOYINKA AND AN IDEAL HUSBAND**

Soyinka in his work did not consider women; he consciously represents the male character as strong, powerful and metaphorically as a LION-a symbol of irresistible power. The men in the play like Baroka is represented as initiator of action and commander-in-chief, the king while their female counterparts Sidi and Sadiku are represented as the goals and beneficiaries of men's actions and associated with processes of sensing and emotion.

This is also seen in Baroka who had practiced polygamy. Polygamy shows how men have authority and power over women by having multiple wives and making subservient to them. In addition, Baroka seduces Sidi with wise words that went to show how knowledgeable and educated he is.

In Illungunle's society women are not supposed to be as educated as men, they are to be educated in domestic areas. In the beginning of the play, we see Sidi carrying a bucket of water on her head, which indicates the preparation for housework. In this society, women are expected to clean the house, cater for the children and prepare the family food while men went out to work and cater for the well-being of the family. The domestic roles, which are expected of the women, are also seen through the character of Sadiku the wife of the village king, Baroka.

Women are expected to be obedient to the rules of the men and appease their desire as the men please; the men dictate their way of dressing, speaking and behavior. Sadiku does this by maintaining the household and raising the children and catering for her husband's needs. An instance is seen when her husband pretended to be sad from losing his manhood, she massaged his feet in order to soothe him, it was also her duty to fetch new wives for her husband.

She speaks only when given permission to speak and this is shown when she entered the king's chamber and addressed him as "My Lord", and only continued speaking after he said, "you have my leave to speak".

Baroka's authority is shown in the way he has great control over his wives and the manner in which they obey without hesitation. This is also seen when Sadiku his favorite wife was shaving his armpit hair, desperate for his approval and when she cut him, he sent her away abruptly.

Women in the play are seen as inferior, this is also seen in Sadiku the eldest wife whose job is to meet up with the demands of her husband not withstanding her opinions.

All this evidences in the play all point at the same thing-Men are more respected and seen as an authority and the Head, while women as seen as the weaker, lower and lesser half-the Tail in the society.

However, in “Ideal husband”, gender and sexuality that is shown there is that of feminist in nature, women are able to contribute positively in the society and express their opinion, they also fight for their respect. Though this is not fully granted to them but to some an extent, it is better than LION AND JEWEL where women were submissive to their husband. In Ideal husband, much emphasis is given to material things .The male character is able to exert agency over their material acquisition. The female character are trapped by object representation Therefore, the female character identity is only mutable so far as their permutation of identity favor the evolving and adapting male character .women strength are shown in case of Mrs. Cheveley when she blackmail sir Robert into supporting a fraudulent scheme to build a Canal in Argentina . This is a typical example where women express their full strength and power over men

Again, lady Chiltern expresses her feelings for Goring after the husbands secret was revealed to her. She writes letter to Goring, which exposes her love to Goring .Mabel Chiltern, also shows her own desire to express her identity with her attire. Gertrude does not want her to wear anything but pearls, which he believes is more purity but Mabel resist and stick to her desire.