

novels don't
talk but
authors do.

TII

italize

Homosexuality in Pat Barker's *Regeneration*

Regeneration is a novel that talks about the different experiences that former war soldiers go through after their experiences in the war. For most of the time, a lot gets revealed through their admission into the post-war health facility where they are treated by Dr. Rivers and ^{the} six doctors ~~and some nurses take care of them~~. It is a series of emasculating moments for them as their experiences ^{are} ~~characterize~~ ^{by} with screams and insecurities as well as fear. One other theme that stands out is the intimate relationship seen between some of these men. It is ~~however not~~ obviously ~~stated for reasons that I believe are based on the particular period that the books is~~ ~~written in~~. The given time is one ^{when} ~~which~~ the society does not condone homosexual relationships ~~and~~ especially among men in uniform. Pat Barker takes us through a series of instances when the relationships are highlighted ^{Unclear Auk} to those that assumptions are formed about because of the fear of rebuke.

Spacing?

In the book, the first sense of a sexual relationship is seen between Sassoon and Graves. On the ninth page, Sassoon gets too excited ^{Seeing} to see Graves, and it is evident that Graves ^{PT} did not just come to see Dr. Rivers about Sassoon's case, but he also ^{came} to see his friend. The nature of their relationship is questionable especially when they talk about their wounds (Barker 32). Sassoon gets uncomfortable when he indicates that had Graves' injury been between his legs

Always
leave
yourself
out of
it

Books don't link, discuss, state
But authors do.

then ... he leaves the statement hanging. It shows his discomfort on the topic and probably ^{with} the society does not approve of such talks, and that is the reason why he keeps it ^{that} ~~pending~~ ^{silent}. The book also links Sassoon to Owen who is initially intrigued by the Soldier's skill in poetry. At their first encounter, there is an awkward moment in Sassoon's room where they overindulge on issues relating to his poetry, and there is an uncomfortable feeling between them. They, however, become closer, and the relationship moves from mentorship to friendship. Owen, later on, develops strong romantic feelings towards Sassoon.

Give a quote from this secret to back up what you are writing

Due to the delicacy of the issue, people are not very upfront about it and Sassoon does not clearly reveal his intimate identity with anyone until he briefly hints it to Dr. Rivers (Barker 54). They laugh it off. This scene, however, has significant meaning in the understanding of the issue. Sassoon says that his sexual orientation is secret and if exposed is likely to disqualify him from military service. It is probable that the society, within which the book is set in, is one which associates homosexuality with social unconformity. For that reason, those who are homosexuals are likely to keep their status as secretive as they possibly can. Graves who is also in a relationship with a different man eventually gets into a relationship with a woman so as to look normal before the public eye. He goes as far as saying that the tendencies of people to get into relationships with each other are disgusting and abnormal (Barker 202). For that reason, Graves ends his romantic relationship with the male soldier as he is afraid of being persecuted for his homosexuality by the public. For Sassoon, this further makes him feel out of place, as he has no heterosexual feelings at all.

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to
Ave + unclear
who? Sassoon or Owen?
who? Sassoon or Graves?

The other issue that comes out clearly in this book is that of the role of women in the sexual orientation of the men in uniform. As expressed by Owen in his poems, women have left the men to glow in their heroic status. Through the trench poems by both Owen, it is evident that

and who else?

the women do not care about the male suffering and therefore leaving the men to do as they please (Campbell 839). Such conditions are a contributing factor towards men turning into homosexuals. Men will turn to follow men for consolation at times of their suffering as it is them that understand them better.

Contrary to the expectations of the society about the men in combat, the war environment provided an atmosphere that was efficient for these relationships to take place (Barker 70). Through Billy Prior, the reader is taken through the tactics that the soldiers used to battle with the French. They hid in dark trenches throughout the day and partially at night before they could launch their attack. Prolonged encounter with these men in such conditions can be seen to favor the development of these relationships. The soldiers are, however, shy to admit such feeling or even publicly display any form of affection as they are afraid of public ridicule. For soldiers who dared expose their homosexuality, serious consequences were attached to the act, and they included being expelled from military service, public shaming and being arrested.

One theory that guides homosexuality is the gender invasion trope (Campbell 828). It is where there is an intermixture of one sexual body with another body's psyche. What this implies is that the soldiers can see each other from a feminine perspective, which is also a mental scenario and not entirely caused by one's physical attributes. This can be attributed to the fact that the men are secluded with fellow men for a prolonged period. Finally, Pat Barker has successfully highlighted some of the issues that these groups of soldiers went through and through the character, the reader can grasp the feelings of the society towards the issue of homosexuality.

Work cited

Barker, Pat. *Regeneration*. New York: Plume, 1991. Print.

Campbell, James S. "For You May Touch Them Not': Misogyny, Homosexuality, and the

Ethics of Passivity in First World War Poetry." *ELH*, vol. 64, no. 3, 1997, pp. 823-842.

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- ① You made some good points, but you also need to address several errors
- ② You need to find another secondary source. Use Macgill.
- ③ Bring by either the BSL or the regular WHTC for help with revision.

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