

**GENDER ISSUES IN CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD'S NOVEL
ALL THE CONSPIRATORS: SOME REFLECTIONS.**

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ABSTRACT

Christopher Isherwood is one of the most creative writer and a remarkable force in the contemporary literary scene of twentieth century fiction. His novels are largely based on his own experience. They are monumental and autobiographical. They are social and spiritual chronicles of his time.

Christopher Isherwood's novel *All The Conspirators* explores English middle class malaise in 1920s Edwardian society. The central figure Philip Lindsay was deeply influenced by his mother, Mrs Lindsay. Philip forms the basis for intellectual young generation of twenties, who tries to prove himself in the public world of crisis. He wants to give up his job, because of his interest in art and literature and sought to earn his livelihood by painting and writing. His mother strongly protests against Philip aesthetic concerns. Whenever Philip fights to throw off the oppressive power of the mother, Mrs Lindsay exerts her domination on Philip making him feel that he is delicate and prone to get ill more easily. She wants Philip to remain her child forever. Whenever Philip rebels against her to ascertain independence, she instantly attributes a breakdown in her health and pretends to be bedridden. All attempts of Philip to run away from home fails. Mrs Lindsay feels confident and cheerful for her triumph over Philip..

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Christopher *Isherwood* is one of the most creative writer and a remarkable force in the contemporary literary scene of twentieth century fiction. His novels are largely based on his own experience. They are monumental and autobiographical. They are social and spiritual chronicles of his time.

The Gender issues have essentially been born out of inequality, discrimination, insecurity and violence against the same gender or the opposite gender across the world. Gender disparities persists and pervasive in state and public institution, private, social, economic and political life of the individual.

The dawn of 20th century witnessed the rise of dynamic middle class, unparalleled industrial progress and prosperity. The First World War removed the guarantee of the safety and progress. The faith and complacency of the middle class was severely shaken because of wastage of sacrifice, bloodshed and wealth. The period witnessed new generation claimed full liberties. Spiritual degeneration, tendency to question made the youth of the age taste the forbidden pleasures. Women achieved equal status on par with men in all aspects of life. The male domination involving use of force with an intention to maintain gender dominance is over thrown.

Women began to play a dominant role in the family, as world war-1 left them as widows and became single parents, taking care of children and their needs. Many men left their families or occasionally visit as industrial development left them jobless.

E.M.Forster was to remain most influential figure in Christopher Isherwood's literary life. E.M.Forster and his anti-heroic approach to the modern novel influence Isherwood and plan to write neo – forsterian novel "All the Conspirators" in 1928.

The central figure Philip Lindsay ran away from home to Island of Scilly to do ever interesting painting work and dreams of doing business with them. "I want to do picture – post cards, sunsets, cows crossing a stream, Yes and hunting scenes, children making daisy, a cat with her kittens. I shall do five or six right off now that I 've started...at any rate, it would show mother that I mean business". Philip forms the basis for intellectual young generation of twenties who tries to prove himself in public world of crises.

Philip never wants to go back to his home. Philip without any hesitation and reluctantly says " I sometimes wonder whether one will ever go back to that house ". But his attempts to escape from home did not succeed for many days. Philip earlier worked in an insurance office. He was there for 4 years, since he passed the Matric. He never went to public school because he " had rheumatic fever twice"

Philip in a fit of anger caused by his friend Allen's misbehaviour, he returned home on the next day. Philip reveals to his sister Joan his intentions " I am going to write and paint" Philip's character has a nostalgic appeal which forms the basis for the character of twenties,. Brian Finny remarks that Philip " does offer a key to the attitude of intellectual young generation of the 1920s".

Philip Lindsay is deeply influenced by his mother Mrs. Lindsay. She exerts her domination on Philip making him feel that he is delicate and prone to get ill more easily. She wants Philip to remain her child forever. She actively encourages childish urges. More over Mrs. Lindsay is not happy with the way he plans his future and responds with harsh and unpleasant replies. Philips father's friend Mr. Langbridge, fails to convince obstinate Mrs. Lindsay about Philip strong aesthetic concerns. Finally Philip rejoined the job which he left and ran away, which makes Mrs. Lindsay feel that he did settle in right way. Naivety has been the pervading style of the thirties which Isherwood derived from E.M.Forster. Bernard Bergonzi writes " the calculated simplicity and naivety we find in the central figure".

Victor, who has become intimate to the family arranges a job for Philip at plantation in Africa (Kenya) Joan does not encourage this because, she considers it is fatal for Philip. He runs away from home for the prospects leaving a note behind, On the way having drenched in rain, he catches Rheumatic fever and return home in a wheel chair, who needs continuous support of someone.

Mrs. Lindsay is the novel put herself subjective to the odds of destruction of the son by the evil mother. Isherwood depicts the undeclared, never ending war fare between mother and son. Shelley calls " A great war between the old and young" the conspirators – Philip and Joan fight to throw off the oppressive power of their mother. She pretends annoyed for Philips venture . Whenever Philips rebels against her to ascertain independence, she instantly attribute a break down in her health and pretends to be bedridden. She is such an obstinate and stanch women, who well uses the modern artist's defenses such as silence and cunning throughout the novel. Brian Finney points out , according to the myth of the twenties , Mrs. Lindsay is " like a old men who sent their sons of to die in the war to prolong their possession of power she is unknowingly sacrificed her son to preserve her own raison d'être as a mother and head the family" . Philips attempts to run away from home fails twice. Mrs. Lindsay feels confident and cheerful for her triumph over Philip. In the words of victor " she is radiant , she looked years younger, she no longer seem slightly timid, slightly apprehensive of something unpleasant about to happen. She was confidently gay". Christophers Isherwood's use of Forster's informality of approach is responsible for curious blend of violence and Pathos in the novel.

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