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## Neil LaBute's *Some Girl(S)*: A Study of Gender

**Ina'm Munther Num'an\***

Tikrit University- College of Education for Women- English Department  
<mailto:inaam.munther@st.tu.edu.iq>

&

**Prof. Ansam Riyadh Abdullah Al-Maarroof**

Tikrit University- College of Education for Women- English Department  
[Sbc.s5@tu.edu.iq](mailto:Sbc.s5@tu.edu.iq)

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### **Abstract**

This paper about Neil LaBute's play, *Some Girl(S)* tries to reveal the repressive aspect of the male characters' adherence to established gender norms by examining the performance of *Some Girl(S)*. To uncover why the male characters in LaBute's works attempt to conceal their emotional selves, the author analyses them through the lens of Judith Butler and other gender theorists. In general, LaBute criticises conventional performance for stimulating change as a response to the prevalence of dangerous males and the generally negative ramifications of their positions. This change is needed because dangerous males dominate conventional performance. To illustrate this issue, LaBute draws on a substantial repertoire of different methods.

**Keywords:** Gender, Sex, Judith Butler, Neil LaBute, *Some Girl(s)*, Drama.

\*-Corresponding Author: Ina'm Munther Num'an, E.Mail: <mailto:inaam.munther@st.tu.edu.iq> ,  
Affiliation: Salahadin University - Iraq

## مسرحية نيل لابوت "بعض الفتيات": دراسة جندرية

انعام منذر نعمان

جامعة تكريت

و

أ. د. انسام رياض عبدالله

جامعة تكريت

### المستخلص

تحاول هذه الورقة التي تتناول مسرحية نيل لابوت ، "بعض الفتيات" ، الكشف عن الجانب القمعي لالتزام الشخصيات الذكورية بالمعايير الجندرية الراسخة من خلال فحصها لأداء مسرحية "بعض الفتيات". من أجل الكشف عن الأسباب التي تجعل الشخصيات الذكورية في أعمال لابوت تحاول إخفاء ذواتهم العاطفية ، أجرى المؤلف تحليلاً لهذه الشخصيات من خلال عدسة جوديث بتلر وغيرها من المنظرين الجندرين. بشكل عام ، ينتقد لابوت الأداء التقليدي للذكور في محاولة لتحفيز التغيير كرد فعل على انتشار الذكور الخطرين والتداعيات السلبية عمومًا لمواقفهم. هذا التغيير ضروري بسبب حقيقة أن الأداء التقليدي يهيمن عليه الذكور الخطيرون. لتوضيح هذه المشكلة ، يعتمد لابوت على مجموعة كبيرة من الأساليب المختلفة. التي يتناولها التحليل. **الكلمات الدالة:** الجنس ، الجندر ، جوديث بتلر ، نيل لابوت ، "بعض الفتيات" ، الدراما.

### Introduction

The theatre played an important part in the social lives of people living in the 19th century. They had a good time at the theatre, seeing comedies and shows with a "morally relevant" message. People may spend their leisure time reading condensed versions of well-known plays or staging their performances of plays at home if they have the time. Playwright Neil LaBute is one of the numerous authors who have included theatricality and performance in their works; all of his plays, but notably *Some Girl(s)*, feature multiple instances of acting and performance from various characters (2006).

One of LaBute's plays, *some Girl(s)*, is one of his most scathing critiques of the moral, psychological, economic, and political conventions used to subjugate women in the United States and worldwide. It is important to note that these conventions have all

been used to oppress women. The author of these plays on women wanted to call attention to how women in American society are considered objects by composing these plays on women. One critic has characterised the subject matter of LaBute's plays as "a feast of perversions," including adultery, infanticide, rape, homophobia, racism, sexism, fatism, gender, and just plain violence (Farouky). He argues that you have no right to write about anything if you aren't actively working to make a difference. The situations in which his characters find themselves often provide commentary on contemporary themes. Both literature and the reality in which we live may be understood through the lens of LaBute.

Investigating gender identification in modern American theatre via the prism of identity development provides a chance to challenge and analyse the so-called gender crisis. The objective of this research is to analyse the gender studies that are not fully covered in Neil LaBute's *Some Girl*, a modern American drama that was written in 2005. (s). During the play, the characters engage in deep thought on the topic of what it means to be a certain gender. Suppose one has a comprehensive understanding of how both the male and female sexes construct gender. In that case, one may begin to see and dismantle the oppressive power structures fuelled by hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity fuels the oppressive power structures that are fuelled by hegemonic masculinity. This research aims to get a deeper comprehension of the cultural milieu that gives rise to various conceptions of masculinity and femininity. By analysing contemporary dramatic literature primarily written by white middle-class males and females, this study aims to discover culturally altered conceptions of masculinity and femininity in the production of theatrical representation as well as the effect of such representation.

### **1. Gender as a Concept**

The different expectations that society has for men and women regarding how they should act and what they should be like as persons are referred to as "gender," and the word "gender" is used to define these expectations. The word "gender," a relational idea, is used as a prism through which interactions between men and women are conceived. According to gender theory, the qualities identified with being a man or a woman are not intrinsic. However, they result from a person's upbringing and the milieu in which they were raised. It is a metaphor for the qualities that individuals end up adopting as a result of being absorbed in a community and its culture. The idea of

"gender" is a social one, and the word "gender" refers to an analysis of how men and women are trained to act in line with the expectations of society (Jarviluoma 1–2).

The concept of gender initially appears in the writings of American feminists in the 1970s as a reinterpretation of historical events. In the 1980s, historians working in England were the first to use this phrase. By the middle of the 1990s, it seemed like every week. A new volume was being released with the word "gender" somewhere in the title. As a direct result of the political reality that exists, the word "gender" has almost taken the place of the word "woman" in expressions such as "woman and gender." Some people believe that it may be used interchangeably with sex. However, the most common use of the term is as a synonym for sex, and it is used to highlight the contrasts between men and women throughout history. Since the primary manner in which men and females vary from one another is in how they are not the same, it is difficult to examine just one sex without also looking at the other. The term "gender" is often used because it is intended to emphasise that the distinctions between men and women are socially, culturally, and politically created; as a result, these disparities are subject to change. It in no way minimises the significance of the intrinsic distinctions between the sexes. As a result, the distinctions between the sexes have evolved in ways that biology cannot adequately explain throughout human history. As a consequence of this, the concept of "gender" is a social construction that is attached to a body type that is defined physiologically (Shoemaker 1).

On the other hand, sex may also refer to the physiological distinctions between the sexes. At birth, gender is determined for every individual. The gender of an infant is determined by the gender of his or her parents. A newborn may be either a boy or a girl. The distinctive characteristics of male and female genitalia served as a point of departure for the formulation of this description.

Conversely, there is the theory that individuals are socialised into specific gender norms and expectations depending on their biological sex. Several researchers have proposed this theory. Males of the species *Homo sapiens* are taught to carry out responsibilities that have historically been assigned to men. They are socialised to behave and think in a manner more typical of males. Biological daughters get training to prepare them for roles as caregivers and housekeepers. They learn to behave and think in ways usually associated with femininity at a young age. Thus, the biological characteristics that distinguish men and women are also called sex. The biological sex

range, represented by the full scale, comprises the external genitalia, internal procreative structures, genetic material, hormone levels, and secondary sex traits such as breast size, facial hair, voice tone, and body form. Every organ is the same except for those necessary for reproduction. Apart from these inborn differences, gender equality is maintained across the world. There are fewer differences between men and girls in terms of their physical appearance than there are similarities. Girls are considered females, and boys are considered men due to the evident morphological differences between the sexes. These natural-based characteristics are present in every human group, including every human family, every neighbourhood, and every country. The natural (biological, physiological, or genetic) and the social cannot be easily differentiated. However, many scientists think there are significant biological and genetic differences between men and women. Concerns that differ according to gender concerning the environment, culture, economics, and politics all impact biology (Barash and Eve Lipton 2-3).

Although one's gender may be changed via upbringing, one's sexuality cannot be changed. In contrast to the fluidity and cultural diversity of sex, gender, gender roles, and gender norms are all relative concepts open to change at any time. Characteristics that are unique to each gender provide light on the basic distinctions that exist between men and women. The word "sex" refers to the intrinsic and biologically defined distinctions between the sexes regarding the genitalia and the procreative purpose they serve. These differences may be seen in terms of the procreative function of the genitalia. All people share the experience of sexual orientation, but gender is constructed by society—an amalgamation of a society and its cultural traditions. The word "gender" refers to a wide variety of characteristics, including but not limited to behaviours, mannerisms, and social duties traditionally associated with men and women, respectively. It undergoes change and transformation due to the effects of factors such as history, geography, and social conventions (Lerner 3).

### **Some Girl(S) Gender Discourse**

Some Girl(s) had its premiere at the Gielgud Theatre in London in May of 2006. On the evening before his wedding, the main character of this work, a guy ready to tie the knot with a nursing student, concludes that he would record the names of all the

women he has loved but subsequently abandoned in a journal. He is aware that his actions have resulted in a trail of shattered relationships, so he pretends to go on a Pilgrim's Journey to fulfil his commitments while maintaining a sense of irony about the situation. On the other hand, it does not seem that this pilgrim has developed morally or spiritually (Bigsby 206).

When it comes to discussing more general topics, such as gender, Neil LaBute is more at ease. It is shown in the film *Some Girls* by the appearance of a stock male protagonist named Guy, whose only purpose is to take advantage of a wide range of female characters. The character of LaBute is intended to symbolise how men often treat women in society. Guy, meant to stand in for all males, tackles the societal subconscious in his work by carrying out violent deeds against women. One might see comparisons between this scenario and Henrik Ibsen's play "A Doll's House," which is considered the "father of theatre." Nora, the main character of Ibsen's play, is a woman, and she is used to symbolising the struggle that women face in patriarchal societies worldwide.

Bigsby believes that LaBute's exploration of heterosexual relationships may be understood via the lens of Guy as a type of totem. Regardless of whether or not the characters have actual names, the stage directions will always refer to them as "the guy" or "the lady" at some point. LaBute believes that the description of Guy by the critic as a serial monogamist is on par with that of a serial killer. It is discovered underneath his outward appearance of real dishonesty is coldly premeditated violence. The gloss is responsible for the emphasis. The intention of playwright Neil LaBute to write "a series of duets involving a huge number of women's parts and following the journey of a modern-day Candide as he stumbles through a terrain familiar to most men — the mess he's made of his love life on the route to adulthood" served as the impetus for the creation of the play. LaBute described the play as "following the journey of a modern-day Candide as he stumbles (LaBute xi). Your personality has undergone a little modification as a result of this. It is very impressive! (LaBute 24).

*Some Girl(s)* is a documentary that explores how men discriminate against women and contribute to the institutionalisation of oppression and violent conduct. An air of indifference characterises the relationships between LaBute's characters at all times. According to LaBute, the bulk of the characters' self-centred, slothful, and harmful acts can be traced back to the throwaway culture of American capitalism. This culture,

he says, is to blame. One wants to compel other individuals to cease seeing them as humans and treat them instead as objects to achieve their goal. According to LaBute, getting rid of faulty objects is far more convenient than trying to fix them. We go so far as to call it "recycling."

Regarding romantic relationships, we are too quick to say that "the easiest option is to quit it since we do not want to take the work" (qt. in Dickson). According to John Lahr, the protagonists in LaBute's works are so preoccupied with their problems that they cannot "understand the anguish of others" (as subjects). As a result, they wind up injuring one another, either by design or by mistake.

The artificiality that is so prevalent in American culture is explored in depth by LaBute. Becky Becker, author of "No Simple Misogyny," asserts that the female characters in LaBute's plays are naive enough to believe in the ideals of conventional beauty and gender standards. Becker believes this to be the case since the female protagonists are naïve. Some of the author's male and female characters have gender identities that have been socially created, and the writer demonstrates this by using the phrase "Some Girl(s)" in this instance. The statement "Guy answers to Lindsay, "The guy is accurate. " can be found in the movie *Some Girl(s)*, which is used to describe Guy. I was speaking in terms of a subfield of sociology that centres its research on women's lived experiences. To give it its name, "gender studies" is what people talk about these days, Lindsay. (37).

The play by LaBute depicts misbehaviour on the part of both males and females, but most of the blame lies with men in general and a certain kind of man in particular. Living up to traditional masculinity's expectations and being counted among these people is the same thing. The fundamental focus of the play is on male gender performance, which reflects the playwright's interest in the way men are depicted in culture and reflects that interest.

To conduct a complete study of the play's underlying gender theme, it is crucial to consider how the play's female and male characters are portrayed by their roles and the circumstances in which they find themselves. This topic was discussed extensively in ancient times, as both Plato and Aristotle addressed it in their respective writings. It demonstrates how widespread the topic was at the time. Aristotle was an ancient Greek scientist and philosopher who flourished in the third century before the common

era. He disagreed with the perspectives of women. In his perspective, women were defective, and he was imperfect. He was the lowest of God's creatures, and he preached that men should govern and women should bow down to their superiors (Bar 227–228). Throughout history, the concept of sexism has evolved. For instance, "a wife and mother and this are like some ancient Greek history," the voice of patriarchal society silenced the great philosophers, Socialists, and intellectuals of the golden era, reducing their influence and turning them into adherents of patriarchal society. [Citation needed] [Citation needed] [Citation needed] [Citation needed] [Citation needed] [Citation needed] [Citation needed] [ (13)

When one examines the development of women's rights over time, it becomes abundantly evident that women have not always been given the ability to make appropriate choices. History has always been written from the male perspective, with males serving as the subjects of the narrative, whereas women have always been the subjects of research. By turning her into a perfect copy of himself, man has successfully enslaved a woman with her consent. According to Beauvoir, this was the first time women could cultivate their self-awareness (Dijkstra 293). In the book titled "The Second Sex," written by Simone de Beauvoir, she makes the argument that "one is not born a woman, but rather develops one" (12). Beauvoir contends that gender is a social construction but that inside this formulation, there exists a subject, a cogito, who appropriates this gender and who, in theory, may appropriate another. Despite the incessant pressure from society, Beauvoir demonstrates how one "becomes" a woman. This urge has nothing to do with sexual desire.

There is no indication in the narrative of the gender of the "one" who is transformed into a woman. She contends that since "the body is a circumstance," sex cannot be considered a discursive physical facticity because it is difficult to appeal to a body whose meanings have not always been understood. Hence, she contends, sex cannot be considered a physical facticity (Butler 14).

In this instance, the philosophical argument between determinism and free will is the basis for competing opinions on the construction definition.

As a result, it is reasonable to suppose that the boundaries of the conversation are formed and confined by a constraint on cognition caused by the use of a common language. Within the confines of specific conceptual frameworks, the "body" appears



to be either a receptive medium on which cultural meanings are imprinted or an active instrument through which an appropriative and interpretative subject chooses a cultural meaning for itself. Both of these interpretations are possible. In each scenario, the human body is seen as an objective medium, on top of which societal connotations are layered. On the other hand, "the body" and the various "bodies" that make up the realm of sex- and gendered subjects are both artefacts of human imagination. Before a human body is given a gender, nobody can claim that it has any importance (Butler 17).

Hotel rooms with slight changes are used to shoot scenes from numerous cities. LaBute compares sex relations to various versions of a song. Men and women have distinct dating aspirations. He flees his crimes and the women and towns he destroyed. He unwinds best in his hotel room—just a stopover.

He professes to be ready for a lifelong commitment and not leave a mess. However, his continuous usage of "some female is all" (44) to describe his fiancée demonstrates that he has not changed his methods with the other women on his list. *Some Girls'* hotel room symbolises the male protagonist's imprisonment. It symbolises men's dominance over women. Guy, the play's only male character, reinforces its macho tone. It reinforces the sexist belief that men are superior. *Some Girls* depicts patriarchal tyranny.

LaBute wanted to portray that this macho figure needs to learn from his mistakes. He left to assess this immovable person's insulting actions. LaBute's plays' male protagonists need to be developed more. Paul Taylor, a Guardian contributor, "One of the shortest books in publishing history may be about Neil LaBute's male characters' gallantry for the female protagonists. LaBute admits, "I treat women better than men. I was suspicious of men since my father was " (Bigsby 236).

Some family members suspected his location and activities at home and overseas. It worries me for humanity (qt. in Bigsby 236). Here, he admits that his tight father-son relationship has influenced his work. Innocent male characteristics may be bad.

LaBute's piece addresses early women's education. After the French Revolution, Mary Wollstonecraft promoted Revolutionary and Enlightenment views regarding women via education. Several women have fought the patriarchal ideology that subjugates them. Women's representation in male literature as angels, prostitutes, submissive

husbands, gods, and mothers helped maintain these positions (Habib 213). Through learning and experience, the play's female heroine evolves. Women learn about themselves through watching and learning from their environment. "you finished your master's and felt forced to become a "gig citizen" or "what have you" "societal (LaBute 29). This reference examines gender inequality's effects on violence against women, sexual and reproductive health, and gendered stereotypes and norms. To influence society and culture, gender parity programs emphasise individual efforts to challenge unfavourable gendered conventions and stereotypes.

Some Girl's man lies and cheats to achieve (s). He's too sophisticated for such bravado. He avoids confrontation like all men. He would only have returned to the three he had abandoned with an explanation or confrontation. His hurried divorce shows his commitment phobia. The media portrays males as more intelligent and well-read. He often mentions renowned writers, indicating this trait. Culturally, women are not expected to be smart or have advanced degrees. Sam, Tyler, and Bobbie embody this stereotype. Tyler doesn't comprehend Man's references to Don Quixote (33) or Bluebeard (34), and Bobbie adds, "I don't believe I'll ever grasp what he's talking about." "I hardly read. excluding X-rays." (67).

All women, except Lindsay, who teaches as a housewife and a mother who gracefully accepts her job but secretly yearns for romantic adventure books, fit this model. "...and that is why my friends have many babies, and I have fun!" says Tyler, a strong, confident lady. (26). Lindsay is one of a more progressive but still mainly traditional group of women who have succeeded in their careers and married powerful men in their industries. Bobbie's sentiments make her hard to categorise. This drama has stereotyped male and female characters.

Judith Butler believes gender action involves gender performance. Its repetition legitimises and re-enacts socially accepted meanings daily and ritually (7). Even when private persons with gendered bodies execute this "action," the public may see it. These activities have temporal and social aspects, and their public character is not accidental. The performance has the strategic purpose of sustaining gender inside its binary frame, which cannot be assigned to a subject but must be understood to establish and solidify it (Butler 178). Labute uses a collective personality to show the cyclical sexual activity of multiple women to portray gender performances.

This play has different connections. They show a self-centred man who is ignorant of his betrayals. Despite his intermittent commitment, the ladies are attracted to the same person, despite their diverse origins and ages. Some Girl(s) focuses on LaBute's favourite themes—desertion, abandonment, and loss. It's also about the frustration of looking for life's solutions in individuals you'll never comprehend. Despite appearances, their relationship was short. Everyone lived in many tales (208).

Guy thinks, "That is not very pleasant," when Bobbi says this (LaBute 62). He's continually seeking ego satisfaction.

Sam assumed he left her for "any girl." She heard his mother suggest he should send a girl like that to a good local school. She had preserved her aspirations while harbouring resentment over her desertion, as seen by her slap across his face.

All morality is male power. In addition, a man's strength and others' impression of it rise as he embraces these ideals. As Michael Kimmel notes, this false picture causes males fear and suffering (Wright 8).

LaBute's men are socially moulded to support traditional masculinity and prioritise power above intimacy, which makes them unable to develop meaningful relationships and inclined to harm others. LaBute's masculine heroes fear being emotionally and physically inferior.

Kimmel, one of the best men's studies researchers, is influenced by social constructionist gender studies. Feminist educator encourages workplace gender equity. He states in *The Gendered Society* that his objective is not gender equality. His words:

Why, after all, are love, nurturing, and tenderness defined as feminine? Why do I have to be expressing the effect of the other sex to have access to what I regard as human emotions? Being a man, everything I do expresses my masculinity. Moreover, I'm sure my wife would be no less insulted if, after editing a particularly difficult article or writing a long, involved essay, she was told how extraordinary it is to see women expressing their masculine sides—as if competence, ambition, and assertiveness were not human properties to which women and men could equally have access. (266)

Kimmel believes we restrict ourselves by categorising conduct into binary gendered categories. Sigmund Freud's theories on male and female sexuality inspire Kimmel's "flight from femininity" concept. He develops Freud's technique to show that gender is not static (Wright 10). He does so more effectively in *The Gendered Society* by citing Candace West and Don Zimmerman, who claim that gender is a performance rather than a characteristic (100). Kimmel employs several masculinities to describe masculine identities across time, location, culture, and ethnicity. Kimmel adds that the prototypical American guy opposes the stereotypically feminine "Other" in American culture.

Kimmel defines hegemonic masculinity as "a guy in power, a man with power, and a man of power" (Wright 8). He discusses racism but mostly how males use their power to oppress women and depict them as the opposite of themselves. "Tell me what page she's on" (LaBute 17) is an allusion to a man's number of girlfriends. A man reads one page of a woman, then the next, but he may always revisit the past and show off his masculinity.

LaBute maintains that traditional masculinity still affects many American men, like the protagonist of *Some Girls*, even if they are becoming less restrictive. Guy uses physical strength, discipline, and authority to tackle his dilemma. Modern artists like LaBute need to confront masculinity. Therefore they frequently do.

Social scientists study gender-related biological, linguistic, and cultural differences.

Gender may mean a (formerly) sexually distinct body. Feminist theorists say gender is a system of relationships, not a permanent property. Following Beauvoir, others may claim that only the feminine gender is marked, that the universal person and the masculine gender are muddled, and that women are defined by their sex. At the same time, men are extolled as the carriers of body-transcendent universal personality. Women symbolise infertility and linguistic emptiness (Butler 13).

Women can achieve anything if a language has one meaning. Women symbolise plural gender here (Butler 16). Irigaray views both the subject and the Other as male pillars of a closed phallogocentric signifying economy that totalises by excluding the feminine. Beauvoir regards women as the Other. According to Irigaray, this dialectic employs

the absence of women to define masculine identity, preventing a new economy of meaning.

The stylisation of the body affects how individuals view themselves. Thus, it is crucial to understand how gender operates in the daily context of a broad range of physical gestures, movements, and styles that provide the sense of a solid gendered identity (Butler 16).

Several Girls depicts Man's contact with four ladies. Lindsay seduces Guy, who becomes more receptive. When Lindsay blows smoke into his mouth, the spectator wonders what will happen between them. The Man and two of his exes with very different experiences with him set the audience's expectations for the third segment. The next female protagonist excites them. Like the first scenario, they failed. Lindsay's furious and sarcastic. After discovering they had an affair while she was married, he left town and never contacted her again. Gender becomes socially created temporality rather than identity. Let's say gender is defined by discontinuous activity. Hence, "material appearance" is correct. A constructed identity is a belief enacted before a social audience, which may include the participants (Butler 179).

Some Girls by LaBute employs several experimental theatrical approaches. Expository strategies are one example (the link between the dramatic past and the present). "The spoken dialogue that occurs between the dramatic figures" is the primary text, while the secondary text includes "the title of the play, the inscriptions, dedications, and prefaces, the dramatis personae, announcements of act and scene, stage-directions, [...] and the identification of the speaker of a particular speech" (Pfister 13–14).

Some girl(s) has four acts despite their lack of scenes and acts. Sam, Tyler, Lindsay, and Bobbie provide the names of all four episodes, but man is the only constant. LaBute employs several approaches to teaching. Understanding his plays requires studying theatrical history and the present. LaBute examines these topics extensively in Some Girl (s). The unpleasant past always matters. Exposition, according to Pfister, "communicates information about previous events and circumstances that shape the dramatic present" (Pfister 86). This play breaks the theatrical convention of revealing history early on through a prologue, protagonist soliloquy, or explanatory conversation.

Trauma affects certain girls' current situations (s). As this is an episodic drama, the explanatory material can only be understood in terms of the individual episodes, all of

which centre on the Man. Dramatic occurrences from the past overpower those from the present. The biggest difference is how Sam and the four ladies—Tyler, Lindsay, and Bobbie—view the past. The first episode's protagonists' recollections differ greatly. He broke up with Sam in high school. Some of the book's tales may depict the characters' last feelings.

MAN. [...] I feel it did not end well...[...] ...we sort of...SAM. You ended it! MAN. Uh-huh. Right. SAM. You broke up with me. [...] MAN. Well, we were just kids, right? SAM. Eighteen. When you dumped me, I mean. That is an adult. MAN. True, but that is what it seemed like. To me. Kids SAM. Whatever. Whatever you say. [...] MAN. [...] I think the reason we broke up back then was...this. We were, umm...SAM. Not we. You. You ended it. (9–11)

Their memories and sentiments about that difficult period are different. If he doesn't recognise what he did to her, he's either emotionally ignorant or attempting to downplay their split. In addition, she appears to recall more details from the past than he does:

SAM. I thought it slipped your mind. So much else seems to've...MAN. I thought we even talked about this once. SAM. No. MAN. Didn't we? Over the summer there, before I ...? SAM. No, we didn't. Not ever. MAN. Oh. Okay, my mistake (17). Although most of the dialogue focuses on the dramatic past, there is one important moment in the dramatic present when their conversation causes a change in her conception of their past relationship: SAM. [...] I realise now, though, it was just a teenage thing, and you dated somebody else right after me, so... how is that for a wake-up call, huh? Shit (20).

The first impacts the viewer's assumptions, expectations, and perspective in the second scene. They had a romantic past, too. Sam and Tyler's striking contrast gives this

episode a unique tone. It is interesting how the mood changes when more pieces of the tragic past are revealed. Tyler appears confident and competent, unlike Sam, who is heartbroken by her divorce from the Man. They discuss their relationship, including their sexual experiences and his acceptance of her smoking. The talk is pleasant, and they are clearly like one other. Towards the conclusion of this episode, a piece of the problematic past is disclosed, changing the conversation:

MAN. I felt so shitty about what I did to her by leaving that I just...plunged in with you, did whatever. All the, you know... [...] TYLER. Look...it is never cool to be second in a relationship. It is not.

Furthermore, I was a distant second there for a bit! [...] you can talk yourself into anything if you say it enough.

Nevertheless, it is not true. That shit hurts. (39–40)

The narrative also provides significant insight into the motivations for Man's repeated interactions with his exes: Maintain vigilance in this regard; doing so will not do any harm. Learn what is new and check to see if we are in a safe situation (no harm, no foul, that kind of thing). [...] Right a wrong that has been done. (32–33).

He is getting married soon. Therefore he believes that going on these excursions "would be a terrific way to start [his] new life" (33). Although the past's dramatic events dominate most of their talk, the dramatic events of the present will soon become a significant component.

## **Conclusion**

According to this idea, the beginnings of gender may be traced back to Plato and Aristotle, as the researcher herself mentions briefly at the opening of the study. Plato and Aristotle developed this hypothesis. By integrating the two, LaBute intends to demonstrate how gender and women's history have been intertwined for millennia. As

a result, the author employs this tactic to launch a conversation on gender. Labute, as he did in many of his previous plays, left this one without a resolution because he wanted his audience to realise that the power dynamics between the sexes can never be settled.

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