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**THE SHIFTING IDENTITY OF URBAN WOMEN
PORTRAYED IN DEBORAH WRIGHT'S NOVEL
*OLIVIA'S BLISS***

A THESIS

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**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LETTERS
AIRLANGGA UNIVERSITY
2006**

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*OLIVIA'S BLISS***


A THESIS

**Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Sarjana Degree of English Department Faculty of Letters
Airlangga University Surabaya**

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2006**



*I dedicate this thesis
to the way of life I have chosen,
May Allah always keep me here...*

*And
to those who are always in my heart,
May Allah give me a chance to be with
them again someday...*

Approved to be examined

Surabaya, 23rd of June 2006

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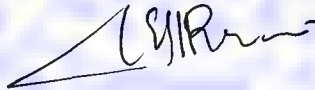
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Surabaya, 22nd of June 2006

Amylila Monika Palupi

*Then which of the Blessings of your Lord
will you both deny (jinn and men)?*

(Ar-Rahman: 21)

...so travel through the earth...

(Ali-Imran: 137)

Run..Run..There's never enough time...

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ABSTRACT

Deborah Wright's *Olivia's Bliss* (2000) is a novel about an urban woman named Olivia Bliss living with two other women and one man in a same house. They have their own problems and solutions to share between them. This novel tells the readers about their life during their quarter life, about their tussle at work in career attainment, couple seeking, performances, etc.

This study is concentrated on the identity of urban women portrayed in the novel. Their identity is seen from their viewpoint upon several environmental aspects. Then, the identity will be analyzed further to see the shifting that occurs inside it. The observation upon urban women's identity in the novel is in the effort of giving better understanding to other people that this kind of identity exists.

The method used in this study is library research and descriptive analysis through literature. Furthermore, there are two theories applied in this study. The first one is the theory of Identity that is used to analyze the urban women's identity portrayed in the novel. The analysis of the identity is seen from their point of view of these aspects: love and marriage, work and career, sexuality, and also lifestyle and image. Then, the identity is analyzed further using the theory of New Identity of Woman to see the shifting that occurs toward it.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Romantic fiction is a popular genre of literature which has grown rapidly ever since early of twentieth century. Mills & Boon has been one of the most well-known publisher of this genre. Long after that, this genre has developed into various style and packages, but still the same theme: romance. One of them nowadays is something known as *chic literature*. *Chic literature* or *chic lit* is one of the popular culture of romance fiction today that started to be famous in the early 1990's in America and England. The most famous one has already been audio-visualized as a movie: *Bridget Jones' Diary*. In Indonesia, chic lit started to be acknowledged not long after, previously *chic lit* were the translated-version of American or England. At the mid of 2004, the novel which is claimed to be the first Indonesian chick lit was published, it was *Cintapuccino*, written by Icha Rahmanti. At the same year until the beginning of 2005, several other titles are published, such as: *Pretty Prita*, *Philophobia*, *The Missing Puzzle*, *Test Pack*, and *3 Days Cinderella*. Today, *chic lit* has become a phenomenon in the world and in Indonesia.

Chic lit is a novel about urban women's life with all their problems. This kind of novel is taken a fancy among the readers because it is assumed to represent the existence of those women with their complex life. It talks about their

tussle at work in career attainment, couple seeking, performances, etc. So far, *chic literature*, as one of the most famous women's writing nowadays with its huge number of selling, has led into curiosity among people in society as what An Rosalind Jones feels about the romantic fiction. She said that over the past decade, the rise of feminism has been paralleled almost exactly by mushroom growth in the popularity of romantic fiction (Storey, 1993: 129). Chick lit is questioned for its position in women literature world whether it stands for women movement or it is actually still written under patriarchal constructed world and did nothing for women.

Urban women are grown-up girl in the age of 20-30, living in big metropolitan cities, and still struggling for their career and love life (it is usually called as a-quarter-life-crisis). Urban women are the kind of women who are still looking for acceptance in the society, where it is recognized that woman between 20-30 is on transition time from girl to adult woman. A lot of things happen and are expected to happen at this period. This is time when they are reckoned to marry, give birth, create a family, establish their life as a woman.

Olivia's Bliss is the winner of the Poolbeg-Ireland on Sunday Write A Bestseller Competition in 2000 written by Deborah Wright. For this English writer, *Olivia's Bliss* (2000) is not her first novel. She also writes several other novels and romantic poem-book: *The Rebel Fairy* (2002), *Under My Spell* (2004), *Love Eternally* (2005), *The History of Lucy's Love Life in 10.5 Chapters* (2006). It seems that romantic story is her genre. It can be seen through her website which mostly discusses about love and romance.

In *Olivia's Bliss*, there is Olivia, a twenty-seven-year-old-single women and lives in London. She does not finish her bachelor degree since she feels bored of formal education and it leads to 2,2 GPA. She is still unable to find an equitable job since she always has trouble with any job that she does. She never enjoys doing those jobs since they are not jobs that she has always wanted. She lives in a flat with her lodgers: Josephine and Leila, and they are having race on to hook the gorgeous, loveable, perfect Ricky, their new lodger and only guy in their flat. But then, Olivia finds herself helpless against his boss' powerful personality and sexual magnetism. He is Ricky's father named Sir Henry Caldwell. Olivia is in her process to discover the genuine choice in her life as she is fatiguing to figure out the kind of life that is suitable for her character and skill. She always wants to be a writer but always fails to reach it out. That is why she never feels comfortable with her job. At the other side she has to live with her own money. When she was younger—in her college time—she had responsibility and dependency on her parents, especially financially, that required her to accept suggestion and rules of parents. Whenever she has successfully earned her own living, she begins to release her dependency and arises to control her own life. Through this novel, we will be able to see the portrayal of urban women's life told in it.

I am interested in writing about this work since I am curious about the rising number of the production of *chic lit* and the new identity of woman today, especially those living in the city which is usually discussed in *chic lit*. From this study, I am able to figure out the identity of urban women portrayed in the story

that is determined from their values upon several aspects in life, such as: family, marriage, career, and sexual relationship, etcetera. Then the identity will be discussed further to see the shifting that happens between the femininity and feminist side.

B. Statement of the Problems

1. How is the identity of urban women portrayed in *Olivia's bliss*?
2. How does the shifting of femininity and feminist perspective represent the portrayal of urban women in the novel?

C. Objective of the Study

1. To know the identity of urban women portrayed in *Olivia's Bliss*.
2. To know how the shifting of femininity and feminist perspective represent the portrayal of urban women in the novel

D. Significance of The Study

The study has two significances. The first is to bring deeper understanding upon the new identity of urban women in a text especially in a *chic lit* as one of pop culture today. The second is to give contributions to the students of Airlangga University English Department, especially the students who are taking literature as their major.

E. Scope and Limitation

This study concentrates only on the portrayal of urban women in *Olivia's Bliss* by looking at their value upon certain aspects in life such as: love and marriage, work and career, sexuality, and lifestyle and image, so that there is a picture of urban women's identity portrayed in the novel. Therefore, the study focuses on the main character, her friends and whatever happens around them that is related to the study. Then, the identity is discussed further to show the shifting that happens upon the identity between the femininity and feminist point of view.

F. Theoretical Background

This study is to analyze the portrayal of urban women in Deborah Wright's novel *Olivia's Bliss*. I want to picture the idea of urban women's identity portrayed through the novel and examine the shifting that happens between the femininity and feminist point of view. Hence, the theory of Identity by Kathryn Woodward is used to examine the identity of urban women emerged in the novel and analyze the identity profounder to see the shifting that happens. Woodward states that identities now have moved away from traditional, class-based loyalties towards 'lifestyle' choices where they are concerned with ethnicity and 'race', gender, sexuality, age, disability, social justice and environmental concerns that produce new identifications.

The second theory is theory of New Identity of Woman by Myra Macdonald. According to Macdonald in her *Representing Women: Myths of Femininity in the Popular Media*, nowadays women can accomplish whatever

they want to, they are prepared to make sufficient effort. They are also associated with stylishness and the belief that it is possible to be both feminine and supportive of feminist objectives at the same time.

G. Method of the Study

The method used in this study is library research, while the main sources used is the novel itself *Olivia's Bliss* by Deborah Wright. This study uses the method of data collection from the novel by having a closer reading to the novel, making data classification, and determining the data based on the criteria. The criteria used here contains the portrayal of urban women including their point of view upon several things, lifestyle, principles, and others that still have the role during process of urban women identification in the story.

In other hand, I also use other information from other sources dealing with *identity* to support the analysis. The other data about any information related to the novels are also used during the analysis.

In order to make a complete analysis, the qualitative method is also used as well. Qualitative research methods are a complex, changing, and contested field-a site of multiple methodology and research practices. As Punch says that qualitative research is not a single entity, but it is an umbrella term, which encompasses enormous variety (139). And the qualitative data can therefore be defined as empirical information about the world, not in the form of number (Punch, 1998: 159). It means in doing the analysis, I use descriptive analysis and

explanation through the events and action in the story related to the identification process of urban women in the story.

H. Definition of Key Term

Urban women: women aged 20-30 years old, living in the city, and still fighting for her career and love life (her quarter-life-crisis)

Feminism : a movement to support belief in the principle that women should have the same rights and opportunities (Legal, political, social, economic, etc) as men

Feminine : having the qualities or appearances considered characteristic of women

Feminist : supporter of feminism

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In analyzing the novel, theory of identity by Kathryn Woodward will be used as the core concept to figure the identity of the urban woman in the novel. Then, the identity is discussed deeper using the theory of Myra Macdonald about the new identity of women to see the shifting between femininity and feminist point of view that happens.

A. Theory of Identity

In his essay, *Cultural and Diaspora*, Stuart Hall via Woodward says “ all of us write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific and what we say is always ‘in context’, positioned”(51-59). Based on it, everything said or expressed by someone is none of nothingness. Every word expressed is concerned with the process of taking side (positioned). Afterward, this study works in determining what is behind the speech of the main character and her friends as urban women upon several aspects in their life, since their opinion will determine their identity.

According to Woodward, in *Identity and Difference* (12-29), identities now have moved away from traditional, class-based loyalties towards ‘lifestyle’ choices where they are concerned with ethnicity and race, gender, sexuality, age, disability, social justice and environmental concerns that produce new identifications. Identity of someone today is determined through their point of

view upon race, gender, age, disability, social justice and other environmental concerns. What someone says, thinks, uses, or acts symbolizes her identity since identity works through symbols and there is association between identity of the person and the things the person uses.

Woodward states that identities are not unified since there are many contradictions within them, which have to be negotiated. Someone may experiences this contradiction, but it does not mean the person has changed her/his identity. Furthermore, she believes that identity is relational where difference is established by symbolic marking in relation with others, which show how we make sense of social relations and practices. By this, a person or group can say who is included or excluded in their identity. Identity is also maintained by social differentiation. It says how this classification of difference is 'live' out in social relations (12). Identity, then, is not the opposite of difference, but depends on difference (29) where someone sees her/his identity based on the difference that occurs between her/him and those outside. Identity gives people location in the world and presents the link between them and the society in which they live (1). People attribute qualities to themselves and transfer associations, they are making it possible to see themselves in the image presented.

B. Theory about New Identity of Woman

Brooks says that identity is never stable (189), during years, the identity of woman keeps changing, especially because of several movements that happen towards women issue, as the feminist struggle that requires betterment for woman

position in the world. There are first and second wave feminism discussing the identity of women. It is also followed by the third wave feminism that mostly criticizes the lack of the second wave one. Nowadays, there are many identities of woman emerge around us since women cannot be generalized to have the same identity as what Yeatman via Brooks says (103). They have different experiences that finally lead into different value of life and expectation including different identity.

Woodward states that everyone always experiences identification process in her/his life (12) where they take up their positions and identify with them, including the urban women appeared in the chic lit as the roman novel which talks about urban women. Then, the writer will discuss about this new identity of women using the theory by Myra Macdonald.

Macdonald states that flapper image of the new woman as playful, self indulgent, sexually aware, and adventurous. The woman romantically represented as charming, educated, well-to-do, and prominent in the social and civic life (85-87). It is all about pleasing oneself, freedom, and self-sufficiency (91). She is also associated with stylishness and the belief that it is possible to be both feminine and supportive of feminist objectives (226).

Femininity can be defined as structural opposite of masculine or as simultaneously, gentle and kind, but also prone to jealousy and pettiness. Femininity is believed as value constructed by patriarchal power. While feminist here is defined as supporter of a movement to support belief in the principle that women should have the same rights and opportunities (Legal, political, social,

economic, etc) as men. According to Macdonald, this kind of woman is allowed to be feminine and feminist at the same time. It means that the woman could be defined as flirting and confrontational at the same time. She is conscious about her feminine quality inside her that is different from man, but it does not stop her to act as man does. This woman believes that she has to be sensual in order to gain man's attention since she needs man as part of her life; while she also believes that she is not inferior to man and has the ability to compete with man in gaining professional career, political role, et cetera. This new woman is independent for having her own career, life, money and happiness with her friends, but she also regards man in her love life partner where they depend on each other. The traditional female pre-occupation such as man and body-care is not abandoned, but woman is still urged to travel light and indulge themselves, not others. At the same time, she is encouraged to get out of her home and develop their full potential (91-95). Macdonald persists in her essay that in this term, there are even more things around that encourage woman to leave the stereotype of being inferior in woman and man relationship (100).

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

I will focus primarily on the identity of the urban women portrayed in the novel by discussing their point of view upon several aspects; which will finally emerge as their identity. Hence, the identity will be discussed further to see the shifting that happens upon this new identity of woman according to Macdonald. The urban women here are the main character, Olivia, together with her lodgers Leila and Josephine. They have problems, reasons, and solutions of their own to share and apply together as they are living in the same house with another male lodger named Ricky.

A. The Identity of Urban Women in Olivia's Bliss

Identity is marked out through symbols including language and visual symbol. There is an association between the identity of someone with the things she says, uses, or writes. Here, I will discuss the urban women's point of view upon several aspects shown in the novel for shaping their 'new' identity. The aspects are love and marriage, career, sexuality, lifestyle and image. Through their opinion about those things, their identity will be revealed.

1. Love and Marriage

The main and never ending discussion in the world is about man-woman relationship. This term has been widely discussed and developed in many

versions, stories, legends, and fairy tales. The love life in the novel includes the way the characters in the novel regard men as their partner in love life and their role in harmonizing these women's life. The first thing emerges about this issue can be seen when Olivia and her two female lodgers, Leila and Josephine, are trying to find another lodger in order to reduce their monthly payment for the house rent. They are arguing whether it is better to have male or female new lodger. But at the end, they agree that a male lodger will help to balance and harmonize the masculine and feminine vibration of the house (18). It means that those girls believe a woman is not able to create her own steadiness of life without having male partner to take part. It is a confession of how important male is and how a balance condition will only be reached by the two element of life: man and woman together.

One day, Olivia finds herself falling in love with Ricky, her new male lodger. At the moment, he is helping her to find a new job as personal assistance (PA) in his father's office. In fact, Olivia also figures out that Ricky starts to fancy Leila and it makes her very upset for thinking that she has lost him. She is disappointed and considering the importance of her PA job for her, even if it is the best PA job in the world, it is nothing if she could not have Ricky (62). Here, it is proven that, for Olivia, love life is very important. Then, it is understandable why deep inside her heart Olivia wishes a white lie from Josephine when she (Olivia) asks her (Josephine) opinion about her (Olivia) love life, and Josephine answers that Olivia's love life is non-existent (4). Olivia is very mad by that answer. She actually wishes for the opposite. Why would Olivia wish for that? She thinks that

having non-existent love life is something pathetic, and it is bothering that she wishes her friend, Josephine, will tell her a lie in order to make her feel better. She would rather get the fake answer to relieve herself from the fact that her love life is non-existent.

The importance of love life is stated very clearly through Josephine's statement to Olivia that one of the two fundamental things a woman needs in life is love (4). Love is considered as important aspects in someone's life, and losing someone she loves makes her feel very distress. When Olivia has just passed her divorce to Henry, she realizes that she actually loves Ricky, but she has no more chance to fight for it since Ricky is already married to Josephine. When Leila finds it out, she says that losing a husband is a great loss but losing one's lover as well might be regarded as 'sheer carelessness' (468). Sheer carelessness is something that may happen to those who do not know how to keep her love and this is something deserves to be cried on since love is important part of someone's life.

Olivia and Ricky are working at the same place. They are writers for *Vixen*, one of the glossy super-celeb-packed woman's magazines, a sort of cross between *Cosmo* and *Hello* (19). Ricky is one of the limited numbers of male who work there. One day, Ricky has just come back from his honeymoon with Josephine, Olivia's lodger, and he writes this article:

Marriage is a contagious disease that most people acquire at around the age of twenty-seven. It appears to be more predominant amongst the female species rather than the male, who maybe suffer early

symptoms, which do not turn into full-blown illness until even as late as the mid forties . . . (320)

According to him, marriage is the biggest issue of women at the age around twenty-seven as an early symptoms that usually occurs at the age of early forties for men. It is more predominant for women where they are more burdened by a bachelorette, which it is considered worse than a bachelor. Men can wait until forty to be called bachelor that is already happened for women (bachelorette) at the age of twenty-seven. Women tend to be more afraid of not meeting the right man and end up as upset spinster, as Josephine says when she fails to marry Ricky in their first wedding ceremony. Josephine and Ricky plan to have double marriage by getting married at the same time with Olivia and Henry, but then it fails and in the future they decide to get married in their second wedding ceremony.

Oh God, Olivia, what am I going to do? I'm going to go through life never meeting Mr Right, I'll end up one of those desperate ageing women chasing after older men who are too busy chasing after younger girls and then I'll just shrivel up into one of those old women who sit and spy on neighbors and won't give little kids back their balls (216)

Josephine is afraid of the idea of never meeting the right man to marry that it will make her become a boring and frightening old woman. When she is getting older, there will be less chance for her to meet the right guy since she can not compete with younger women which she considers more attractive for men. Marriage is a

need to avoid something that she does not expect to happen in her future. The right time for a woman to get marry, according to Josephine, is when she is still attractive for men. This, according to Ricky, shows that marriage has nothing to do for love, especially for women. He also writes:

Marriage has nothing to do with love. It rests on the foundation of fear. There are two types of people in life: those who do what they want, those who do what they are told. The ones in the first category always get divorced, and those in the second never have the guts to. So they learn to tolerate each other. They pretend. They live a life, they sit at breakfast and discuss work and dropping in Marks & Spencer on the way home to buy some dinky little sausage rolls or something equally banal . . . society's value are just all upside down. (320)

Today, the value of marriage starts to change, especially in big cities where sometimes career and prosperity are more prominent than marriage or family. Now, the value of marriage has gone very far from the old tradition, which assumes that marriage is a requirement for someone to live normally. It is now well thought-out as disease, means something bad, unwanted, and bothering. It is also contagious that it encourages many other people to do the same thing.

Ricky looks upon marriage as nothing else but lies since couples are pretending to be happy by tolerating each other and do not act as they originally are. They regard tolerance is a process of lie, since they have to oppress their real feeling upon something that actually they do not like, but they will say that everything is alright in order to avoid a quarrel. They keep doing the same routine

activity day by day without giving any chance to feel bored since they are afraid to express what they actually feel. Married woman and man start to do all the banal things just like sitting at breakfast and discussing work and dropping in Marks & Spencer on the way home to buy some dinky little sausage rolls which symbolizes the routine of their daily life. The routine here means their new life that is started right after the second they said “yes” in the vicar and never change or stop along their marriage.

Answering the opinion, Olivia says to Ricky that marriage is not really that bad (321). She believes that there are beautiful things that happen in a marriage. At the time, Olivia is married to Henry, Ricky’s father. She admits if there is problem between her and her husband, Henry, but she believes that it is nothing (338). But at the end, when she finally figures out the real problems that occur in Ricky and Josephine wedding, she can easily understand the reason why Ricky writes such an article. Ricky confesses to her of how his honeymoon was since he and Josephine have decided to create an open marriage—means that each of them may have other relationship outside the marriage, so Josephine and Ricky are allowed to have other man or woman. Josephine thinks that marriage should not be the end of fun. He thinks that it is very easy in theory, but very difficult to be applied (338).

Contrast to Ricky and Josephine, Olivia is contented about the idea of marriage. It has been very difficult for her to decide before she is finally married to Henry. At first, Olivia is afraid to confess her crush on him since she realizes that he is a married man and she does not want to hurt his wife, Agatha. Olivia

finds that it is impossible for her to be with someone that she loves, Henry. But then, she decides to cheat with Henry after he says that his marriage is on the rocks (109). During their secret relation, Olivia keeps asking him about their status. She insists that he should make a decision right away between divorcing his wife or break up with her. She is really impressed with the idea that Henry will marry her soon after he divorces his wife (157) and she is filled with the fluid of bliss when finally Henry divorces his wife and proposes her. Because of her love to Henry, she accepts his proposal and finally they are married (182-183). Here, we can see the reason behind Olivia's deciding to marry him: it is because of love—she loves him at the time—and Henry's status—he is a single when he proposes her. When in the future, she decides to divorce him, it is just because she is no longer in love with him. Love becomes a justification striving to achieve marriage and when love is gone, it becomes the reason to end the marriage.

When a woman gets married, it means that she will be tied up with a man with whom she has to spend her life with. Marriage is a commitment where someone has to tolerate her/his couple because of the differences that occur. For Olivia, thinking about it is frightening. She is afraid that marriage will not be as great as she expects. She even has some doubts inside her right after Henry proposed her. On one side of her heart insists that this marriage brings nothing but good things for her (187). While at the same time another side of her heart says to her: “By the time you reach your sexual peak, he'll be sipping Horlicks and trundling in a zimmer frame . . .”(188). Horlicks is a nourishing malted food drink, which can help someone to relax and unwind and help someone to sleep.

While the word zimmer frame means a light-enclosing framework (trade name Zimmer) with rubber castors or wheels and handles. It helps invalid or the handicapped or the aged to walk. These two things symbolize the unexpected things that might happen in the future of a marriage. But sometimes things are just not like what they have expected, when her spouse might not understand what she needs because they have different feeling, willingness and maturity. Shipping Horlicks together with trundling zimmer frame and sexual peak are different opposite things. A man who is trundling a zimmer frame and keep shipping the Horlicks means someone who has no longer the same desire of sexuality as he used to be. Olivia thinks that this is bad that when she has just reached her sexual peak, which means she is in her time of having big desire in sexual relationship, while her husband cannot fulfill her demand. This symbolizes one of many disappointments that may occur during the marriage, and this thing scares Olivia.

In his marriage, Ricky finds himself compromising several things to Josephine. Josephine asks him to greatly compromise where he has to adjust with it while he thinks that Josephine does not do. She pushes him to eat nothing but little cardboard crackers and a rind of cucumber in the term of “Diet Sympathy” (337). But on the other hand, Josephine fails to treat his son, Jamie, since she never likes kid, while Ricky feels that his son needs attention and the feeling of being wanted in the family (339). This feeling of disappointment drives him to write the article above.

Compromising is one thing that Josephine is scared about. It causes her run away from her first wedding ceremony with Ricky—which is finally failed,

but in the future they decide to really get married—because of this fear, since she thinks that she is not a marriageable woman because she can not compromise easily with her spouse. Compromising is her big problem in building a relationship with a man, where she is always hard to accept her man's downside (213-215). Opposite to this, Olivia realizes that marriage is about compromising, it is not about being walked over but it is about making sacrifices for each other because she really cares. It is all about compromise (213).

After getting married, Olivia has to understand that her husband no longer wants to have any child and she finds that she would not mind with that (339). Another compromising that she does is about the attitude of his husband, Henry whose attitude terrifies her when he is on his bad mood. He once threw a vase across the room close to Olivia when he was mad at her and it frightened her, but then she recall her behavior that made her husband so mad. She has done something that Henry hates; she bothered him when he was writing his novel in his study. He threw the vase after reminded her for several times. At first, she thought that he is a psycho husband, but then she considered about the possibility of being so dreadful for his husband just like what his former wife, Agatha, was. One of Henry reasons to divorce Agatha is because she is so dreadful for him. At the end, both of them back to normal after forgiving each other (257-260). The other compromising done by Olivia is when Henry introduces her to a new way of life she does not do before: theatre, opera, classical music, hostess and dressed up for dinner with his colleague, and such which are very boring according to her. She also has to sacrifice her vegetarian style since Henry thinks that she is too thin

and it makes her unhealthy (250-253). While Henry does not compromise much as she does for him. Henry accepts the way she relates to her family, especially her mother where she has to support her life financially. He takes over this duty. But outside it, he often pushes his willingness upon Olivia. This is what finally leads Olivia to leave him and get a divorce in the future.

Another thing to be compromised in marriage is about privacy. Marriage is the idea of making commitment between two people who live together. It deals with several rules. Living together drives on losing some part of privacy. Josephine thinks that marriage is the ultimate invasion of privacy (216) that she does not like about, while Olivia thinks marriage does not mean that way. She recognizes marriage as the process of going through different layers (216) which means that this is a process to know and understand her couple within the differences that occur between them.

For some people, marriage is considered frightening when it relates to baby. Being a mother is something terrifying. Here is the portrayal of a mother in the novel: “Come on Olivia, d’you really want to spend Saturday nights stuck at home doing the ironing?. . . dirty nappies. Sleepless nights. Huge stomach, losing your figure...”(188). Being a mother means a woman has to sacrifice her ‘hang-out’ time since she has to do all the house keeping things such as: ironing, washing, cleaning the house. Mother is usually so busy taking care of her house and her family that she does not have enough time to actualize herself. Moreover, her duty is overwhelmed that she is not able to finish in the proper time, and then she has to make use of her weekend finishing those things. Furthermore, if there is

a baby, she will not have time to rest and relax. Having baby is very hectic; it takes all a mother's time to patronize it. A mother has to take care of the baby who cries during the day and wakes her at night. At the same time, a mother will lose her time to take care of herself. She will not have any opportunity to go to the gym or salon or other places where she usually does. At the end, she will start losing her life, her figure that she used to have.

At first, Olivia is frightened of the idea of having children and spending her time taking care of the family, but sometimes she also imagines of the situation where she has to be home at five to put on the tea and do the ironing or have the kids running after her and her husband and demanding for him to play tag and nagging her to buy them an ice cream (156). Deep inside her heart, she loves the idea of a family where she will be able to take care of her husband and children. Opposite to this, Josephine always hates the idea of marriage that ends up with the boring old couple coming home after work and asking about her day or maybe about their laundry and other similar conversations (461).

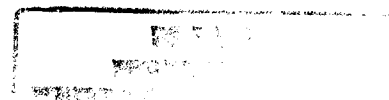
Olivia and Josephine are urban women in the novel with different attitudes in viewing marriage. Josephine hates the idea of marriage since she always thinks that it will end with a boring life of two old couples. On the other side, she is afraid of not meeting the right man to marry and this will cause her a spinster. Olivia believes more on this institution even she never denies her anxiety of disappointment that may occur. She considers of having more serious relationships by marrying the man that she loves. She believes on the marriage that makes her feel comfortable where she is not pushed or pressed, and when this feeling ends

she decides to end her marriage. Both Olivia and Josephine try to express their doubts and fear about marriage while at the same time they also express the possibility for them of getting married, by giving disagreement upon the opinion about how bad a marriage is without fully rejecting it.

They implicitly say that it is not right that marriage is bad, but it is also wrong to say that marriage is always good. So, we can see the value of marriage believed by the characters that marriage is a process of tolerating their spouses, to find the similar thing between them. Sometimes there are bad things in a marriage where they have to lie for something in order to keep the sweet thing between them. But there are also good things on the marriage which make marriage become something worth to fight up.

In other words, we may say that urban women presume that being married is important, but being a single is also enjoyable. It has never been a mistake to be single. There are lots of thing that people could do outside marriage, and there are many reasons to approve one's decision, and if someone decides to get married and be a fully mother, she could do it since she wants it, without being denigrated by other people.

What urban women say about marriage shows the readers about their position toward this thing. Hence, we can figure the value of marriage according to urban women as part of their identity. At a certain point they are very afraid of the change that may occur after they get married, but at other point, deep inside their heart they also believe in marriage by saying that marriage is not that bad,



which means that they still have expectation upon this institution. Being a single or married woman is an option.

2. Work and Career

Another thing that implies the identity of the women is about having suitable job. The women in the novel are trying hard to get qualified jobs that are comfortable for them, but at the same time they no longer think that having a job is necessity to financially support them. For them, their job should be something fun, the one that will make them feel comfortable in doing it, so, here, financial factor is not the biggest consideration in determining the most wanted job. This characteristic is shown from the portrayal of Olivia during her process in getting a right job. She has to move on from one career to another—a waiter of Pizza Hut, a waiter in Italian restaurant, staff of the local library, and personal assistant—since she does not feel comfortable with them. She also tries to fail her own interview after she figures out that the job offered is not something that she wants. It takes quite long time and sacrifices from her to successfully achieve what she always wants to do for her life: be a writer. It also happens to Josephine who always wants to be a model in magazine (19). She is very happy to call her three-day model in a year as her career compares to the other jobs that she has done.

Career is very important for Olivia and her friends since it is one of the two fundamental things that she need in life (4). The word fundamental means essential, basic rule or principles. Here, these girls define career as an essential thing in their life means that career is the basic thing that they have to have and

fight in life. Career is not aimed to achieve money, but it is about existence. Career determines their existence as a woman. Having career means someone exists, since her partners in her work place need her. She can show her ability through her job. She is a normal woman whenever she has a career and she has to fight for her career since it is not easy to find the suitable ones for her. Olivia finds that her job in *Vixen* is something that she really wants. She enjoys it for its challenges and hard working and also the hectic, and everything that happens surrounding her (262-275).

The new style about urban women's career states if someone is economically independent, and if she has, to give, a vital interest in her work of her own she will have tried many ways to give the least thing that is humanly possible to give. Other things may die, but her work has to go on. This is proven when Olivia is asked to quit her job in *Vixen* by her husband. She rejects it by saying that today is nineties and women of nineties are different where they can have good home and good career at the same time. Olivia imagines herself leaving the job that she has always wants, and it drives her mad. She loves all the deadlines, telephones and all the things she do with her partners much more than all the jobs in the house which only consists of checking the answering machines and going to the fridge every hour to fill up the emptiness. She does not have to do any housekeeping either since her husband is very rich so that she can have a maid to help her do the work. She argues to her husband that she simply cannot do that. She insists that she not to give up her job. She is even ready to leave the car that she usually uses for her daily work and take the train right after her husband

asks her to quit and does not let her to use the car. (286-288). This thing shows of how Olivia will do anything to keep her job that she will not let anyone take it from her, including her husband. Her job justifies Olivia's existence as individual. She feels that she has the ability to do something that is needed by other people, by her partners in *Vixen*, and finally by the readers. To be someone needed is an application of her existence. Until she has done that, she cannot go back and she will not. She believes that she can maintain her home and career at the same time. She does not have to choose one of them.

3. Sexuality

Wolf writes that traditional value puts man as the subject of sexuality and woman as the object. Here, she states that men are desired to women, while women never put themselves to be desired by men. Women desire to be desired (307). Through that value, it is believed that in the sexuality life, women only do the passive sexual activity while men have the active ones. Women are trying to make themselves as sensual as they could be, so they could attract men. A woman desires to make man desired with her; her body, performance, sexual appeal, not desire to the men themselves. This is seen in the novel when Olivia lists the beautiful parts of her body that she thinks it will impress Ricky, compare to those belong to Josephine since she thinks that Josephine's are better (21). She tends to compare her body with other woman since she wants to figure the ideal one that will be desired by man. She also does the same thing during her bath to see what her body lacks as some problems to overcome (24). This is the process of Olivia's

identification upon someone that she considers her as someone she wants to be and how she wants to be viewed different with those whom she does not want to be stereotyped to. On the contrary, we can also see some parts in the novel which put women in the new position where the urban women in the novel easily say how men's sexual appeal have attracted them. This is seen when Olivia and Leila agree that their future lodger, Ricky Caldwell, has the sexiest voice imaginable, so smoky, and drawling and husky, with a hint of Celtic (13). Olivia and Leila have no doubt to say what are interesting from Ricky and how much both of women are desired by. Furthermore, Olivia often let herself imagine all the sensual things about Ricky that make her aroused. Olivia herself often has fantasies about having sex with Ricky.

The new position of these women allows them to be desired by men. They are now able to figure out the beautiful things of the guys that make them desired. There is no taboo in expressing their curiosity of men's sexual appeal, including the size of their genital organ (291). But they are also still on the old spot where they are trying hard to make men desire them since it makes them desired too—desire to be desired. This shows the development of women area in sexuality life.

Sexuality means a lot for the urban women as they regard it as an important aspect of their life. Josephine even believes that sexual fusion is the key element in any marriage (291), which means that for her, sexuality plays the most important role in keeping any marriage. Furthermore she states to Olivia that sexuality in a relationship is just like eating ice cream or reading book and other daily activities:

Olivia, you are nineties girl. You live in a society where you are not allowed to eat ice cream, read a book, go to the movies or wear a pair of Levi's without having sex...(115)

Urban women are girls living in the year of nineties. Living in nineties era leads to different life and viewpoint compare to the previous. Being nineties girl means having new 'considerations' to follow or to do as all the considerations that reflect the life of nineties girls according to Josephine.

4. Lifestyle and Image

Meyer Schapiro via Adlin defines style as a constant shape of elements, qualities, and expressions of individual or group including lifestyle and civilization style. While Alvin Toffler via Adlin, defines style as tool used by someone to express his or her identification to certain subculture. Lifestyle includes the way someone organizes product and idea (166). From the definition above, we can simply say that lifestyle is a matter of identity where you could not separated one of another. As lifestyle is an identification process, we can determine an identity of certain people, which belongs to certain subculture.

Adlin suggests that lifestyle offers you the sense of identity and it also functions to avoid someone from getting confused for so many choices around (166). With so many choices around, someone will always choose to have certain lifestyle in order to have an identity of her own or certain group. Then, discussing lifestyle is one way to determine the identity in which someone belongs. The word

'style', according to *Oxford*, means: way of life of an individual or group...' Here, way of life means how someone or group carry on her or their daily life.

Since lifestyle consists of the way someone decides to carry on, there are several aspects in the novel that will discuss to determine to determine the lifestyle of these women. According to Cheney, the writer of *Lifestyles*, lifestyle is a pattern of actions of someone to differ him from the other people around (40). By having different lifestyle, you become a person different from others surrounding you. Hence, he mentions several things to be seen as lifestyles, such as appearance, entertainment, hobby, sports, books to read, etc. (70). Then, in this part will figure those things to be seen from these women to conclude their lifestyles.

Appearance is not merely about what someone is wearing. It includes the body shape and outer performances, the fashion. Olivia and her friends are women with big attention upon this issue. The size and shape of the body is very important thing for them. The ideal body according to Olivia is beautiful cheekbones, long and un-hairy legs, slim body, slim thighs, and big breast. Sometimes she even compares her body to her friends' as Josephine or Leila since she often thinks that theirs are better than hers (21&24). Moreover, about fashion, these women regard outlooks as something to maintain. They give big attention toward the 'correct' appearance. One day, when Olivia is about to face a job-interview, Josephine and Leila help her to determine what dress and the accessories to wear. They even do the clothes-exchange between them to get the perfect performance. At the same time, it also portrays on how Josephine is very

neat and careful in organizing her complete and lots of wardrobe (5). When Olivia is in fight to Josephine and Leila for getting Ricky's attention during his early days in the house, she determines to use her best new dress to wear since she thinks that putting the right outfit is one of her ammunition for the fight (23). Once, Olivia splurged her entire week's salary on a new suit with a short skirt and trim jacket to make her more confident and easier to pass early days in her new job (66). This new suit helps Olivia to feel better. Appearance is one of the basic things required to maintain by these women in order feel positive about themselves and make them able to fight and do other things in their life. Good appearance is one of their sources of strength to face challenges in life.

The importance of performance is not only a matter of determining the right mode of clothes, but it is also about the brand they are consuming. By looking at the well-known brand as *Jigsaw* suits, and *Estee Lauder* make up that Olivia is expecting to buy whenever she has money (188), it says about role of brand upon these women's appearance. When Olivia and Josephine discuss about appearance, both of them are talking about the right color of make up that they will use for the wedding, which color is suitable for their face and which color that will only drive them to look horrible (196) as what Olivia believes of herself for being a winter girl that she has to put on light color dress (23). This adornment of the body by many different ways, such as clothing, make up, accessories, etc, expresses the fundamental dimension of group identification process—of who and what they consider themselves to be and not be.

According to James Laver via Baldwin et al., clothing is motivated by three basic principles: utility—clothes can serve a useful purpose, hierarchy—clothes can distinguish us in social status, and attraction/seduction—clothes are designed for purpose of sexual attraction (290). In the novel, those women show that they are encouraged with the three motivations. They use clothes of course in order as useful purpose to cover their body as an essential requirement in life. The second motivation is shown from how they regard the importance of dressing the right clothes with certain price and brands to maintain their certain status that distinguishes them from those who do not do those things. The last motivation also exists within these women since they also aware of the right clothes to wear in order to create sexual attraction. Olivia does this when Ricky appears for the first time in the house as the new lodger. She was wearing her nightshirt to welcome Ricky; she was told that he was very gorgeous that she wanted to look sexy when they met for the first time (15).

Olivia and her friends are urban women who would spend their money for having fun in nightclubs as their entertainment. They are accustomed to have schedule of going there. Olivia herself even, avoids to work after seven thirty in the evenings since she has just invested in a month's clubbing pass and she does not want to miss it (6). Here, she puts nightclubs as an important a part of her daily life, as something that entertains her and her friends. When Ricky moves to the house, all the members of the house decided to hold a party as a celebration of his new moving (27).

Lifestyle is something done by certain people to create an image. In other words, someone is imaged based on the lifestyle that she has. Image and lifestyle are inter-related. According to Josephine, image is something important for her and her friends. That is the reason why she is very selective in determining a new lodger for them. When a woman comes to the house and proposes to be their new lodger, Josephine decides to refuse her since, according to her, the woman is too fat that she will ruin Josephine and her lodger's image then they will not be able to have fun with the woman around them (12). It is a matter of appearance, which has been discussed above, of having good or "right" shape and size of the body. Josephine creates an image based on the difference between she and her friends compare to the woman. The difference will show who is included and excluded upon an identity. The fat woman is excluded from their image, that is why she is not part of them.

An image is created and imposed to the people to gain acceptance and existence. The image of urban women in *Olivia's Bliss* is stated obviously through their act and opinion about how ideal metropolis woman is portrayed as the one with good performance, total sex included-relationship, glamorous life with parties, night lives, fun, etcetera. Being an urban woman indicates a nineties girl with those lifestyles.

The other important thing to be discussed is the book read by these women as part of these women's lifestyle. *Cosmopolitan*—or it is often mentioned as *Cosmo*—is the woman magazine mentioned several times in the novel. For Olivia and her friends, mentioning the word *Cosmo* is a custom during their daily

conversation. It seems like *Cosmo* is very familiar to them that they do not even need to explain what *Cosmo* is since everybody around them already accustomed with that term. Moreover, they are also never asking or being asked of why they should choose *Cosmo*, why not other media, for example newspaper, gardening magazine, or family magazine, etcetera. *Cosmo* is women magazine that mainly discuss about women including sexuality, lifestyle, image, fashion, etc. It is mostly written by women for women and talks about women issue, it also gives big attention upon women's interest. Urban woman are those who has big interest upon those issues.

How these women look upon *Cosmo* as the book they read is strengthened by the opinion of Josephine about regarding *Cosmo* as her bible (4). Bible is a religious book to be the reference of the reader. It shows them how to carry on their life. So if Josephine believes that *Cosmo* is her bible, means that she will put *Cosmo* as her reference. This is seen through several acts that show how these women view *Cosmo* as part of their life.

The first one is when Josephine says to Olivia that her waist is only twenty-three-inches and *Cosmo* says something about it (128). It reflects the big concern of Josephine about *Cosmo*'s opinion. Even in the novel, Josephine does not finish what is *Cosmo*'s opinion about her twenty—three—inches waist, the problem to be discussed here is why would she mentions *Cosmo* magazine as her reference. Why does not she mention about her doctor's or her mom's opinion or other sources that could be more reliable from scientific point of view. It is clear that for Josephine what *Cosmo* says about appearance is more important that

other's opinion. She will feel relieved when she is already fulfilled what the *Cosmo* expect about her appearance.

The next thing that emerges in the novel is about how these women put *Cosmo* as their reference about sexiness. For these women, appearance is not merely about the size of certain or all part of your body, but furthermore, they are expecting themselves to be good looking and also sexy at the same time. By fulfilling certain size of the body does not always means sexy for these women. That is why they need an admission that they are sexy by filling the form entitled "How Sexy Are You" provided by *Cosmo* as its beauty quiz (140). The same question emerges of why they only care an admission given by *Cosmo*. Why do not they feel sexy because of they really are, without any agreement of *Cosmo* by fulfilling the standard given in the magazine.

In life, some people expect to do the right thing in the right way, especially for the big things. One of the big issues among adult women is about finding the right man. For some women, they have big curiosity in determining their perfect match, or whether there is a perfect one for them. Olivia and Josephine are discussing about this during the preparation of their double marriage. Olivia's cousin asks them about how they know that their future husbands—at the moment—are the right persons. The discussion about philosophical thing of love also applies *Cosmo* as the reference. Josephine believes that all of the people have their own perfect match as what is stated in *Cosmo* they are all destined to meet their perfect match in anywhere in the world (194).

Moreover, it is said in the novel that metropolis magazine is a need for urban women as one of their education to face metropolis life: “You have read every issue of *Cosmo* since you were thirteen years, you cannot claim that you have not been thoroughly educated....”(115)

What does she suppose to expect by being educated by *Cosmopolitan* magazine since she were thirteen year old? It is clear that *Cosmopolitan* is not dedicated for children, but the big question is whether thirteen years old is considered as child or adult, or it is the proper time for a child to make *Cosmo* as part of her learning. Furthermore, the period from thirteen up to twenty something is quite long; it is about ten years or so. It is such a time for customary process for someone to make something—*Cosmo*—as apart of her life where she cannot separate her life from it.

Cosmopolitan is a magazine of modern lifestyle. Hence, women magazine and urban women are just like two sides of the same coin; they cannot separate from one to another. Here, it is seen that by putting *Cosmo* as part of their daily life, urban women try to put it as part of their lifestyles. If someone wants to be a metropolis woman, she has to recognize *Cosmopolitan*, read it, and perform like what is presumed inside the magazine.

To be part of urban women community, there is image that women have to have. There are symbols to maintain, and these are part of being within this community. Lifestyle and image become one of the basic needs of being human. For urban women in the novel, these two things consist of the appearance or good looking, good clothes, nightclubs, total-sex included relationship, and also

Cosmopolitan magazine. There are needs to be famous, to be someone important, someone accepted in certain community. Urban women are a community, and whenever someone has decided to join this community, they surely have to fit the status.

B. The Identity's Shifting

According to Macdonald, the main characteristic of the new identity of women in the city is the shifting between the femininity side and the feminist objectives inside it. Here, this part will examine the identity of urban women above from this viewpoint by identifying the shifting that happens: the blur barrier of femininity side and the feminist objectives. Patriarchal world nowadays is not merely identified as anything done by men to women. Hence, it is now represented in more powerful way in many sides within society. It is there, beneath our brain. It works outside our consciousness. There are not only men who stand for patriarchal, but also women. According to Tyson patriarchal woman is a woman who has internalized the norms and values of patriarchy, which can be defined as any culture that privileges men by promoting traditional gender roles. Traditional gender roles cast men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive; they cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive (83). Hence, the femininity of women is regarded as patriarchal oppression since this behavior is created under patriarchal construction.

New identity of urban woman puts Olivia as someone who considers love as the reason of accepting Henry's proposal since she believes that her love is the

justification of her marriage. At the same time, after Olivia has just accepted the proposal, she begins to reconsider about her decision. She realizes that by marrying him, all her problems are solved—money, writing, love, future, all sewn up for the next sixty-odd years (187). Sir Henry Caldwell whom Olivia will marry is a well-known literary big man who owns about twenty publishing companies and houses. He has a show of literary discussion contains of popular writer and guests. He also writes some books and literary criticism (20). So it is imaginable how rich he is.

When Olivia realizes who the man is she about to marry, she begins to imagine the kind of life she will have; first is about love. She finds herself helplessly falling in love with him and she will finally marry him. It means that she will have to live with someone most wanted for her. Then, she does not have to worry about money since her life will be overwhelmed with huge amount of money where she is also able to finance her mother too—which in the story, soon after she gets married, Henry gives one of his houses to her mother. Next is about her career. Olivia has always wanted to be a writer, but she never had the chance. By marrying Henry, she will have not just bigger, but very much bigger opportunity to reach out her dream. It means that Olivia realizes how many fortunes she will get by marrying the man. Her future is in granted. Jackson via Dixon says that love is always defined as part of feminine sphere (174). Here, the feminine side of Olivia is seen from the part where she is portrayed as the one who is able to love a man and regard marriage as something joyful since she finally together with a man she loves. While all the fortunes that Olivia is grateful

about by marrying him shows that she can be considered as patriarchal woman since she depends her life to a man that she cannot stand on her own effort to overcome her problems. But if it is analyzed deeper, it actually shows how smart she is. She is aware in using her power to fulfill her dreams and also solve her problems at the same time in one instant way. The awareness of this woman leads her into her feminist side.

There is one interesting point to be discussed behind Olivia's decision to marry Henry. As has been told that Olivia loves the idea of marriage which shows her feminine side, and at the same time she realizes the benefits that she will get by marrying Henry. The interesting point here is Olivia's feminist side that actually agonize the other woman at the same. The other woman here is Agatha, Henry's former wife. Outside Henry's reason to divorce Agatha, which according to him is because both of them do not love each other anymore and that Agatha is dreadful to him, it can be seen that Olivia gets her happiness—her marriage—by repressing Agatha's right of her marriage with Henry. Then, it is seen that Olivia establishes her right by violating other woman's right. Her feminist side is only for herself, not for other woman. On the contrary, it is against the spirit of feminist itself.

Macdonald states that feminist thinking questioned women's natural talent for caring and reconstructed this as a social imposition placed on women for men's convenience. Feminists encourage women to get out of their homes to develop their potential (95). Here, having a good career is an important aspect for urban women where they are no longer wanting to be bound by the value of

staying home and be the mistress of their spouse, even if they have already lived in prosperity, for them job is a need to be a real human, and even if they have to face two opposite things between home or career, urban women will try her best not to leave one of them, as what Olivia thinks: “I can have good home and good career—this is nineties, it’s different for women now” (287). The fight between Olivia and her husband, Henry, when he asks her to quit from her job drives her mad. She insists that she can maintain the two different things that she does not have to choose one of them. She can be a good wife taking care the house, while at the same time she also goes on with her career. Furthermore, she finds out that the house does not need her badly since Henry is so rich that he can afford a servant to do all the housekeeping. Then, she considers that her career will enliven her life rather than staying in the house and does nothing but “drifting uselessly around the house like a lump of driftwood, or checking *1471* to see if anyone might have called” (286). Olivia is a model of urban women who uses all he might to fight for her job where she has to rebut her husband.

Olivia realizes that she has the ability to work outside the house: to have a career. She refuses to give her personal interests, month by month, for the sake of her work. She is not the one who feels happy to be dropped by men whenever they wanted. One day, Henry says that Olivia should stay home since he has finished writing his books and now he wants to spend more time with his wife (287). He wants her to give up her job for the sake of accompanying him at home, and when Olivia refuses it, this shows the intention of equality of Olivia. When Henry is so busy with his books and does not have much time for her, she

never asks him to give up his job. But then, when the opposite happens, Henry finds that Olivia is too busy doing his writing career in *Vixen*, he asks her to quit. He does not think of Olivia's days when she is alone without him, but now he wants Olivia to think about his loneliness without her. This is the feminist issue brought by Olivia in avoiding inferior position compared to her husband.

Olivia takes pride in becoming a writer in the *Vixen*, something she has always wanted, to take part and to become a vital factor in *Vixen*. She thinks that she also needs her job as Henry does. The same thing also applied when she also needs Henry in her days as if Henry needs her. That is why she expects that Henry will understand her activity and job as she always understands his activity and job. Olivia wants to put her position equal to Henry.

Olivia also has the idea of being a good wife in the house—good home. She once thought about living happily with her husband and children by she taking care of them daily. That is before she realizes that she will not be able to do anything in the house since Henry can afford to a pay servant to do the house keeping. This is considered as the femininity side of her where traditional gender roles put women at that position of feeling great about the house keeping. But, as Macdonald says, recognizing the possibility of pleasure in domestic activity when that is consciously chosen by women rather than structurally enforced (96), it is not sure whether Olivia really thinks of the idea because she is under patriarchal value or not. Even if she is not graduated from any university degree, but only spending some time in college before she finally drops out, Olivia is educated enough to be able to choose what she likes or wants with her life. It is proven

when she warns herself about the housekeeping thing that may be part of her new life after she gets married which means it will be burdensome for her and takes away her freedom. But still, she likes the idea once even if she has the option of not doing that.

As mentioned before, this new identity brings women to be aware of their power and desire as women where they recognize men as their partner in love life and in doing work. Through the modern era, women's opinion about their need of men is no longer abandoned. At this moment, women are free to express their feeling of how they regard men to be part of their life. To have someone that you love is something blissful and blessed.

Through the novel, we are told that women today are very open and aware about their sexual power against men that they are now can take part in holding a good and suitable relation, for example when we figure out how Olivia tries to satisfy and seduce her spouse by using her ability of inebriate striptease (138), or when she and Leila declare that they will walk naked from the bathroom to her room so that they will be seen by the gorgeous man that will be their new lodger (12). These women are actively enjoying their sexual pleasure. They realize the way on how to be seductive and anxious to learn how to please their men by filling the *Cosmo* beauty quiz about how sexy they are since sexy body is something pleasant for men. At the same time, having a sexy body is also pleasing themselves as women. Here, it is seen that those women are able to control their sexual position as self-indulgent and also the need to satisfy men, which means they be the object of men's sexual desire.

In understanding femininity, we will not release the aspect of women's body since femininity is the attributes that are conventionally associated with the condition of being female within a specific culture (Macdonald: 224). It is for sure that in any culture in the world, female are always related to beauty. That's why Macdonald suggests that "in this era, traditional female preoccupations such as men or body-care were not abandoned, but now women are urged to travel light and indulge themselves, not others" (94). Urban women are aware of their body and appearance as their sexual appeal as shown in Olivia's manner by splurging her entire week's salary on a new suit with a short skirt and trim jacket since she thinks that it would impress her boss—Henry Caldwell (66). She wants to please him by her appearance so that he will give more attention upon her. Olivia thinks that getting attention from her boss expresses her existence in front of him.

They are aware of what is needed for them to be good-looking, not only to please others, but more important is to please their own selves. These women pay more attention toward them in order to respect their status as women. Feminist point of view objects the objectification of women's body to please men as an oppression towards women, but today, new erotica of women to gain attention from male can be defined as the controlling women upon their body to express what they want and how they could use their sexual appeal to reach their aim. Women's sexual pleasure does not have to be the secondary place to men's.

In this era, women are having the chance to have their own romantic fantasies that are enacted as a new playfulness with a new style (100). Olivia often lets herself imagine all the sensual things about Ricky that make her desired.

Olivia herself often has fantasies about having sexual activity with Ricky, when she thinks that she is in love with him. She always imagines how she is seducing Ricky or at other time how she is being seduced by him. These sexual fantasies of woman intensify connotations of the feminine woman as enigmatic and narcissistic, inhabiting a private universe that makes her convenient repository for male rather than female imagining. At the same time, women are also able to speak out about their sexuality in the first-person conventional feature as what has been done by Josephine in confessing her sexuality to Olivia (291).

Men are important, but in some points women need to be stand equally to men where they could live independently without any help from men. This is proven by the expression of Josephine when she figures out Olivia's worry about being pregnant without any husband to support the living and to acknowledge the baby: "A nourishing female influence is enough!"(477). Through this statement, we are told that women are still able to save their own life. Women have the power to fulfill what they need by their own ability. Another protest also delivered by these women in facing some facts around them that –according to them—often put them in inferior position or the become object of men. Olivia holds up an absurdly short skirt since she thinks that it will impress men by saying that it is the type of thing workmen fall of roofs for. But then, Josephine forbids her to do so. She says " They'll spend the interview looking at your legs-you'll get it for sure..." (5).

To perform something outside the habit where the world is created for you is uneasy. Women are used to perform in order to fulfill the demand of the value

already achieved. They have to keep fighting to gain better result. Women of today are those with the spirit of competence to show their best potential compare to men.

Lifestyle and image become one of the basic needs for urban women in the novel, it consists of the appearance or good looking, good clothes, nightclubs, total-sex included relationship', and also *Cosmopolitan* magazine. Fashion feature urges women to discover the new freedom of fashion that it is about free spirit and about being able to flirt with different looks. This fashion is urging them simultaneously to discover freedom as the capturing of the feminist spirit and to 'flirt' with their appearance as the femininity side of women. The fashion of these women retains the essentially mystery of femininity while paradoxically acknowledging women's claims to freedom. Hence, it expresses the shifting that happens toward the identity of urban woman in the novel. Even, actually this freedom is done on the expense of other woman. This is seen on the moment when Josephine rejects a woman who proposes to be the new lodger in the house since according to Josephine this woman is too fat, and it will ruin her and her friend's image.

Based on that, by not letting the woman enter the house, Josephine is violating other woman's right to be seen equally and not based on appearance only. Here, she discriminates the woman by oppressing her to follow her viewpoint if she wants to be accepted. She does not respect the woman's choice about appearance or furthermore she even does not give her chance to choose. The spirit of feminism gives chance to all women in the world to be seen equally

of the society—the patriarchal world. The right thing is considered to the right thing according to the society. They are disabled to perform as what they like or they want because sometime they do not have bravery to do that, or even more they do not know what they want since they never have a chance to express or figure it out. Women are often judged based on their sexual appeal, symbolized by short skirt which is actually chosen by Olivia without any physical demand from others, but she does not realize what she is doing because she wants to impress men—the interviewer—as unconscious patriarchal values inside her. But here, through this novel, through the character of Josephine, one thing that emerges is the idea that women of today are not the same with previous time. They are aware upon this issue and they want to be judged not only for their performance but also their brain as the men do. Or it can be understood as the opposite way, that finally Olivia has to follow the patriarchal value which says that men tend to see her legs during interview that she had better avoid using short skirt, even if deep inside her heart Olivia wants to use it because she just wants to use any clothes that she wants freely without any rules forbid her to. So here, by avoiding wearing the short skirt can be determined as feminist objectives or vice versa, the sign of living under patriarchal value: woman follows the rule of patriarchal that forbid her to use short-skirt during interview since it is considered as something not polite and will attract man, even if that is the clothes that she wants to wear.

There is an image created by these women where they are women who is trying their best to fulfill their potential, and not rest on their laurels (MacDonald 93). This means that women are encouraged not being satisfied with what they has

whatever they look like and provides chance for them to choose on how they want to pass their life without being interrupted by other people.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

From the novel *Olivia's Bliss*, the writer views that the identity of urban women portrayed in it can be seen from what they say, uses or act. The urban women here are the main character, Olivia, and also her lodgers: Leila and Josephine. Hence, the writer determines the identity from several aspects: love and marriage, work and career, sexuality, and also lifestyle and image.

From their viewpoint of love and marriage, urban women in the novel presume that being married is important, but being a single is also enjoyable. For them, being single is never mistaken since there are a lot of things that people could do outside getting married. Getting married is necessary but there is no certain time to do that, and if someone decides to get married and be a mother, she could do it for she wants it, without being denigrated by other people. On one point, they are afraid of the change that may occur after they get married, but at other point, they have expectation upon marriage. Being a single or married woman is an option.

In the second aspect, urban women can be seen as those who believes that they are nineties girls with the ability to have good home and good career at the same time. Doing the house keeping or running for their career is an option since they are aware of the consequence. Even so, they mostly think that career is the fundamental thing of their life where it expresses their existence as an individual.

The sexuality aspect of these urban women says that they are now aware of self indulgent and self-pleasure. Women's pleasure of sexuality should not be in the secondary position to men. These urban women know how to flirt to pleasure or seduce their men while at the same time they are doing that to get their own pleasure. They put sexuality as part of their relationship.

Urban women are seen as those who have image and lifestyle to maintain. Lifestyle and image become one of their basic needs. For urban women in the novel, it consists of the appearance or good looking, good clothes, nightclubs, parties, total-sex included relationship', and also *Cosmopolitan* magazine.

Then, we able to determine the identity of urban women that they are aware of choice to be still single or getting married, to have good home and good career at the same time and how important career is as the expression of individual existence. They are also aware of their sexual power and appeal not only to seduce and please men, but also to please themselves since they have the control of it and their pleasure of sexuality is as important as men's. They are community with image and lifestyle that is different with those outside them.

This identity of urban women in the novel expresses the new identity of women stated by Myra Macdonald who believes that this new identity is shifting. The shifting that happens is between feminine and feminist viewpoint. Feminine side is considered as the characteristics of patriarchal condition, which is the opposite of feminist point of view who rejects anything considered as patriarchal. Here, the new identity of urban women contains these two contradictive sides

within the same person. They are feminine at one side and also feminist at the other side.

At the same time, by establishing their feminist perspective, these women are sometimes violating other women's right. The urban women in the novel are able to achieve their aim by oppressing other's women. They stand their feminist objectives on the expense of other women which means that they are against the spirit of the feminist itself.

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SYNOPSIS

In *Olivia's Bliss*, there is Olivia, a twenty-seven-year-old-single women and lives in London. She does not finish her bachelor degree since she feel bored of formal education and it leads to 2,2 GPA. She is still unable to find the equitable job since she always has trouble with any job that she does. She lives with her flat mates Josephine and Leila and they are having race on to hook the gorgeous, loveable, perfect Ricky, the only guy in their flat. But then, Olivia finds herself helpless against his boss' powerful personality and sexual magnetism. He is Ricky's father named Sir Henry Caldwell.

After she is finally married to Henry Caldwell, she finds out the fact that she is not in love with him since she only looks for a father figure in him. Henry makes her feel that she is nothing compare to him. She realizes that she only loves Ricky Caldwell that always makes her feel worth. It happens through their honeymoon in India where Ricky also joins them after he failed to marry Josephine in their "two marriage" arrangement. At the time Josephine and Ricky plan to have wedding ceremony together with Olivia and Henry. The situation is getting difficult for Olivia ever since Henry gets her a new job in the same place where Ricky belongs. But then Olivia can hang on and persists not to cheat on Henry since she always avoids for Ricky's conversation about both of them, she wants to regard Ricky as she used to be: friend. When finally Ricky decides to marry to Josephine on the second chance, Olivia finds herself really painful, but