

Thesis: In *Corregidora*, the act of sex is a mechanism through which the novel's male characters maintain their power over the women. This, then, asserts that the men in the novel serve the purpose of mirroring Mr. Corregidora and thus Ursula's experiences are modernized reflections of those experienced by her mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, which, in turn, is a mirror itself for the way in which the oppressed sometimes take on the characteristics of imperialist hegemonies.

Topic Sentence: Ursula has her womb nonconsensually removed from her body as a result of her female identity, which is an instance of testimonial injustice.

Example from primary text: "I'm your husband. You listen to me, not to them . . . The doctors in the hospital said my womb would have to come out . . . They said when I was delirious I was cursing him and the doctors and nurses out" (3).

Analysis: Due to Mutt's abuse and allowing the doctor to perform the surgery on Ursula, Ursula loses her ability to have children. This illustrates an instance of testimonial injustice in that, due to her female identity, Ursula receives a credibility deficit and thus does not have autonomy over what happens to her body.

Evidence from research: "There can be operations of power which are dependent upon agents having shared conceptions of social identity—conceptions alive in the collective social imagination that govern, for instance, what it is or means to be a woman or a man . . . Broadly speaking, prejudicial dysfunction in testimonial practice can be of two kinds. Either the prejudice results in the speaker's receiving more credibility than she otherwise would have—a credibility excess—or it results in her receiving less credibility than she otherwise would have—a credibility deficit" (Fricker).

Wrap up: As a result of Ursula's female identity, which is conceived by the collective consciousness to be hierarchically lower than a male identity, she receives a credibility deficit by both Mutt and the doctor which ultimately leads to her hysterectomy.

Topic sentence: Sexual violence is the mechanism through which Mr. Corregidora oppressed his slaves and the other male characters in the novel oppress Ursula.

Example from text: "Her father, the master. Her daughter's father. The father of her daughter's daughter . . . how many generations had to bow to his genital fantasies?" (59).

Analysis: In fathering both Ursula's great-grandmother and Ursula's grandmother, Mr. Corregidora reinforces his power over his slaves and the Corregidora bloodline. Connecting to a central theme of the novel, the notion that Ursula's value comes from her ability to "make generations," violence is a way through which oppression can be asserted over a generational timeline.

Evidence from research: "Thus, violence in one way may seem to be an obvious way for one group to dominate another . . . how largely can one-sided violence continue for generations?" (Cudd).

Wrap up:

Ursa's performing of fellatio on her ex-husband Mutt at the end of the novel represents Ursa's sexual liberation, as fellatio is extremely close to emasculation and is described as "a moment of broken skin but not sexlessness, a moment just before sexlessness, a moment that stops just before sexlessness." This, then, is an inversion of the power dynamic between the men and women throughout the novel, as the act is vacant of sexuality.