

What about Gender in 2137? Marge Piercy's Androgynous Future in *Woman on the Edge of Time**

Luca Sarti

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Abstract

The present study aims to shed light on the reconfiguration of gender in Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976), hailed as a classic of science fiction.

After a brief introduction to the novel, the paper explores how gender and sexuality play a pivotal role in producing discrimination in two dystopian New Yorks of the same planet, but far away in time – one in the present of the 1970s, the other in a distant future. Subsequently, taking into account the research carried on until now, the focus is on 2137 Mattapoisett, a utopian gender-free society. The ideal androgynous world is gradually discovered by Connie Ramos, the protagonist of the story, who time travels intermittingly into the future with the power of her mind to temporarily escape from her frightening time. Notably, with an eye on the present, gender is investigated as it is reconfigured through language, especially through the genderless pronominal system created by Piercy in order to depict a better future society for all human beings. This reconfiguration is brought about by the author through the creation of an androgynous future society where the links between biological sex and gender identity, sexual orientation, reproduction, and parenting have been broken once and for all.