

The Impact of the Feminist Movement and Sisterhood in Wendy Wasserstein's *The Sisters Rosensweig*¹

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ABSTRACT

The Nineteenth and Twentieth century was considered the major turning points in the history of America which witnessed the uprising of the social, economic and political fields. It was the time for America to transform from a rural into industrial country.

The two centuries witnessed a new kind of revolution that helped women to end the injustice and oppression they experienced for many years. The Feminist Movement contributed to obtain the women's legal and social rights. As social observer, the Feminist playwrights helped the movement to spread its ideas and views through their dramatic productions.

One of the Feminist playwrights that was considered the voice of her generation was Wendy Wasserstein who devoted her plays to depict women and their problems through the second half of the twentieth century. Wasserstein was described as an author of women's identity crises. Her heroines were intelligent and successful, but unfortunately without self-confidence.

Wendy Wasserstein (1950- 2006) was born in New York. She was the daughter of Morris Wasserstein, a textile manufacturer and Lola Schleifer Wasserstein who emigrated from Poland to America when Germany occupied Poland during the World War II. At the age of eleven, her family moved to settle in the upper side of Manhattan where she attended a series of young women schools. She received her B. A. degree from Mount Holyoke in 1971, and her M. A. degree from City College where she studied Creative Writings.

What motivated Wasserstein to be a playwright is her experience to observe the American culture. She is considered the most influential American dramatists and the voice of her generation. The research discusses Wasserstein's *The Sisters Rosensweig* (1993), which depicts the life of three middle-aged sisters who reunite again to help each other to move to the next stage of their life.

Keywords: *Feminist Movement; Sisterhood; Women's rights; Sara; Pfeni; Gorgeous.*

INTRODUCTION

The Sisters Rosensweig was published in 1992 by the Dramatists Play Service in New York, and it received the critics' admiration for its humor. The play earned the playwright's Outer Critics Circle Award and Tony Award Nomination for the best play in 1993. (Galens, David 2003, 212). Wasserstein regarded it as her most serious effort; she was surprised that the audience responded to the humor rather than the more serious dimensions of the play. Actually, her seriousness emerged from the humor that was part of her social analysis to her plays (Biggsby, C. W. E. 2004, 379). It is unlike her previous plays; this work is a non-episodic play, complete with the unities of time, place and action.

The play gained appreciation for its representation of the spirit of time, the moral and social events, and trends of the late 1980s. All the characters engage in deep intellectual and thoughtful arguments about the issues of their times, like the fall of the Soviet Union regime, the Lithuanian Resistance, and the efficacy of the American culture and economy. While the events take place through the weekend, the play offers the life of three desperate sisters: Sara, Pfeni and Gorgeous through their celebration of Sara's fifty-fourth birthday. They are all educated, talented and successful in their work. The eldest sister, Sara Goode, divorced twice and recovered herself from a hysterectomy through being a successful banker at Hong Kong bank. She has moved to London to acquire a British accent. She also named her

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daughter Tess from her second husband with reference to Thomas Hardy's heroine in his controversial novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles 1891*. (Krasner, David 2005, 171).

Gorgeous is married to a lawyer who lost his job and is writing mystery novels in the basement, she has four children. They live in Newton, Massachusetts. Sara's third sister, Pfeni is forty years old, and she is a journalist who has a relationship with a theatre director, Geoffrey. Pfeni begins the play by arriving and ends it by leaving. At the end of the play, Sara helps Pfeni to do her best by going to Tajikistan to finish a book she started years ago about the lives of women over there. Tess, Sara's daughter, is a twenty years old and seeking to find her own identity away from her mother's control. She decides to go to Lithuania with her friend, Tom, to have a better life. Later, she changes her mind and stays with her mother (Wakefield, Thaddeus 2004, 19).

The male characters in the play come from different backgrounds. Merv Kant (Mervyn Kantlowits), attends Sara's birthday party. He has an important role in changing Sara's ideas concerning identity, self-loathing, who is in love with Pfeni. He lives his life according to his own standards since he is a liberated model. He tries his best to make Pfeni feel better. Both Nicholas Pym and Tom Valiunus, are the two characters who represent the polarities of the English society, who influence Sara and Tess's notions. Wasserstein is concerned with women protagonists who shouldn't remain alone *"especially in a culture that tries to deny the possibility of love to women over thirty five."* (Murphy, Brenda 1999, 224) She wants to introduce women's dignity on the stage. In an interview, Wasserstein comments on that:

"The fact is, three middle aged women on a stage who are accomplished and successful and not caricatures in our culture is still a surprise. And that's why I wanted to write this play" (Ibid).

The heroines in *The Sisters Rosensweig* are talented, and able to manage their lives in a way that they seem happy with it. they still feel detached from themselves and their lives. In his analysis of Wasserstein's heroines, Bigsby sees that:

"Wasserstein's play is political, in that it engages with the individual's struggle to make sense of changing times, to live according to principles that are generated not out of fashionable beliefs or pragmatic adjustments but out of genuine convictions rooted in a sense of self which is a product of experience. Her heroines show what Hemingway called grace under pressure, but that pressure comes from the struggle to balance biological drives, social ambitions, political commitments with the need to discover the basis on which life can be lived with some dignity" (Bigsby, 347).

Critics praised the play to be the time line of three sisters who are trying to discover their place as women in this world. David Krasner comments saying:

"Wasserstein's The Sisters Rosensweig is a journey of self-discoveries and mutual revelations, filled with joy and sorrow...Sara eventually finds emotional comfort in her reunion with Pfeni and Gorgeous, her two sisters, as well as in the recognition even if temporary of her roots" (Krasner, David, 467).

The Sisters Rosensweig can be considered the modern version of Anton Chekov's immortal *The Three Sisters*. Wasserstein's goal was as she illustrated in an interview:

"Like Chekov, I wanted to write a play dealing in time obsessing about time,...I also wanted to write about the fact that time has passed and you're not going to be all those persons you might have been; you have a history, you have chosen a road, and yes, you did know what you were doing" (Brustein, Robert 1991, 115).

Wasserstein's sisters are the feminist counterparts of Chekov's nineteenth century sisters with careers and choices that Marsha, Olga, and Irina (the characters of Chekov's play) never imagined. Banker, travel writer, and radio personality (in Wasserstein's play) *"replace Chekov's headmistress, telegraph operator, and a wife; because according to Gorgeous "the decade of bimbo is over. ... This is the era of the strong but feminine woman"* (Ibid, 117). The play is also Chekovian in the way it balances comedy and serious issues. While examining serious questions about identity, family, relationships, the American recession, and the predicament of women in mid-life; the play still manages to emerge a comic tone (Christy, Marian 1998, 224).

In *The Sisters Rosensweig*, there are autobiographical references through which Wasserstein admitted that the central characters of her play resemble to some extent herself and her two sisters. Sara, the anglophile, inspired Sara Goode. Her sister Georgette shares some characteristics with the character Gorgeous Teitelbaum, including her nickname and her love for fashion. Pfeni Rosensweig, the wandering journalist is like Wasserstein herself (Parini Jay, 2006, 328).

According to some critics, the play has a feminist appeal in its depiction of generation of women who attempt to fit social roles in search of self-identity. *The Sisters Rosensweig* represents real episodes with characters that are more dynamic and many themes to indulge with. David Galens, in his criticism shows what distinguishes the play most; Galens writes:

" What fuels The Sisters Rosensweig thematically is the issue of identity as it is expressed in or explored by all of Wendy Wasserstein's characters. The play is rich in its representation of women struggling to define themselves against the backdrop of the conventional social roles as a function of their age " (Galens, David, 223).

It is also obvious that the play celebrated the familial bonds that support the people's need for intimation and tenderness. In her essay, Howard Zinn clarifies that *The Sisters Rosensweig* is a chance for the sisters to prove their ability to speak truthfully of their feelings about one another and their past through a birthday party (Zinn, Howard 1980, 226). Wasserstein wanted to celebrate the females' ability to reevaluate their lives to find confidence in themselves to fulfill their dreams. Jan Balakian in her article entitled *Wendy Wasserstein, a Feminist Voice from the Seventies to the Present* said:

" The Sisters Rosensweig is Wasserstein's most skillfully written play to date. ...Its brilliance lies in the balance of humor and the serious issues of identity, self-hatred, and the possibility of romance and love when it seems no longer possible. It is a play of possibilities, not just in terms of a middle-aged love, but in its exploration of characters who discover who they are " (Balakian, Jan 2010, 224).

Thus, *The Sisters Rosensweig* is one of Wasserstein's best plays that represent the issue of middle-aged women, and their transformative power of their reunion to change the course of their lives. It is a story of people in their weekend. According to Robert Brustein's words, the play *" makes us laugh a little, sigh a little, and go home feeling that despite life's confusion and pain, things will somehow work out "* (Brustein, Robert 1991, 78).

2-The Influence of Sisterhood.

In *The Sisters Rosensweig*, Wasserstein created characters that are educated and successful, and they own a social and economic stability that enable them to encounter the difficulties of life. The events of the play focus on the three sisters Sara, Pfeni and Gorgeous, who gather to celebrate Sara's fifty-fourth birthday.

The three sisters are not courageous enough to confront their problems. Still, there is a sense of personal quest in Wasserstein's plays concerning their needs and feelings, who are they? And what they want to do in their lives. It is clearly reflected in Geoffrey's words to Pfeni when he tells her *" you really don't understand what it is to have absolutely no ideas who you are "* (2.2.88). (Wasserstein, Wendy 1993) (All the quotations below from the play are taken from this edition).

In fact, Geoffrey is not just talking about himself; his notion refers to the three sisters. The whole play clarifies two basic principles that the characters have to realize: victory and obstacle. In his textbook for college actors, Robert Cohen illustrates that *" the victory ... is what the character wants. The obstacle is whatever stands in the character's way "* (Barnett, Claudia 1999, 110). Both principles are found in *The Sisters Rosensweig*, the three sisters deep inside are in desperate need to overcome their problems. Therefore, their obstacles and hardships of their lives overdo them.

The three sisters *" need to find Chekhov's Moscow of the spirit, to find place in the world "* (Brantley, Ben 2001, 82). Each sister as Lee Barney asserts: *" struggle with identity crises, trying to rationalize the choices she made in her life "* (Ibid). The three sisters continuously try to find out the answers for questions about identity crises. The life of Sara's Goode summarizes the relationship between the past and present. She grew up in a traditional family in Brooklyn, New York, but for certain reasons she tries to view her past as a symptom of the old world values, and she aggressively nullifies her New York upbringing. Howard Zinn analyses Sara's behavior as *" with her fake British accent, chintz-field house, and snobby beau [she] has done everything short for converting to repudiate her roots in Brooklyn "* (Zinn, Howard 1980, 99). Throughout the play Sara tries to reveal this detachment from her roots whenever it is possible. In one of her arguments with her daughter Tess on how Pfeni tries to relate their roots with their present, Sara comments:

" New York in a way that has a very little to do with us. Pfeni's the only one who's guilty of revisionist history, my luv, Pfeni the one who's romanticized a world we never belonged to " (1.1.9).

Sara believes that she is a self-made woman. For her, her success and fame are totally nothing to do with her family's support and encouragement, she tells her sister Pfeni about the subject of her daughter's thesis:

" Her thesis is to prove that my early years have no bearing on my present life. Frankly, I can hardly remember my early years " (1.1.13).

Sara and Pfeni are obviously " *roiling with disconnect* " (Brantley, Ben 2001, 82). Sara, for instance, describes herself as a miserable woman who according to her daughter, Tess, " *is in desperate need of hope and rebirth* " (1.1.7), Pfeni shares Sara's isolation being away from home. However, Pfeni's reason differs from Sara's. Pfeni as a journalist who travels around the world; she feels isolated from home, and has no specific place to settle in. she is also known as being a woman who would be more emotional and prone to fracture sentimentally, whenever she stays in one place for a while. Pfeni, on the other hand, is unable to leave her unsatisfying job despite being full of restless tasks. This is seen as Tess tells her aunt Pfeni of what her mother Sara thinks of her:

TESS: *" My mother says she worries about me because I'm so Much like you. She says you compulsively travel you Have a fear of commitment, and when you stay in one Place, you become emotional and defensive just like me "*

PFENI: *" Tessie, honey, I'm sorry. I didn't know it was contagious " (1.1.7).*

Both Sara and Pfeni with their jobs as a successful banker and a brilliant journalist, represent the achievements of the feminist movement accomplished through the past years. Wasserstein portrays women who have important jobs as persons that forget the meaning of happiness and excitement in their lives and the satisfaction about themselves. Concerning the other sister Gorgeous Teitelbaum, the way she looks and the way she behaves, reveal a lot about her personality in the play. She is introduced as:

" A very pretty but overdone woman of forty six enters through the open door. She wears a fake Chanel suit with too many accessories and carries imitation Louisa Vuitton suitcases " (1.2.27).

Gorgeous is a successful wife, mother, she brags about her life whenever it is possible. While introducing herself to Merv, she tells him:

" Merv let me tell you something. I was a Newton housewife with four wonderful kids. My husband, Henry, is a very prominent attorney. We have a very comfortable life style. In other words, everything was going just great, but I needed just a little sparkle to make it all perfect " (1.2.30).

Gorgeous seems less troubled than her two sisters, until she reveals some secrets about her life. According to David Patrick Stearns assessment, Wasserstein has *undoubtedly* " *upset her feminist supporters, especially since the two who have pursued glamorous careers. ... Realize they are neurotic, lonely and painfully estranged* " (Ciociola, Gail 1998, 87). Even Gorgeous, the only married one between her two sisters complains to them about her husband:

" Every night at ten he dresses in a trench coat and goes to prowl around the bars of South End. He comes home at five in the morning and begins typing in the basement until he falls asleep at noon. We pass each other in the hall and he tells me how much it means to him that I am still here " (2.2.93).

The female characters raise the question of how much women can get the independence they desire. Though, the play presents a positive portrait of the independent women, but it also introduces the " *high cost of autonomy* ". (Robert Brustein, p. 130) Sara and Pfeni in particular are the ones who realize that it is hard to keep up with a good job, a family, house work, and the social commitments at the same time. The problems of the work to the three sister influence their lives too, and they are enormously frustrated. That feeling make them gradually lose their self-confidence. It can also be added that one of the reasons that caused the dissatisfaction about the three sisters is the absence of reliable men in their lives.

Sara and Pfeni did not experience a long and stable relationship. Gorgeous too, confesses later in the play that her relationship with her husband, Henry, is not normal as her sisters think. Nevertheless, they pretend that they are happy. Gorgeous believes that her sisters envy her happiness and perfect life, she comments:

" Well, I'm sorry things have not worked out as you hoped. But I can no longer allow you to hurt my feelings because you are so threatened by my bride in my husband, my family, and my accomplishments " (2.1.77).

Pfeni, on the other hand, does the same, as she believes that her life has a strong basis, but later she discovers that her relationship with Geoffrey is completely far from being normal. In one of the scenes, Pfeni tells her sister Sara that:

PFENI: *" Geoffrey says we'll live together when his house is finished "*
SARA: *" That man has no intention of ever living there, when he can enjoy the hospitality of all his friends " (1.1.12).*

3- The Impact of the Mother- Daughter Conflict.

The male characters in this play are confused. They think that they must be independent and strong. Moreover, they spend much energy trying to figure out which position should they take near their women friends. Geoffrey asks Pfeni: *"What is that you want, my angel, which you're not getting? Do you want to get married? Well get married"* (2.1.67). Geoffrey, in fact, expresses the typical liberated late twentieth century views. Merv too, is confused about how to understand Sara's unwillingness to give him a chance to know her better:

" I've never met anyone like you, Sara. You're warm and cold all the same time. Your face is so familiar and so distant. Sometimes, I look at you and see all my mother's photographs of her mother and her mother's entire family " (2.1.79).

The issue is more serious for the three sisters. They are torn between their own way of life and the way their mother Rita Rosensweig wanted them to follow. The image of the mother with her conventional values of life, which represents the early female role models with limited choices, distracts them. There is that conflict between the past female traditional way life and the less conventional choices of the present. This mother- daughter conflict influences Sara when she states: *" mother and I have a female trouble conflict "* (1.2.36). She unconsciously wants her daughter to follow her and tries to decide the future of Tess alone. She tells Merv:

SARA: *" We are hoping she'll be up at Oxford next year "*

MERV: *" She wants to stay here for school "*

SARA: *" From what we've heard about the states now, I think it's wise " (1.2.24).*

In a previous scene, Tess clarifies to her aunt Pfeni how she cannot discuss her future with her mother's Sara, because it is already settled:

TESS: *" ... I can't wait to leave London to go back to school "*

PFENI: *" Did your mother say you could? "*

TESS: *" Are you kidding? The woman who named me for Tess of the D'Urbervilles? The only American who is convinced that Harvard and Yale are second-rate institutions. She won't even discuss it " (1.1.4).*

Pfeni too, has that mother-daughter conflict inside her, as she still wants to have the traditional life that her mother experienced. Still, she lives with Geoffrey on one level but betrays her true desires on another. Although Gorgeous is the only sister that followed her mother's conventional way of life; but she discovers that the perfect life has its problems too, as her situation with her husband Henry.

4- The Loss of Identity.

The identity problems could be detected when the characters cannot accept their names. Their names affect their lives. Sara Goode seems to enjoy the possibilities of identity confusion. She admits that when she says: *" multiple divorce*

is a brilliant thing. You get so many names to choose from " (1.1.12). Later, when Merlin uses her original full name, " no, you are Sara Rosensweig " she responds: " *Jesus, no one's called me that in thirty years* " (1.4.58). There is a further name confusion when Sara asks her sister " *Pfeni Rosensweig, Pfeni! God, what an awful name! Why do you keep it?* " (1.1.11). Her actual name is Penny and even Penny is not accepted by her, " *Penny Rosensweig wasn't any better*" (1.1.12). Gorgeous always wonders about the reason of choosing that name for her, " *it is not Daddy's fault, he called me Gorgeous* " (2.2.94).

Wasserstein uses the name's various comic possibilities to heighten the identity confusion. Towards the end of the play, Sara says: " *My two little sisters! Gorgeous and also Gorgeous ... we are the sisters Gorgeous!* " (2.2.96). Merv, whose actual name is Mervyn Kant is called as Marv, Marvin and Merlin. He changes his last name to Kant. " *It seems absolutely clear that who we are, who we have been, and who we think we are now, are questions that interest Wasserstein is great in this play* " (Barnett, Claudia 1999, 110).

The problem of identity goes further to extend the names. It is about who they are and the way they look is a way to hide the real selves. Sara tries to forget about her background. She tries to get rid of everything that reminds her of home. She lives in Queen Anne's Gate, in an apartment furnished with classical English furniture, and she speaks with an English accent, as an attempt to deny her cultural background. The problem causes the clash of cultures, which definitely leads to identify problems. Although all the characters are Americans, still Sara and Pfeni are less related to their cultural background. For Sara, America is no longer the perfect place of the fifties. She tells Merv:

" *Merv, the home you're talking about is the Bronx, the Brooklyn, the America of forty years ago. It doesn't even exist anymore* " (2.1.82).

In a previous scene, while she speaks to Merv, Sara explains why she thinks America is not suitable anymore to live in:

" *Well, obviously what we have is a society in transition; you've got an industrial economy that is rapidly being transformed into a transitional one. And that's exacerbated by a growing disenfranchised class, decaying inner cities, and bankrupt educational system* " (1.2.24).

Sara's sister, Pfeni, has the same problem of being detached from her background, because of her continuous travels, that make her feel unsettled. Sara's daughter, Tess, tries to find a place to relate herself to. Through the play, she plans to go with Tom to Lithuania, to participate in the Lithuanian demonstrations against the Soviet Union. She, in fact, is confused about being an American who lives in London and want to go to Lithuania for an event, which does not refer to her in any form. Her relationship with Tom is based on her admiration of his family's stability which she misses. She tells her mother:

" *Mother, Tom comes from a perfectly, balanced and mortal family, which is something you've never managed to maintain despite being on the cover of Fortune twice* " (1.1.1.).

It is more obvious in Gorgeous situation. She is introduced as a woman who wears fake suit and accessories to give the impression that she is rich. She tries to become a better person as her jobless husband cannot afford a luxurious kind of life for her. Pfeni, on the other hand, has a certain way of travelling with shopping bags rather than suitcases. She imitates adventurous, daring, and crazy people. She says to Tess:

TESS: " *Aunt Pfeni, why don't you have any suitcases?* "

PFENI: " *Because your grandmother Rita told me that only crazy people travel with shopping bags. So, I've made it my personal signature ever since* " (1.1.7).

5- The Strength of the Familial Ties.

Wasserstein wanted the play to " *deliberately set on the event of a momentous historical event* " (Ciociola, Gali 1998, 84), specifically that August weekend of 1991 when the Soviet Union was teetering on the revolution. Setting the plays within historic frameworks is one of the passions:

" *In a way, what I do is a lot like British theatre. It's a large canvas in which you see the social and historical change, and then the personal change, and how they reflect in each other* " (Balakian, Jan 2010, 136).

The play begins and ends with Tess, to reflect the power of youth and the continuation of the Rosensweig generation. Tess decides not to travel to Lithuania with Tom. She tells her mother:

TESS: " *I told Tom to go with me* "

SARA: " *thank you, honey* "

TESS: " *I didn't make this decision for you. I made it for me. You have to have your own life* " (2.3.106).

The decision of Tess indicates that she is finally able to make her own decisions, and to plan her future without her mother's intervention. With the fall of Berlin Wall, and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world is going to change. The lives of the characters will never be the same, at the end of the play, the sisters gather to have a confession session. Each sister speaks freely about her fears and problems. They finally discover that life is too short to waste the grief and sorrow. Geoffrey tells Pfeni saying: " *all I know is life is random and ... we must cherish those we love* " (2.1.96). The sisters finally realize that it is important to be strong enough to confront the harsh reality of life. Despite the difficulties, it is a world of possibilities. Sara, Gorgeous, and Pfeni are convinced that beautiful moments should not be wasted:

GORGEOUS: " *you know what I wish with all my heart* "

SARA: " *What?* "

PFENI: " *What?* "

GORGEOUS: " *I wish that on one of your birthdays, when all the children and the men have gone upstairs to sleep ...* "

SARA: " *What men?* "

GORGEOUS: " *... and we finally sit together, just as three sisters ...* "

PFENI: " *around the samovar* "

GORGEOUS: " *and we talk about the life* " (2.2.96).

At the end of the play, the characters continue their lives with new decisions. Geoffrey decides to move on directing plays and goes back to America. Following Geoffrey's advice, Pfeni decides to devote her life to journalism, rather than raising a family. She takes off to Tajikistan to write her book about suffering women. In spite their hard circumstances; those women manage to make a better life to for their families. After all, Pfeni discovers that she derives her strength and self-confidence from those women. Though Geoffrey abandons, she never blames her; Geoffrey is an external factor who helps her to find her real self. She finally leaves with great hope for a better future.

Gorgeous, on the other hand, decides to be true to herself. At the end of the play, she receives a real channel suit and accessories as an appreciation for her privileged performance in one of the touring campaigns in London. Gorgeous manifests her newfound honesty and maturity by selling them to collect money for her daughter's tuition. She finally goes back home to support her husband, and continue her plans about her new cable show.

Sara's response to her daughter's thesis project tape record summarizes the way she reconciles with herself, background, and identify. She said: " *My name is Sara Rosensweig. I was born in Brooklyn, New York, August 23rd 1937* " (2.3.107). This information is heard for the same time from Sara. Sara's revelation of her background indicates that she realizes that is impossible to forget one's past. Sara finally accepts to experience love and romance again; she finds moral support in her sister's and daughter's love. Merv decides to know Sara better through a mature relationship based on rational life. In the final scene, both Sara and Tess using their favourite song which draws a positive image of the new promises.

Wasserstein manages to create female characters who finally gain self-knowledge, acceptance, and empowerment. According to poet Deena Metzger, " *the second half of a woman's life provides the opportunity for transformation* " (Ciciola, Gail, 98). These three sisters show the power of sibling relations. They prove that sisterhood never dies. Despite their differences, the three sisters can survive quite well on their own, as they anticipate a more promising future.

CONCLUSION

The twentieth century was a time of prosperous life for the Americans. The rapid developments in the fields of life led to serious social, cultural, economic and political crises. Women who represented half of the American population suffered a lot from the oppression and injustice. So, they had a great faith in the Feminist movement to support them in getting respect, justice and fair opportunities. In 1920, they had their legal right to vote. Therefore, a large number of women writers tackled the obstacles women faced in different fields as a mean to help the Feminist Movement spread its ideologies and agenda.

Wendy Wasserstein illustrated central concerns like gender, identity and the lack of self-confidence. She also discussed the positive and negative aspects of the Feminist Movement. Wasserstein's play portrayed educated, talented, smart, beautiful and professional women because she believed that all women deserve to fulfill their potentials. In *The Sisters Rosensweig*, Wasserstein focused on women who tried to enhance their feelings through searching for self-emancipation to be able to overcome the patriarchal barriers to achieve their autonomy. The three lived a harsh life through reflecting their desire to balance their private and professional lives. In spite of their loneliness, misery and dissatisfaction, they pretend that they are happy and successful.

Sara Rosensweig is the central character who plays a major role to be a motive for her two sisters and her daughter, Tess. Sara is characterized as a beautiful, elegant and dignified woman. Being the eldest sister, she is unable to adjust with any new events and persons. Both Sara's sisters, Pfeni and Gorgeous have their own problems too. Pfeni can't choose a husband and she has no clear plan for her future. Gorgeous on the other hand tries to hide her failure in finding a harmony with her husband.

Wasserstein managed to create female characters who finally gained self-knowledge and acceptance. She did her best to show the power of sibling relation, and to prove that sisterhood never dies. The playwright succeeded to mix the comic scenes with the tragic events. Although, the play is full of agony, but Wasserstein sought for happy endings to illustrate women's bravery and integrity.

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