The representation of gendered disabilities in First World War fiction

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Preface

I first became interested in the representation of disability in literature when I was studying Disability Studies at Ghent University. One of my subjects dealt with the presence of disability in film, and, being a voracious fiction reader, made me wonder about the position of disability in literature as well. Soon afterwards, for another course, I was given the opportunity to write some essays on the representation of disability in Spanish children books. These study experiences together with my job – assisting and caring for people with disabilities – prompted me to choose a topic involving disability in fiction for my master’s dissertation. My study in Linguistics and Literature provided me with much more insight in literary representation than I had during my first study. I am glad to be able to integrate knowledge from both my disciplines into this work.

This dissertation would not have been realized without the support and advice of several people. The greatest thanks goes to Dr. Kate Macdonald, for supervising this dissertation, and providing me with her valuable feedback and suggestions. I also wish to thank my fellow students Tiffany and Julie, for spending many hours together in the library for our “thesis writing sessions”. Furthermore, my gratitude goes to my parents for supporting me throughout nine years of study, and Ángel for proofreading and always listening to me brainstorming at the dinner table.

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0. Introduction

The return of England’s wounded war veterans during the First World War brought about a massive upsurge of the population of disabled people. The social attitudes towards these disabled men were initially very positive, since they were the heroic sons and husbands who had set out to defend their country. Being England’s wounded heroes they constituted a separate category of disabled men, in addition to the group of disabled citizens. Their reintegration into society however often challenged their feelings of masculinity, as they had become dependent on care (by women). Narratives written during and after the war depicted wounded soldiers frequently as heroes, while disabled citizens – disabled women and children, and men with pre-war impairments – were represented differently. Disabled characters in novels have often functioned as metaphorical devices, and have been studied accordingly. Yet, by reducing disabilities to mere metaphors, the experience of people with disabilities is misrepresented.

In 1980, in her short article “Disability and Monstrosity: A Look at Literary Distortions of Handicapping Conditions”, Shari Thurer already warned for the possible dangers of a metaphorical use of disability. Attributing a purely symbolic meaning to disability can reinforce certain stereotypes and attitudes towards disability in society (12-15). Therefore, introducing a disability studies perspective in cultural studies could contribute to revealing how certain (static) representations of physical impairment will keep these disabling attitudes alive. The application of a perspective from cultural disability studies allows for an understanding of disability depictions as social constructs, and offers a literary analysis beyond disability as a mere metaphorical device.

Over the last two decades, researchers have shown an increased interest in supplementing the cultural studies approach of literary analysis with a disability studies viewpoint. Lennard J. Davis is one of the authorities dealing with literature from a disability studies perspective. In his short article “Enabling Texts” (1997), he raises the importance of cultural critiques in Disability Studies. Rosemarie Garland Thomson examines the cultural representations of physically disabled individuals in American novels in her book Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature (1997). She considers disability to be a minority discourse, which relates to other social constructions, like gender. David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder study the literary representation of disability in their

In the literary analysis of this thesis I will similarly adopt a point of view from Disability Studies. I will present a reading of four novels written during the war and the interwar period, which are set during and after the war. Because of the novels’ different publication dates, they record the changing attitudes to disability over time. Rose Macaulay’s Non-Combatants and Others (1916) and Evadne Price’s Not So Quiet… (1930) take place during the war itself, respectively at the home front and the warfront. John Buchan’s Huntingtower (1922) and D.H. Lawrence’s Lady Chatterley’s Lover (1928) depict the aftermath of the war, and therefore indirectly show the reintegration of disabled characters in society.

The main objective of this thesis is to analyse how male and female physical disabilities are represented in First World War fiction. First of all, I will explore the literary representation of the characters’ gender roles at work and in the household – the positions they have to comply with to be considered masculine or feminine. Disabled people are not always able to fulfil the social requirements of their gender, and will consequently be perceived and/or treated differently, for instance by infantilizing them through social attitudes and through their environment. Secondly, the attitudes towards disabled male and female characters will be studied. They regularly are treated as children or objects of care by able-bodied characters. Moreover, they might even be seen as asexual, or unattractive.

As mentioned above, I will be using ideas and theories from Disability Studies for the literary analysis of fictional novels. These theories will be applied to the representations of ‘gendered disabilities’, with which I refer to male and female characters with physical disabilities. By the concept of gender I understand the social constructions of masculinity and femininity. Obviously much more can be said about gender theory; however, pursuing the existing debate on gender is beyond the purposes of this thesis (for a further discussion on gender, see for instance Butler¹). The concept of disability will be used throughout the analysis without distinguishing it from impairment. As will be pointed out in the literature review, the social model of disability distinguishes between the biological ‘impairment’ and the socially constructed ‘disability’. Although I consider this insight to be of great importance in understanding the construction of disability by society, consistently making a distinction

between both concepts will distract from the focus of my analysis. I will therefore use both concepts to refer to the cultural representations of impairment in the novels, which, by definition, are embedded in constructions created by society.

I will commence this dissertation with a background on the four novelists and their novels in part 1. The main critiques on and interpretations of the novels by literary scholars will be summarized and connected to the viewpoints of this dissertation. In the second part, an overview on critical literature on disability will be presented. Firstly, I will clarify the concept of disability and explain the existing paradigms of disability. Secondly, the depiction of the disabled body in fiction will be discussed by representing the theories and ideas of the leading authorities studying the cultural representation of disability. Thirdly, I will connect disability to the concept of gender, both as experienced in real life and as represented in fictional works. This last section argues that disability can alter gender construction, causing, for instance, feminization of the male. Moreover, the function of work, the position in the household and sexuality will be treated briefly. Part 3 will explain the methodology used for the literary analysis. The fourth part holds the analysis of the four novels, and is divided into four sections corresponding to the four elements I mentioned earlier. The first element of analysis is the function of work and other occupations for the disabled person, and the rehabilitation of the wounded soldier into a job after the war. The second factor is the position in the household, in which it was supposedly the woman’s task to support the war-wounded man back into his position as head of the household. The third section addresses the contrasting portrayals of the heroically disabled soldier and the infantilized disabled characters and/or feminized disabled male. As a fourth element of analysis, sexuality is discussed. I will show in the latter section that disabled characters are frequently desexualized and generally are considered to be asexual. Part 5 completes this thesis with a conclusion of the analysis of the novels, connecting it to the ideas explored in the literature review.
1. Background on the authors and their works

1.1. Rose Macaulay – *Non-Combatants and Others* (1916)

Rose Macaulay (1881–1958) was an English novelist and poet, born in a family with a rich literary and academic background (Crawford 16). She spent part of her childhood in Italy. After the family’s return to England, she attended Oxford High School and in 1900 she entered Somerville College, Oxford (Bensen 15-17). During the First World War, she worked for a short period as a Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse (VAD) and as a land-girl (Bensen 18). In 1915, she wrote *Non-Combatants and Others* – the story of the protagonist Alix Sandomir’s life between other non-combatants.

In a review of Macaulay’s novel on BBC radio in “Minds at War”, Sarah LeFanu speaks of Alix as an alter ego of the author herself. Gender ambivalence marked Macaulay’s young womanhood, which would find expression in the androgenized protagonists of her novels. These were often thin, solitary young women with boyish names, like Alix. According to LeFanu, *Non-Combatants and Others* reflects Macaulay’s changing attitudes to the war. Although, in 1914, she still saw the war as a noble cause, the sudden death of her friend Rupert Brooke and her experience as a VAD nurse in 1915 quickly changed this romantic vision. In the novel, Alix considers the pros and cons of anti-war activism, just as Macaulay did. Rose Macaulay would join the League of Nations Union and the Peace Pledge Union after the war. Alice Crawford’s investigation of the changes in Macaulay’s literary career adds that Macaulay’s war novels generally reflect the author’s profound shock at the war, and are therefore more openly satirical (57). Alix’s quest in *Non-Combatants and Others* is one for personal coherence: she tries to find meaning in a world fragmented by the war (61).

Angela K. Smith argues that Macaulay expresses three different kinds of otherness in her novel: Alix is female, disabled and an artist. During wartime, the task of the artist is to aesthetically combat the war. For instance, Alix’s brother Nicholas criticises the effect of the war on literature, while Alix struggles to find her way in the world so that she would be able again to paint it. In order to express this battle between the artist and the war, Macaulay represents different viewpoints. However, instead of providing any answers, she invites the reader to think further about these issues (142-156). While Smith’s study mainly focuses on the function of art during the war, I will centre more on the other two elements Smith indicates as expressing Alix’s ‘otherness’: being female and physically disabled.
Boxwell as well looks at the position of women during the war. She states in her article “The (M)Other Battle of World War One” that *Non-Combatants and Others* is mostly important for its “resistance to the stereotypic encoding of the mother in war as accomplice in war-making” (89). Macaulay goes against the stereotype of the woman as a natural (and passive) peacemaker, by representing Alix’s mother Daphne as an unconventional mother figure (92). Boxwell’s article further maintains that the story develops towards the final entry of Alix into the world of organized pacifism (90). Although I agree with Boxwell’s analysis, I will expand her idea of Daphne’s female resistance to Alix, who throughout the entire novel – and not only towards the end – refrains from the feminine tasks associated with war. I will indicate Alix’s exclusion from participation in society as the real impetus behind her joining the pacifist movement.

In contrast to Boxwell, Debra Cohen does not consider *Non-Combatants and Others* to be solely a pacifist novel. She emphasizes the importance of Alix’s disability, which will as well be the starting point for my own analysis. Alix’s impaired leg results from a diseased hip-joint when she was a child. Her lameness makes her invisible in society – she is considered both medically and sexually ‘unfit’ to participate in the war – and turns her into the subject of the gaze of others at the same time (38). Moreover, Cohen analyses how Alix tries to stay invisible throughout the story, for instance by joining two ‘mass movements’: the church and the pacifist movement (45). I will employ Cohen’s idea of the ‘invisibility’ of the disabled character to explore Alix’s exclusion from war work, and her rejection as a desirable partner. However, unlike Cohen, I argue that Alix strives for visibility and recognition as a disabled woman in society.

Courtney Andree discusses the representation of disabled bodies in Rose Allatini’s *Despised and Rejected* (1918) and Rose Macaulay’s *Non Combatants and Others* (n. pag.). She demonstrates that, because of their work as artists and their exposition of the war’s illogicality, the disabled characters in these novels become activists for the anti-war movement. In contrast to Cohen’s interpretation, she concludes that Alix’s pacifism contributes to her visibility as a disabled woman. My analysis will likewise support the idea that Alix tries to fight her exclusion from society. I firmly agree with Andree that Alix is represented as part of an outsider group, both because of her disability and because of her refusal to ‘do her bit’ for the war (by, for instance, recruiting or knitting).
1.2. John Buchan – *Huntingtower* (1922)

John Buchan (1875-1940), born in Scotland, was “variously, a journalist, editor, publisher, war reporter, propagandist, civil servant, novelist, poet, politician, and historian” (Macdonald, *Companion* 23). He studied first at Glasgow University and went to Oxford in 1895. He later went to Cape Town in 1901, where he worked for two years in South Africa’s reconstruction under Lord Milner (24). At the outbreak of the First World War, Buchan became a war journalist, and by 1915 he was a war correspondent for *The Times* on the Western Front (25). He contributed to the war propaganda for the rest of the war and became director of the Department of Information, responsible for propaganda at home and abroad (Strachan 79-80). After the war, he carried on his work as a publisher and an editor (Macdonald, *Companion* 26). He also continued writing, and frequently used soldiers and ex-soldiers in his novels (4). Although he had not fought during the war, he used to write as though he had (Strachan 78).

His novel *Huntingtower* was first published in 1922 and tells the story of Dickson McCunn, a retired merchant who sets out on a walking holiday. Together with the poet John Heritage and ‘The Gorbals Diehards’, a group of boys from the Glasgow slums, he gets involved in an adventure in which they rescue a Russian Princess held captive by Bolshevik villains in the Huntingtower estate.

Pilvi Rajamäe examines how Buchan reconciles modernity and heritage in *Huntingtower*. According to her, Dickson McCunn symbolizes the traditional world, and goes in search of the romantic, pastoral world. John Heritage represents the heritage of McCunn’s generation, but, disillusioned during the war, rebels against the ideals of this generation. Buchan believes that the gap between both generations can be resolved. By engaging in a common, romantic quest, the tension between both is overcome. Whereas Heritage can accept his ‘heritage’, Dickson McCunn adapts his notion of romance to modernity (169-185). Rajamäe does not pay attention to the role of the disabled characters in her study. The novel’s war-wounded characters have not been disillusioned by the war, and still behave as brave heroes in the modern world. In my analysis, I will focus more on these disabled minor characters, to reveal their status in the post-war fictional world.

Unlike Rajamäe, Kate Macdonald does explore the portrayal of the war-wounded ex-soldiers and congenitally impaired civilians in *Huntingtower*. She rightly shows that the impairments of the latter are used as symbols for their impaired moral behaviour, while the war-wounded characters symbolize the morally good (“War-Wounded” 13-16). Whereas the congenitally impaired were marginalized by the British state, the war-impaired soldiers initially obtained a
special status. Macdonald further argues that the depictions of both kinds of disability in *Huntingtower* reflect the cultural norms of post-war British society (17). I will build on Macdonald’s findings throughout my own investigation. My emphasis will lie primarily on how the novel’s disabled characters are positioned in the fictional society.

1.3. D.H. Lawrence – *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928)

David Herbert Lawrence (1885-1930) was an English writer, known for his ‘indecent’ novels that were sometimes even suppressed. At seventeen he started with poetry, but later on he took up fiction as well. He worked as a teacher, but had to retire in 1911-1912 due to his poor health. Lawrence was shocked at the outbreak of the First World War, considering it an outrage. Moreover, he was declared medically unfit for entering the army (Moore 17-19). Lawrence believed that the war would destroy traditional England, and expressed this preoccupation in his letters to friends. His concern repeatedly returns in his post-war novels, like *Kangaroo* (1923) (Bergonzi 135-137). *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* similarly takes place in a world corrupted by war and industrialism. Paul Delany claims that the war caused in Lawrence a bitterness that made him resent England in his novels, as “a savage hacking at his own roots” (“Foreword” x).

Lawrence had his novel *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* published in 1928 in Florence. In fact, this was already the third version he had written of the book. According to Michael Squires, apart from the many differences between the three versions, all three are divided in the same three major sections. The first section is ‘negation’. In this part Connie Chatterley finds refuge in gamekeeper Mellors’ hut. In the second part – ‘regeneration’ –, the gamekeeper becomes her lover. The third and final part is the resolution: Connie leaves Wragby (“Introduction” xxv).

To the third version of the novel, Lawrence added an essay – “A Propos of Lady Chatterley’s Lover” – in which he explains his ideas on sex, body and mind (305-335). He ends the essay with clarifying his attitudes towards Clifford’s disability and the question whether or not Clifford’s paralysis is intentional:

Sir Clifford […] is purely a personality, having lost entirely all connections with his fellow-men and women, except those of usage. All warmth is gone entirely, the hearth is cold, the heart does not humanly exist. He is a pure product of our civilisation, but he is the death of the great humanity of the world. He is kind by rule, but he does not
know what warm sympathy means. He is what he is. And he loses the woman of his choice.

[...] As to whether the "symbolism" is intentional - I don't know. Certainly, not in the beginning, when Clifford was created. [...] [W]hen I read the first version, I recognized that the lameness of Clifford was symbolic of the paralysis, the deeper emotional or passional paralysis, of most men of his sort and class today. I realized that it was perhaps taking unfair advantage of Connie, to paralyse him technically. It made it so much more vulgar of her to leave him. [...] Whether we call it symbolism or not, it is, in the sense of its happening, inevitable. (333)

Thus, in the end, Lawrence sees Clifford’s condition as a symbol of the emotional paralysis of society, which is one of the results of modern civilization. Clifford contributes to this civilization, but at the same time cannot control it, as “he is what he is” – he actually is kind, but is another victim of a corrupted society.

Various scholars analysed the character of Clifford metaphorically. James Cowan traces the mirroring of the author in the portrait of Mellors. Not only is the gamekeeper a working-class man who often uses his dialect, he also serves as a projection of the man Lawrence wanted to be. On the other hand, Lawrence coped with the same impairment as Clifford: erectile dysfunction (136). Cowan moreover believes that both Clifford and Mellors represent the author’s sexual ambivalence, respectively his masculine and feminine side. Whereas Clifford is rational and intellectual, Mellors is more empathic and tender (147). I partly agree with Cowan’s observation that Clifford is represented as masculine, in that his position in the coal mining industry arouses his feelings of masculinity. However, I will show that this masculinity is constantly undermined by his feelings of helplessness and the feelings of pity by the people surrounding him, which infantilize him. Similar to Cowan, John Middleton Murry writes about Mellors and Clifford as possible ‘components’ of the author. He states that Clifford Chatterley represents Lawrence’s own infirmity, while Mellors is a satisfied version of himself. In the figure of Mellors, Lawrence tries to imagine “a final triumph of his own defeated masculinity” (367). Murry further points out another similarity between the gamekeeper and Lawrence: they both blame women for their loss of happiness (364). In my analysis, I will explore Clifford’s exact relation with the novel’s female characters – Connie Chatterley and Mrs Bolton. Similar to Murry, David Cavitch explores Lawrence’s identification with Mellors. The gamekeeper’s manhood is presented as the antithesis of Clifford’s impotency (200), which is also reflected in the symbolism of the natural
environment. The world the story is set in takes the form of a pastoral idyll in which the characters act in line with the ideal of love (197). Clifford represents modern society with all its perversity and meanness, and therefore contrasts with Mellors and the natural world. The woods symbolize the innocence of the love between Connie and Mellors, generating a space in which the idyll still can take place (198). Unlike the studies by Cowan, Murry and Cavitch, this thesis will not examine the relation between author and characters. Whereas they all approach the character of Clifford Chatterley as a symbol or metaphor, I will investigate how he is reduced to his disabled body.

Other critics centred their investigations primarily on the paralysed Clifford Chatterley. Julian Moynahan explains that Clifford creates a web of ‘abstract others’ in which he has the illusion of life (73). He is represented as a kind of ‘parasite’: to feel alive, he needs to lean on the energy of his wife Connie (74). Moynahan emphasizes the fact that Clifford is represented as inhuman, and therefore cannot arouse pity in the reader (76-77). Keith Sagar likewise remarks that the sympathy in the reader is – deliberately – inhibited. Clifford was already ‘spiritually disabled’ before going to the war. He has a weak personality and is therefore dependent on Connie (180). Clifford is even represented as a sort of devil, causing the suffering not only of Connie but also of the miners (196). I support the idea of these authors that Clifford is represented negatively in the novel. I will further examine his representation as a disabled person, exploring the relationships which he has with the other characters and their treatment of him.

1.4. Evadne Price – *Not So Quiet…* (1930)

Evadne Price (1896-1985) was an English-Australian novelist who was best known for her war novel *Not So Quiet…* (1930). Born of English parents, she spent her childhood in Australia. She returned to England around 1914, where she would become an actress, a journalist, and a writer of adult and children’s fiction (the Jane Turpin series), plays and screenplays (Acton, *ODNB*). In an interview with Hazel De Berg² (1977), Price talks about her life and career (“Interview”). However, Simmers³ points out that this account probably is

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³ George Simmers’ paper “Helen Zenna Smith, and the Disguises of Evadne Price” was presented at the Marginalised Mainstream conference (Senate House, University of London), in November 2014, and has been published online on his blog Great War Fiction (greatwarfiction.wordpress.com/helen-zenna-smith-and-the-disguises-of-evadne-price).
fanciful, as documentation supporting her story is missing, while other documents contradict her report (*Great War Fiction*). The writer herself maintains that she was approached by the publisher Albert E. Marriott through her agent to write a satire on Remarque’s *All Quiet on the Western Front*, of which the title would be *All Quaint on the Western Front*. However, she rejected this offer, because she believed Remarque’s text truly sent a message to the world. Instead, she proposed to write the woman’s equivalent to the war book of the trenches. Marriott suggested she should write under a pseudonym, which became ‘Helen Zenna Smith’ (Price, “Interview”).

According to the novel’s back flap, the story “takes its place among the body of fiction, poetry, and memoir”. William Boyd of the *New York Times Book Review* adds that the story “vividly and impressionistically tells of the author’s tour of duty in France”. Though the story was indeed inspired by a memoir, it was not Evadne Price’s. Price confuses the reader by using as a pseudonym the name of the main character of the book⁴, which illustrates the hazy borderline between memoir and fiction. She defies the idea of memoir and fiction as fixed genres, mixing fictional elements with realism (Kaplan 37). Price drew her inspiration from the war diary of Winifred Young, who served as an ambulance driver during the war (Price, “Interview”). These memoirs provided her with a way of depicting the suffering of war, without having been at the front herself. Told by a first-person narrator, *Not So Quiet...* became the story of the war experiences of Helen Z. Smith, who is a 21-year old Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) ambulance driver in France during the First World War.

Whereas several critics have written about gender in *Not So Quiet...*, focusing on the experiences of the female ambulance drivers, the experience of masculine disability has not been explored. Although I will connect my findings to the ideas on gender of the following critics, contrary to their methods, I will analyse the novel through a disability perspective. Jane Marcus wrote an essay about gender as afterword to the novel, titled “Corpus/Corps/Corpse: Writing the Body in/at War” (1988). The purpose of this essay was to focus on the “un/gendered body in pain”, to recover the “lost voices” of the war (242). She explores the discourse of women’s writing and compares Price’s novel with those of other female authors. Marcus suggests that it is the class critique in *Not So Quiet...* that distinguishes the novel from other female war writing (260). Moreover, Marcus discusses the problem of gender identity during a war that ‘masculinizes’ the women directly involved in it (working at the front) (269-

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⁴ To avoid confusion, I will further refer to the writer as Evadne Price, and to the narrator/protagonist of the story as Helen Z. Smith.
To the issue of gender identity, my analysis will add the feminization of the war-wounded men and their degradation to ‘mere bodies’ in the novel.

Similar to Marcus, Meg Albrinck discusses the definitions of gender in Price’s war novel. She explains that previous gender role distinctions shifted when women were sent to the front as nurses. To solve this, propaganda on women’s involvement in the war now used both the figure of the patriotic mother and the dutiful nurse as representatives of femininity (274). In order to offer a resistant discourse, Price uses this rhetoric of femininity – for instance by using the figure of the VAD ambulance driver – while, at the same time, she works against it by representing the silenced voices of the women who served in the war (282-286). Angela K. Smith likewise states that feminine and masculine gender roles collapse in the novel, as women and men experience suffering in the same way: they are all victims of the same unheroic experience of warfare. Accordingly, I will demonstrate that ‘heroic disability’ does not exist in Price’s novel. Angela Smith further demonstrates how stories written by women retell male war stories, examining Not So Quiet... as a retelling of Remarque’s All Quiet on the Western Front. She shows that Price uses both the content and the anti-war message of Remarque’s story, presenting them from a female perspective (107-120).

Laurie Kaplan discusses the narrative form used in the female war memoir. She explores how Evadne Price’s war-writing underlines the inadequacy of language when describing war experiences, for instance by using ellipsis. The form of the language indicates that the conventional narrative form does not suffice to describe death and mutilations (40-41). I will similarly focus on the use of language, to analyse the narrator’s language when she describes the bodies of wounded and disabled men. Furthermore, the language on the warfront is very different from the jingoistic language at home. Celia M. Kingsbury examines how Not So Quiet... challenges the idea that dying in the war is heroic. Whereas people at the home front engage in recruiting and making propaganda for the war, those at the warfront experience the war differently. Smith is disillusioned, but has to lie to her family on the home front, as they will not believe the horrid realities of warfare. I support Kingsbury’s conclusion that, in this way, the novel criticizes the false ideals and hypocrisy of the home front (235-251).
2. Literature Review

2.1. The concept of disability

World War I brought about an enormous increase in the amount of people with disabilities in Britain. Apart from the countless casualties and wounded men, the war permanently disabled approximately 752,000 British men (Gerber, Disabled Veterans 18). Seth Koven shows that disabled soldiers became a common sight in the streets of Britain. Over 41,000 soldiers had at least one limb amputated, and were added to the already existing group of disabled citizens (“Remembering” 1186). By 1918, 400,000 disabled ex-servicemen received medical care and pensions from the British government. They represented the “nation’s identity, its past, present, and future” (1188).

At the return of the maimed soldiers, disability thus became a very common thing to see, particularly in towns like Brighton, where they were sent for recuperation. They joined the wider population of men, women and children with congenital disabilities or impairments acquired before the war (Bourke 34-35). Koven observes there now existed two groups of disabled people: the ‘peace cripples’ and the ‘war cripples’. However, the disabilities of these ‘war cripples’ tended to be more severe than those of civilians. The war therefore drastically changed the experience of disability (“Remembering” 1200).

Nevertheless, the category of disability in general is not a clearly defined one. Some disabilities can be cured, and non-disabled people can acquire disabilities at any time during their lives (Davis, “Crips” 502). Disabilities can be intellectual or physical, temporal or permanent, congenital or acquired, and their definition is not always agreed upon. Lennard J. Davis therefore calls disability a “porous category”: disability cannot be delineated as a category in the same way as, for instance, the categories of gender or ethnicity (“Identity Politics” 537). Gerschick interestingly uses the term “temporarily able-bodied” to refer to people without disabilities, drawing attention to the disabling processes of life, such as ageing (1264).

Disability Studies – the discipline occupied with research on disability – indicates that several paradigms exist to describe disability, each of which has different implications for the treatment of and perspective on disabled people. The medical model sees disability as a disease and therefore puts its emphasis on the search for a cure, while the rehabilitation model
tries to ‘repair’ and conceal disability to reintegrate the disabled person in society (Davis, “Crips” 506). Soldiers, for instance, were therefore entangled in a medical model of disability, as they had no other choice than subject themselves to the offered treatments at the front. However, they often felt offended at being the mere objects of benevolence of the women nurses (Koven, “Prisoners” 238-239).

A third model, the constructionist model, is put forward by Disability Studies as the current perspective to interpret disability. This model defines disability as a social process determined by the constructions of society. In contrast to the other models, the social model distinguishes between impairment and disability. Impairment is the actual lack of a feature, like a loss of sight or mobility, whereas disability is caused by certain restrictions in society. These restrictions can be affective, sensory, cognitive, or architectural, and cause the impairment to become a disability (Davis, “Crips” 506-507). Koven explains that the construct of disability does not so much depend on the physical impairments themselves, but on the social attitudes towards them – which, moreover, are often internalized by the disabled persons themselves (“Prisoners” 236). Ato Quayson criticizes a strict distinction between the concepts of impairment and disability. He observes that “‘impairment’ is automatically placed within a social discourse that interprets it and ‘disability’ is produced by the interaction of impairment and a spectrum of social discourses on normality” (4).

Nevertheless, the constructionist perspective does allow us to rethink disability as a social construction, society itself causing impairments to turn into disabilities. Attitudes about physical difference held by society can also have disabling consequences. Garland Thomson explores how ‘otherness’ is created by building social identities based on physical differences. The disabled ‘other’ does not answer to the standard of how a body should look like. She proposes the term normate to refer to “the social figure through which people can represent themselves as definitive human beings. Normate then, is the constructed identity of those who, by way of the bodily configurations and cultural capital they assume, can step into a position of authority and wield the power it grants them” (8). With this definition, she stresses the social nature of the constructions of the ‘prototypical’ body. Quayson indicates that, because of these social constructions, the disabled body holds an “excess of meaning” (4). This excess of meaning encourages its interpretive framing, for instance in literature.
2.2. Disability in literature

The disabled body has become a cultural construct, based on society’s attitudes toward disability, and has obtained its own position in literary interpretations (G. Thomson 9). However, disability has not been studied frequently in literature and culture studies. It has been primarily the object of study in biological, social and cognitive sciences (Mitchell & Snyder, *Discourses* 1). Nonetheless, literature has the capacity to influence the imagery of its readers. The study of disability in narrative texts is therefore a vital contribution to Disability Studies (Mitchell & Snyder, “Representation” 213). Davis distinguishes three phases in the emerging cultural disability studies. In a first phase, texts were analysed to demonstrate how badly characters with disabilities were represented. The second phase consisted out of actively seeking for positive images in texts. The current and third phase is a theoretical one, in which the nature of representation itself is examined (“Enabling Texts” 249). Texts can be used for transgression, whereas reading can be a process of resisting stereotypes (250). Thus, disability is a valuable viewpoint in literature studies, offering a way to critically engage with social attitudes and forms of representation.

Yet, according to Davis, literature is inclined to ignore the social nature of disability, and characters with disabilities tend to develop toward a cure of their disabilities (“Identity Politics” 542). Mitchell and Snyder agree that fictional portraits of disability usually follow the medical model of disability, focusing on the impairment without looking at the “social navigation of debilitating attitudes” (“Representation” 198). Likewise, Garland Thomson observes that in literature static meetings occur between the disabled characters and the (able-bodied) readers, while encounters in real life are always dynamic. Consequently, the disabled character has no agency, and remains ‘different’ throughout the text (11). Nevertheless, to Alice Hall, literature has the potential to convert disability into a social, rather than a medical, phenomenon (5). A social perspective on disability makes it possible to think about the relation between the able-bodied author and the disabled characters represented in the text, but also allows analysing the relation between a text and the specific context in which it was written (14). I believe that Hall very perceptively notices that literature can disclose the social construction of disability. Even though characters are represented as static and limited to their impairments at the textual level, it is exactly the way in which they are portrayed which can show us the prevailing attitudes on disability in society – the world outside of the text.

Davis values the presence of disability in narratives, as it offers a “new lens through which perceptions can be refracted in a different light” (“Crips” 509). Mitchell and Snyder observe
that disability evokes emotional reactions from readers because “pathos, pity, and abhorrence have proved to be an integral part of the historical baggage of our understandings of disability” (Discourses 17). Individual isolation is characteristic in literary disabled life, representing the disability outside of the social context it actually should be placed in. However, if disability is portrayed as a static impairment, this portrayal could as well mislead readers into reducing people with disability to their limitations (Mitchell & Snyder, “Representation” 198). The prototypical disabled figure often functions “as a lightning rod for the pity, fear, discomfort, guilt, or sense of normalcy of the reader” (G. Thomson 15). Conversely, the personal understanding of disability by readers is influenced by their meeting with fictional disabled persons in texts (Mitchell & Snyder, “Representation” 213). Garland Thomson argues that the disabled character can pose a challenge to the cultural status quo, even attempting to refigure the social order (38).

Moreover, Davis states that protagonists in literature usually have ‘normal’ bodies (Enforcing Normalcy 41). Yet, in some of the novels to be analysed, disabled characters occupy main parts. For instance, the main character in Non-Combatants and Others is the disabled Alix, and in Lady Chatterley’s Lover, the partly paralysed Clifford, though not the protagonist, is given a paramount role in the story. Davis further suggests that, when a character does have a disability, this trait is usually what the story is all about. The character is inserted into the story to provoke certain responses from other characters (Enforcing Normalcy 41). Disabled characters usually either provoke pity, as innocent victims, or are the villains of the story, filled with bitterness or envy: “a recognizable villain [...] is often one-eyed, one-legged, walks with difficulty, stutters, manifests compulsive tics, and so on. The flipside of this character is the utterly innocent character with a disability, most often a child, a child-like person, a woman, or an aged character” (Davis, “Identity Politics” 542). For instance, Alix is frequently described as childlike, whereas Huntingtower’s congenitally disabled characters are true villains. Leonard Kriegel puts this as follows: “In literature, the cripple is threat and recipient of compassion, both to be damned and to be pitied – and frequently to be damned as he is pitied” (32). Paul Longmore believes that attributing disabilities to the villains of the story reflects three prejudices against people with impairments: “disability is a punishment for evil; disabled people are embittered by their “fate”; disabled people resent the nondisabled and would, if they could, destroy them” (67). In this last case, the impairment symbolizes an inner deformity and the loss of their humanity (Longmore 68, Thurer 12).
David A. Gerber similarly analyses the use of disabled characters as a way of evoking feelings of pity and fear. They incite pity when they are seen as innocent sufferers. For instance, the dependence of the injured soldier – like Basil in *Non-Combatants and Others* and Roy in *Not So Quiet...* – would arouse feelings of pity. Disabled individuals can also evoke fear in readers, or in other characters, because they are made ‘demonic’ (*Disabled Veterans* 5-7). Moreover, as they embody physical deviance, they remind readers of their own vulnerability and the possibility of loss of control, and consequently cause social anxieties (G. Thomson 6). According to Gerber, the disabled character can be depicted as “revengeful, bitter, and self-absorbed; dependent, irresponsible, and parasitical; or monstrous, as in the long line of demented, demonic, and depraved fictional creations” (*Disabled Veterans* 7). In this case, the disability is interpreted as a manifestation of sinfulness and of impaired moral values.

Garland Thomson agrees with Davis’ theory that disabled characters usually are not the protagonists of stories. They serve as “uncomplicated figures or exotic aliens whose bodily configurations operate as spectacles, eliciting responses from other characters or producing rhetorical effects that depend on disability’s cultural resonance” (9). When disabled ‘others’ are incorporated in a text, they frequently misrepresent the actual experience of disabled individuals. They often are reduced to metaphors, and other contextual factors outside the depiction of the disability itself are omitted (G. Thomson 10). We can see this in the character of Clifford Chatterley. D.H. Lawrence sees Clifford as a symbol of society (“A Propos” 333), and his disability has been interpreted purely metaphorically by several critics (see, for example, Beal 88-95, Cavitch 195-198, Moore 264-265, and Niven 78). Disabled characters’ metaphorical function in the text causes them to be stigmatized as a sort of ‘freaks’. This representation is an exaggeration of the stereotypes that are attributed to disabled people by society. These literary characters are denied any opportunity for agency, as this would counter their metaphorical value (G. Thomson 11). The villains with impairments in Buchan’s *Huntingtower* illustrate how the highlighting of physical differences can be used to symbolize inner defects. Indeed, they are represented as a kind of ‘freaks’ who stand for all evil. Thurer warns for the metaphoric use of disability, observing the dangers of attributing a – moralistic – meaning to physical deformities. She points out that the stereotypes concealed in metaphors might cause harmful prejudices in real society (12).

Mitchell and Snyder propose the term ‘narrative prosthesis’, which implies that disability is prevalent in literature both as a stock feature of characterization and as a metaphorical device.
Though narratives use disability as a symbolic figure, they usually do not interpret disability as a social or political experience ("Narrative Prosthesis" 222). The concept of narrative prosthesis denotes that “all narratives operate out of a desire to compensate for a limitation or to reign in excess” (226). This desire is an expression of the mind’s longing for order and rationality (223). Thus, stories need anomalies. Disability in a story singles out the characters who bear it, and erases all other possible characteristics. Because disability cannot be situated within the normal, the story has to deal with this otherness by either leaving it behind or by punishing it for its lack of conformity (228). Davis agrees with this idea. He stresses that the otherness of disability alarms the ableist sensibility, and, as a consequence, “narratives involving disability always yearn toward the cure, the neutralizing of the disability” (“Identity Politics” 542).

However, Quayson disagrees with the design of narrative prosthesis, and introduces the concept of ‘aesthetic nervousness’, indicating that “the dominant protocols of representation within the literary text are short-circuited in relation to disability” (15). This can occur between disabled and nondisabled characters, as the latter perceive the former through a network of symbols, but also on a higher level, between the reader and the text. Aesthetic nervousness is set off by a disruption of the framework in which disabled people are placed as “subjects of symbolic notions of wholeness and normativity” (19). The literary representation of disability is situated between the aesthetic and the ethical: it always has an ethical dimension which cannot be incorporated easily in the aesthetic representation. Additionally, Quayson observes that aesthetic nervousness in literature actually is of the same kind as the nervousness in the real world, which is present in the everyday life of people with disabilities. This every-day experience then, is transferred to literature. However, this does not imply that the encounter with disability in literature is the same as in reality (19). To analyse the representations of disability in literature, it is important to understand that “the intervention of the literary representation is an intervention into a world that already situates disability within insistent framings and interpretations. The literary domain rather helps us to understand the complex processes of such framings and the ethical implications that derive from such processes” (24). Moreover, Quayson points out that disabled characters are linguistic constructions, which therefore may share certain characteristics with their able-bodied linguistic counterparts (27).
2.3. Disability and gender

Before the war, the state used the education system to teach boys and girls their appropriate gender roles: a manly man should be athletic, stoical and courageous; a womanly woman should be gentle, domesticated and virginal (Bourke 13). According to Robb, Edwardian society had caused men to become soft and effeminate, and women to be hard and aggressive. The upcoming war was hoped to “regenerate manliness in men and femininity in women” (33).

Nevertheless, World War I brought about a major crisis in men’s lives. Not only were many men’s bodies judged to be ‘inadequate’ to even enter the army (Bourke 13), many of those who did go to war returned with impairments. The war significantly changed the experience of disability. For people with congenital disabilities, a metaphor of passivity used to be employed. Yet, in war, it was exactly fit and potent men who were mutilated and left impotent (38). At first, the disabled soldier was considered to be even manlier than before his injury, as his mutilations were seen as proof of his courage and patriotism (56). Gerber correspondingly names war-induced disability “the red badge of courage of a warrior engaged in a cause worthy of his sacrifice” (Disabled Veterans 5). Although disabled veterans in the beginning acquired this special status, society soon returned to pre-war attitudes on disability, as people were keen to forget about the war and its effects (Bourke 70), and “by the late 1920s, the respect that had initially been given to the war-disabled men had ended” (31). The disabled veteran became unnoticed, similar to the disabled citizen.

These men were now dependent on help, and were no longer the manly figures they were before suffering the impairment (Gerber, “Heroes and Misfits” 549). Whereas the soldier represented the Victorian ideal of manliness, the disabled soldier who returned home threatened this exact idea, challenging masculine independence, work and citizenship (Koven, “Remembering” 1172). They now too became identified with the passivity people with congenital disabilities were associated with, and were compared to helpless children who needed to be cared for for the rest of their lives (Bourke 76). Gerber observes that the disabled veteran was on the one hand a symbol of masculine honour, but, on the other hand, “pity and fear, the common emotions associated with our response to disability, serve[d] to subvert honor and infantilize and feminize the male” (Disabled Veterans 5).

Koven (“Remembering” 1188) and Carden-Coyne (165) state that only by work these men could become real citizens again. However, obtaining employment proved not to be easy, as
they were considered to be more likely to have accidents and were therefore a “greater compensation risk” (Bourke 54). In addition to their employment, it was equally important to restore them to their masculine responsibility as head of their family (Koven, “Remembering” 1188). Men yearned for a return to “the comfort and security of conventional domesticity” (Bourke 21). It was considered to be the task of the women to care for these men, supporting them into taking back their dominant role (Gerber, “Heroes and Misfits” 550). For disabled single men, marriage and children could be a means to ‘restore’ their manliness (Koven, “Remembering” 1189). Accordingly, Carden-Coyne argues that men had to be sexually productive: sex and intimacy were vital to their rehabilitation and the restoration of their masculinity (217). Thurer confirms that non-productivity would be unacceptable in a society which values accomplishment (14). Consequently, the First World War triggered an increase in body and beauty consciousness (Carden-Coyne 219). This consciousness is illustrated by the desire for ‘whole’, beautiful, healthy bodies by the characters of Basil in Non-Combatants and Others, Connie in Lady Chatterley’s Lover, and Helen in Not So Quiet….

In order to make the disabled soldiers into ‘real men’ again, they frequently were reduced to the level of children, and were expected to redevelop as adults. As Koven contends, “the experience of war bitterly reimposes on wounded male soldiers […] the dependence of childhood” (“Remembering” 1171). We can see an example of this childlike dependency in the character of Clifford Chatterley, who is infantilized by his environment and starts to behave accordingly. Bourke remarks that war-impaired soldiers had to be taught to become men again, losing what was interpreted as the ‘feminizing’ tendency of disability. Yet, many could not live up to the expectancies of bringing in money, and were therefore further feminized (74). Gerber too emphasizes the feminization and infantilization of disabled ex-soldiers:

The potential for infantilization of seriously injured men or women alike is implicit in hospitalization and rehabilitation, because they cannot care for themselves. If also smothered with pity and love, patronized and spoiled by family and caregivers, a man may in the gendered terms of culture be feminized if the exhibits indecision, weakness, passivity, and dependence. (Disabled Veterans 10)

Whereas the wound of the disabled soldier initially was a badge of courage, the disability of a civilian was not. Boyle supports the idea of the existence of a ‘disability hierarchy’. At the peak of this hierarchy the ‘heroic disabled’ are situated. These are people who were disabled while doing their duty, sacrificing themselves for their work or country. They are at the same
time at the top of the masculinity hierarchy. Congenital disabilities acquire their place in the hierarchy by the amount of control the person has over his or her disability, placing those who can overcome their disabilities closer to the ‘heroic’ than those who cannot (Boyle 88).

During and after the war years, the disabled male body became a growing concern, which found its way into literary representation. According to Robb, emasculation is a common topic in post-war literature (49). In addition, disabled characters are generally desexualized and devitalized (Davis, “Identity Politics” 536). For instance, in Lady Chatterley’s Lover, the sexual impotence of Clifford is emphasized. He is seen as asexual. Additionally, Barnes and Mercer state that disabled men in literature are depicted as desperately trying to deal with their disability. They are represented in the contrast between ‘masculine potency’ and ‘disabled impotency’ (519).

Whereas the above focuses on disabilities of men, disabled women might be considered to have a double disadvantage as they belong to two ‘passive’ groups. Garland Thomson compares the female to the disabled body. Both are seen as deviant and are excluded from full participation in life. Disabled women, therefore, are socially ‘invisible’ (19). Cohen discusses that Alix, in Non-Combatants and Others, poses an example of a woman whose disability makes her invisible (34-38). Moreover, Garland Thomson continues, disabled women are often seen as unfeminine and asexual (25). According to Fine and Asch, these women were considered to be “inadequate to fulfil either the economically productive roles traditionally considered appropriate for males, or nurturant, reproductive roles reserved for females” (233). They are thus excluded from fulfilling social roles: they are ‘roleless’ (239).

In literary texts, the disabled woman regularly is a symbol of otherness, which can be either positive or negative. Kent distinguishes two stereotypical images in their portrayal. The first stereotype is a positive one, describing the disabled character as an independent, vital woman. Her disability does not determine her identity as a woman (93). The negative image portrays the disabled woman as an object of pity or contempt. She clearly lacks self-respect, proceeds unnoticed by men, and often is bitter and desperate (94). The disabled female character is regularly employed as a metaphor to address a broader issue. These women usually feel inferior, and are represented as vulnerable and dependent beings (Barnes & Mercer 519). Kent claims that there is a direct connection between the lives of disabled women in literary texts and social attitudes towards women with disabilities. The description of women in literature represents their place in society (199).
3. Methodology

I support Quayson’s observation that “[i]t is important to attempt a close reading of literary texts in their totality, and not just in the precise place assigned to the disabled characters” (34). Therefore, I will look at the disabled characters’ relationships to other characters and their position in the fictional world. This dissertation will not analyse the metaphorical meaning of disability in the texts, but instead will focus on the disabled character as part of the network of characters that constitute the text. With this approach, I join the perspective of cultural disability studies. Disability Studies considers disability to be a social construction. Therefore, fiction including characters with disabilities represents a cultural construction of an already existing construction. Disability is thus constructed by society, and once more by the fictional world. Again, I agree with Quayson in that every-day experiences with people with disabilities are transferred to literature. Yet, as Quayson aptly notices, this does not imply that the experience with disability in literature is exactly the same as in reality (19).

As already mentioned in the introduction, I will explore the representation of the characters’ gender roles at work and in the household, and the attitudes towards disabled male and female characters. For the analysis of gender roles, I primarily rely on the ideas of Bourke, Koven, and Robb. These authors do not employ a cultural disability studies perspective, but deal with gender constructions during the war and closely afterwards. I will apply their observations to the fictional world of the novels. In examining the attitudes towards disabled characters, I mostly base my findings on the theories of Boyle, Gerber, Davis and Garland Thomson. Their perspectives derive from the field of (cultural) Disability Studies.
4. Investigation

Before starting the analysis, I will give a brief overview of the different characters with disabilities present in the novels. The first novel, *Non-Combatants and Others*, represents a congenitally disabled girl, Alix, and war-wounded soldiers, including Basil Doye. In contrast to Garland Thomson’s claim that “[d]isabled literary characters usually remain on the margins of fiction as uncomplicated figures” and therefore “main characters almost never have physical disabilities” (9), the disabled Alix is the protagonist of the story. Due to a diseased hipbone by her birth, she has a slight deformity of the leg which causes her to limp. She uses a stick for walking. Alix is an artist, and is involved in the artistic milieu while she lives in the houses of Wood End and Violette. She is introduced immediately at the beginning of the story. The reader is first informed about her physique and personality – a cynical face with critical eyes (4) –, and only further on it is stated that she “was rather lame” (4). She is repeatedly described as being ‘lame’ in the first half of the novel (for instance, see pages 4, 6, 20, 41, 46, and 50). *Non-Combatants and Others* is set on the home front. The context in which soldiers appear in the book is, therefore, in England, recovering from their wounds. Basil, Alix’s artist friend, is one of the soldiers shipped home for recovery. He had the middle finger of his right hand amputated due to a war wound. He will not be able to paint again, and therefore is disabled in his previous occupation as an artist. Furthermore, there are several references to the wounded soldiers, residing at the hospitals.

The story of *Huntingtower* contains two ‘groups’ of disabled persons. The first group introduced in the novel consists of the (congenitally) disabled villains Spidel and Léon. The latter is described as “a sturdy fellow” whose face “was decorated with features so tiny as to give the impression of a monstrous child” (49-50). Spidel is a “lame man” (72), “an odd-looking being, lean as a heron, wry-necked, but amazingly quick on his feet” (73). The protagonists of the story start their adventure when they decide to fight these villains in order to help Princess Saskia. When they go in search of allies, they meet the second group of disabled characters: the household of Sir Archibald. When Dickson McCunn, the protagonist, arrives at Sir Archie’s house, the door is opened by a one-armed butler. Soon the entire

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5 All quotations from the novel incorporated in this thesis are taken from *Non-Combatants and Others* by Rose Macaulay (La Vergne: CreateSpace, 2014).

6 All quotations from the novel incorporated in this thesis are taken from *Huntingtower* by John Buchan (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963).
household is described by Archie as consisting out of male servants with impairments:
“There's Sime, my butler. He was a Fusilier Jock and, as you saw, has lost an arm. Then
McGuffog the keeper is a good man, but he's still got a Turkish bullet in his thigh. The
chauffeur, Carfrae, was in the Yeomanry, and lost half a foot; and there's myself, as lame as a
duck” (150). Sir Archibald acquired his impairment from an airplane crash during the war. He
refers to his household as “cripples” (159).

In *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, the aristocrat Clifford Chatterley is injured during the war. He
married Constance in 1917, only six month before he was wounded. His disability is
described as follows: “His hold on life was marvellous. He didn't die, and the bits seemed to
grow together again. For two years he remained in the doctor's hands. Then he was
pronounced a cure, and could return to life again, with the lower half of his body, from the
hips down, paralysed for ever” (5). He has a motor-chair which allows him to move around
on his estate. He is further described as a healthy-looking, handsome and cheerful man.
Nevertheless, it is mentioned that the war also took some of his feelings away. Literary
analyses of Clifford frequently have the tendency to describe him rather negatively, and see
him as a mere symbol of destructive forces. For instance, according to Niven, “Clifford
Chatterley embodies inherited privilege, atrophied power and sexual denial. He is socially
boorish, insensitive to nature and physically impotent. He has no life in the novel […] other
than as the symbolic manifestation of the mechanical will” (78). In my analysis, I will present
a completely different interpretation of Clifford.

The last novel, *Not So Quiet…*, features “trainloads of broken human beings” (29). The war-
wounded soldiers remain nameless and are not attributed any main roles in the novel. They
are the ‘bodies’ transported by the VAD ambulance drivers. The only disabled character with
a voice in the story is Roy, who is shipped home injured. He is blinded and his leg is
amputated from the hip.

In the following sections, I will present my analysis of the representation of gendered
disability in the four novels. Sections 4.1 and 4.2 will investigate respectively the gendered
occupations of the characters and their position in the household. Sections 4.3 and 4.4 analyse
the attitudes toward disabled characters. The third section analyses how they are infantilized
and/or seen as heroes, while the fourth section examines the representation of their sexuality.

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8 All quotations from the novel incorporated in this thesis are taken from *Not So Quiet...* by Helen Zenna Smith (New York: Feminist Press, 1989).
4.1. Gendered occupations: disability and work

During the war, the ideal masculine and feminine occupations were respectively soldier and nurse. The soldier embodied bravery, strength, and courage, while the nurse was characterised by her compassion, nurturing, and virtue (Robb 36). Soldiers were the “embodiment of true manhood” (34). As Connell observes, “the constitution of masculinity through bodily performance means that gender is vulnerable when the performance cannot be sustained – for instance, as a result of physical disability” (54); consequently, men who refused to or could not fight were seen as unmanly. Men with disabilities could not live up to the social expectations of their gender. In Non-Combatants and Others, some men’s physical deficiencies impeded their participating in the war. These men would be considered as less masculine by British society during wartime. As for the women, the ideal occupation would be nurse or mother. The VAD nurse had a middle- or upper-class background, and was frequently compared to an angel or Madonna (Robb 41). Although they lived through the same horrible experiences as the soldiers, they were considered to be symbols of femininity. Whereas the mother would provide sons (and daughters) to send to the war, the nurse would help to cure these men when wounded in order to send them back to the front.

After the war, gender occupations had to be reconsidered. Great importance was given to the rehabilitation of – now disabled – ex-soldiers. In Non-Combatants and Others, the wounded soldiers play croquet as part of their rehabilitation process. Carden-Coyne explains that physical exercise in general was important in the rehabilitation of wounded soldiers. They would even give sport displays “to reassure the public that they were physically capable and masculine” (162). At the same time, this would show that they could ‘overcome’ their disability. After recovering, disabled soldiers were expected to complete their rehabilitation by finding a job, to wholly restore their masculinity. The male body had to be productive. This imposed productivity was part of an “aggressive normalization” process (Carden-Coyne 64). Disabled ex-soldiers who refused to retrain for a job were even seen as social threats (6).

In Huntingtower, the disabled ex-soldiers in fact have jobs. They form a household of war-disabled servants. And in Lady Chatterley’s Lover, Clifford Chatterley starts to feel masculine again when he starts managing the coal mines.

In what follows, I will analyse the gendered occupations exercised by the characters with disabilities. In Non-Combatants and Others, these will be the stereotypical jobs of the soldier and the nurse or mother, while I will primarily focus on work in post-war society in Huntingtower and Lady Chatterley’s Lover.
4.1.1. Non-Combatants and Others

Basil Doye used to be an artist before acquiring his physical impairment. Now, his amputated finger makes it impossible for him to paint. However, when he volunteered for war service, he had already given up painting for soldiering. His period of recovery in England serves one sole purpose: to send him back to war – and this indeed happens at the end of the novel. During his stay in England, he is criticized for not being at the front, which is seen as a failure of his masculinity. His impairment is not very visible and he is therefore mistaken for a civilian refusing war service. The following excerpt shows how English women internalised the values of society – equating soldiering with masculinity and being at home with cowardice. Basil is not ‘in khaki’ and therefore not recognized as a soldier: “She told me I ought to be in khaki. I said I supposed I ought, properly speaking, but that I was waiting to be fetched. She said it was young fellows like me who disgraced Britain before the eyes of Europe, and that I wouldn't like being fetched, because then I should have to wear C for Coward on my tunic” (38).

Men had to provide a valid reason for not being at the front. Basil is only temporarily home, and will return after his recovery. However, there are other male characters who do not participate in the war as soldiers. According to Bourke, one of the reasons why the war caused a crisis in the ideals of masculinity was that “men’s bodies were found to be inadequate” (13). In the novel, two young men are rejected from service. The narrator ironically explains that they would have preferred to participate in war and take up their masculine role as soldiers: “It may here be mentioned, lest readers should be unfairly prejudiced against Mr. Ashe and Mr. Banister, that one of them had a frozen lung and the other a distended aorta. They were quite good young men really, and would have preferred to go” (20). Because of their good intentions, they are ‘good young men’ instead of cowards.

Women were expected to contribute to the war by doing social work. Middleclass single women would become VAD nurses, taking up a caring role. Other female war tasks would be collecting supplies for hospitals, helping Belgian refugees, knitting socks and mufflers for soldiers at the front, and sending them cigarettes and chocolate. Several women groups were erected to organise this social work (Watson 36-37). The women in the novel carry out similar feminine tasks to ‘do their bit’ and help the war effort:
She saw Dorothy, just in from the hospital, still in her V.A.D. dress. [...] Margot was there too, in the khaki uniform of the Women's Volunteer Reserve [...] She was making sand-bags. Their mother, Alix's aunt Eleanor, was pinning tickets on clothes for Belgians. [...] she was secretary of the local Belgian Committee (as of many other committees, local and otherwise). [...] One of [the Belgian people] had been their guest since November; she was [...] knitting placidly and with the immense rapidity noticeable on the Continent [...]. (5)

They do some fund-raising, help wounded soldiers and refugees, and knit for the men at the front. However, Alix does not participate in any of these feminine war-tasks. Her cousin Margot disapproves of her attitude, and believes she neglects her tasks as an English woman. According to her, Alix is “a lazy little unsociable slacker” (10), and she complains: “Alix is hopeless; she does nothing but draw and paint. She could earn something on the stage as the Special Star Turn, the Girl who isn't doing her bit. She doesn't so much as knit a body-belt or draw the window-curtains against Zepps” (6). While her cousins and aunts are ‘doing their bit’, Alix prefers to stay out of anything that reminds her of the war, and rejects warfare itself.

Alix comments she does not have any desire to participate in anything war-related, but, at the same time, her inability to do so is emphasized as well: “she was lame, and not the sex which goes either, worse luck” (20). Garland Thomson affirms that “[b]oth the female and the disabled body are cast as deviant and inferior; both are excluded from full participation in public as well as economic life; both are defined in opposition to a norm that is assumed to possess natural physical superiority” (19). Alix indeed cannot be a soldier because of her sex and her disability – she is doubly excluded. Her impairment impedes her from serving as a VAD nurse as well, like her cousin Dorothy. She expresses her frustration at not being able to fight in the war:

‘I believe,’ said Alix, ‘it's jealousy that's demoralising me most. Jealousy of the people who can be in the beastly thing.... Oh, I do so want to go and fight... [...] I want to go and help to end it.... Oh, it's rotten not being able to; simply rotten.... Why shouldn't girls? I can't bear the sight of khaki; and I don't know whether it's most because the war's so beastly or because I want to be in it.... It's both.... ’. (72)

She wants to be an active participant, and fights against the infantilization by her environment. Disabled women were seen as ‘inadequate’ to fulfil both economically productive (male) roles and nurturing (female) roles (Asch & Fine 233). However, Alix wants
to be perceived as adequate and able. Therefore, it is exactly the fact that participation in the war is denied to her which causes her frustration. Her situation is compared to Tommy Ashe’s, who was rejected from service due to his medical unfitness: “Tommy Ashe […] was bitter and angry like Alix; like her he would have hated the war anyhow, even if he had been fighting […] but as it was he loathed it so much that he would never mention it unless he had to, and then only with a sneer” (21). Alix does not fulfil the stereotypes of femininity during the war. She is not making a war effort by carrying out the female side of war-tasks, but instead claims her own position in society, choosing her own occupations: she decides to fight war and becomes a peace activist.

4.1.2. Huntingtower

Many soldiers returned home with war-wounds and impairments, and were therefore not always able to exercise their previous jobs (or any job at all). However, according to Koven, to re integrate into society as ‘real’ citizens, having a job was essential. Work would function as a means to independence, securing men’s masculinity (“Remembering” 1188). In Huntingtower, all the characters with impairments have jobs or similar occupations. Sir Archibald is head of a household of “cripples” (159). He himself has an injured leg from an airplane crash during the war. He functions as the employer of other disabled or wounded ex-soldiers: a butler with only one arm, a gamekeeper with a bullet in his thigh, and a chauffeur who lost half a foot. In spite of these impairments, they are all identified as working men. They have permanent jobs in Archie’s household and are thus economically productive. During the adventure, they are placed back into their occupation as soldiers. When Sir Archie learns about their upcoming adventure, he says: “Gad, here have I been vegetatin' and thinkin' that all excitement had gone out of life with the war, and sometimes even regrettin' that the beastly old thing was over” (157). Without his occupation as soldier, he was merely ‘vegetating’ at his estate. Participating in the adventure offers him the opportunity to take up his old role as soldier once again, which reaffirms his masculinity.

Two of the villains with disabilities, Léon and Spidel, also have jobs. First of all, of Léon is said that “[h]e might have been a butler en déshabillé, but for the presence of a pair of field boots into which he had tucked the ends of his trousers” (49). He has the authority to refuse entrance to the property: “‘There’s no entrance here,’ he said huskily. ‘I have strict orders.’” (50). Afterwards, he is referred to by Heritage as “that brigand at the gate” (51). The Oxford
English Dictionary gives two different definitions of ‘a brigand’ – he can either be “a light-armed, irregular foot-soldier” or “one who lives by pillage and robbery: a freebooter, bandit […]”. Heritage probably uses the word as an insult. Nevertheless, he is also described as wearing field boots, which, in line with Macdonald, indicates that he used to be a soldier (14). Princess Saskia will later on tell Dickson that Léon had been a valet working for her father until he joined the Bolsheviks. He is “the keeper of the West Lodge” (53), and together with Spidel “they had the air of a patrol, or of warders pacing the corridors of a prison” (53). They are further labelled “ill-favoured servants” (55), “impudent lodge-keepers” (56) and Spidel is described as a “watcher” (73). These descriptions underline their function as hired guards, with temporary jobs. Nonetheless, their occupation is seen as a very undesirable and unmanly one, as they are guarding two imprisoned, innocent women. This aspect is underlined by the use of negative adjectives, like ‘impudent’ and ‘ill-favoured’. Michael and Isobel Haslett observe that Buchan only used few adjectives in his writings, and this “restraint in adjectives ensures that they impress the reader when used” (19). The corruption of the villains is thus emphasized and contrasted to the selflessness of the heroes.

This analysis shows the contrast in valuation of the servants of the Mains of Garple – Archie’s estate – on the one hand and the Huntingtower servants on the other. Whereas the former are working for the respected Sir Archibald, Léon and Spidel work for the villains. The position of the latter is temporary, and, moreover, serves to achieve a villainous end. Unlike Archie’s servants, Léon and Spidel do not have a personal relationship with their employer – who is the Bolshevik leader Paul. Their relationship is purely political. Though Koven states that a job would contribute to full citizenship (“Remembering” 1188), this does not seem to be the case in the portrayal of this last group of disabled persons. From the beginning on, they are depicted as outcasts, and they disappear by the end of the story. Sir Archibald’s servants, on the other hand, are more successfully integrated into society. They take up their ‘duty’ as male citizens, defending ‘the weak’ and liberating their village – and country – from the villainous outsiders. As Glassock contends, Buchan tended to express pre-war ideals of masculinity in his post-war novels (49). In Huntingtower, the ex-soldiers live up to the masculine ideals of selfless courage and sacrifice.
4.1.3. Lady Chatterley’s Lover

Clifford Chatterley belongs to an aristocratic family and becomes baronet of Wragby after the death of his father. However, after being injured in the war, he and Connie have to live on a “rather inadequate income” (5). At Wragby Hall, Clifford starts to write and becomes a – quite successful – author. He is ambitious and wants to become known as a first-class modern writer. The narrator comments: “Clifford had never been primarily out for money, though he made it where he could, for money is the seal and stamp of success” (51). He just wished to make his “own very display of himself that should capture for a time the vast populace” (51). In contrast, Connie feels that this desire is rather childish and she feels mostly proud of the fact that they are actually making money: “Clifford and I together, we make twelve hundred a year out of writing’; so she put it to herself. Make money! Make it! Out of nowhere. Wring it out of the thin air! The last feat to be humanly proud of!” (63).

Clifford’s writing gives him the possibility to enter into social relationships with other young intellectuals. He invites his aristocratic relations, critics and writers to Wragby, angling for their praise. On the other hand, his status as a writer is not acknowledged by some of the characters. For instance, Connie’s father believes “there's nothing in it” (17). And, though initially supportive, Connie after a while changes her mind: “All that writing! All that wild struggling to push himself forwards! It was just insanity. And it was getting worse, really maniacal” (97). Clifford himself also changes of opinion. When he later looks back on his writing career, he defines literature as “poor emotional half-witted stuff” (108). Although his writing did effectively provide him with social contacts, he feels that, at the same time, “[h]e had been gradually dying […] in the isolated private life of the artist and the conscious being” (108). Being a writer therefore does not give the confirmation of masculinity that Clifford searches for. Moreover, writing is an activity he undertakes with the help of his wife, and thus is not enhancing his feelings of independence.

When Connie plans to leave Wragby for a while due to her illness, the nurse Ivy Bolton is hired to care for Clifford. It is she who inspires his interest in the coal-mining industry. Only at this point in the story Clifford starts to feel ‘manly’ again. As he asserts to Connie: “Neither my mind nor my will is crippled, and I don't rule with my legs. I can do my share of ruling” (183). He feels powerful because he governs over so many men working for him: “He felt a new sense of power flowing through him: power over all these men, over the hundreds and hundreds of colliers” (108). This sensation even leads to the rebirth of Clifford as a leader figure: “He began to feel he belonged. A new sort of self-assertion came into him. After all,
he was the real boss in Tevershall, he was really the pits. It was a new sense of power, something he had till now shrunk from with dread” (105).

[H]e seemed verily to be re-born. Now life came into him! […] He simply felt life rush into him out of the coal, out of the pit. The very stale air of the colliery was better than oxygen to him. It gave him a sense of power, power. He was doing something: and he was going to do something. He was going to win, to win: not as he had won with his stories, mere publicity, amid a whole sapping of energy and malice. But a man's victory. (108)

Whereas writing would confine him to the house, his involvement in the coal industry takes him out of this space. He experiences this new work as “a man’s victory”, as it ‘restores’ his masculinity. Nevertheless, from this moment on, Clifford is portrayed more negatively, and Connie’s extra-marital relationship with the gamekeeper is insinuated to be more acceptable. The nature of Clifford’s work seems to change him into a kind of demon: “In this field [the coal industry], men were like gods, or demons” (108). In a metaphorical sense, Clifford thus represents the evil, repressing the working class. Literally however, if we look at Clifford as a person with a disability, it remains clear that this exact job empowers him, and partly restores his masculine identity and independence. However, the narrator points out the relativity of these feelings, as he becomes at the same time dependent on Mrs Bolton, and consequently infantilized.

4.2. The role of family life: head of the household

The harsh realities of war made men yearn for a return to the conventional household at home (Bourke 21). In post-war Britain, it was supposed to be the task of the woman to restore the returned soldier’s masculinity by returning him to his traditional position within the household. Married men would return to their wives and would be head of the household once again, while unmarried men might start a family in order to express their masculinity (Koven, “Remembering” 1188; Gerber, “Heroes and Misfits” 550). In Huntingtower, no mention is made of the role of family life in the disabled soldiers’ experience of masculinity. Indeed, none of the disabled characters seems to be married. This observation is consistent with Glassock’s remark that Buchan’s male characters tend to remain bachelors, who “inhabit a world in which adventure and intrigue take precedence over domesticity” (44). However, the disabled ex-soldiers do enter in a (protective) relationship with a ‘damsel in distress’, which
might offer them the possibility to take up their masculine gender roles. In *Non-Combatants and Others*, Basil is looking for the ideal woman who will make him feel like a whole man again. The war changed his ideas of the ideal woman, and he therefore chooses the superficial, but beautiful Evie over the critical, but ‘cripple’ Alix. Clifford Chatterley and Roy Evans-Mawnington have both been severely physically disabled during the war and share another impairment: they are sexually impotent. These two men will depend on their wives for both emotional and physical support. Although they might be restored to their dominant role as head of a household, they will not be able to father any children and carry on the family name. Moreover, as they will be placed into a dependent position because of their disabilities, it is questionable in how far they effectively can restore the prototypical form of masculinity as prescribed by society. As discussed previously (see 4.1.3), in Clifford’s case primarily work will obtain this effect.

### 4.2.1. Non-Combatants and Others

Before going to war, Basil used to give importance to the intellectual level of a partner. He wanted to share his life with someone with whom he could discuss art for instance. Alix did fit into this ideal. However, the war changed Basil’s needs, excluding Alix as his possible future partner:

> Alix wasn't really altogether what he wanted. […] However, they had always amused each other; she was clever, and nice to look at; he remembered vaguely that he had been a little in love with her once, before the war. If the war hadn't come just then, he might have become a great deal in love with her. Before the war one had wanted a rather different sort of person, of course, from now; more of a companion, to discuss things with; more of a stimulant, perhaps, and less of a rest. He remembered that they had discussed painting a great deal; he didn't want to discuss painting now, since he had lost his finger. He didn't particularly want cleverness either, since trench life, with its battery on the brain of sounds and sights, had made him stupid.… (38)

Basil’s experience of war has changed him, and he now has new requirements for a potential wife, which he finds in Evie. Evie is the kind of woman he would have despised before going to the war: “Basil had once resented the type. In old days he would have called it names, such as Woman, and Violette. Now he liked Woman, found her satisfactory to some deep need in him; the eternal masculine, roused from slumber by war, cried to its counterpart” (50). As
Bourke states, “the dislocations of wartime experiences made men yearn for the comfort and security of conventional domesticity” (21). Alix actually defies the image of conventional domesticity. As discussed in the previous section (4.1.1), she does not comply with the conventional tasks demanded from a woman of her class during wartime.

Evie does not reject the war, but does not care much either. She is not informed about what is actually happening in the world, but does admire soldiers and their heroism. Basil prefers her ignorance to Alix’s anti-war ideas. He likes Evie’s admiration, and enjoys the trivial conversations he can have with her. Evie is the opposite of Alix: able-bodied but ignorant. When Alix tries to understand how Evie fits into a companionship existing out of intellectuals, she muses: “Well, Evie, of course, came in on her face. It was jolly to have a face like that, to cover all vacancies within” (46). Basil wants to settle for Evie. Settling would bring along taking up the stereotypical roles of the household, in which Basil could be head of the household. Evie would fit into the household like her mother and sister Kate, who only seem to discuss household matters and servants. They are described as the ‘feminine’: they are confined to the house, and would not wish to take part in masculine habits, like smoking, or masculine responsibilities, like fighting in the war. Nevertheless, Basil does not succeed in obtaining this role, as he is rejected by Evie. She enjoys the flirtations with soldiers, but does not want to get tied up already: “She liked him to love her beauty, but she was occasionally startled by the way he loved it. She thought it was perhaps because he was an artist, or a soldier, or both” (63). Evie is not willing to take on the role of the perfect wife, waiting for her soldier to come home: “She spent the week, with partial success, in avoiding Basil Doye. Since she had done with him, what was the use of scenes? She certainly wasn't going to let him go away with the impression that he would find her waiting on his next return from the war to beguile his leave-time” (68).

Basil longs for the security of a conventional household, and wants to have something to look forward to when he will be back at the front. He is however rejected by Evie, and turns down Alix when she tells him she cares for him. The novel ends at New Year’s Eve, with a frustrated Basil thinking of Evie: “To himself he was saying, 'She'd fit on these hills; she'd belong here, more than to Spring Hill. She's a Greek really... that space between the eyes, and the way she steps ... like Diana.... Oh, strafe it all, what's the good of thinking?' Savagely he flung away his cigarette” (95). This quote once again illustrates the difference between Basil and Evie. He clearly thinks of her in intellectual terms which Evie would not even be able to understand.
4.2.2. Huntingtower

In *Huntingtower*, the ex-soldiers are living together in an all-male household of master and servants. The estate’s isolated location might explain the absence of female servants, as they would not want to work in such a remote place. Sir Archie is not married, nor is it implied that any of the disabled servants is. The servants already assert their masculinity by having a secure job. Starting a family might still come later.

Archie and his servants do enter in contact with Saskia, and are presented as the heroes who will rescue the princess. Yet, Saskia is put in command over them when Dougal is absent. She also seems to be more able than they are, as she turns out to be quite active and courageous, for instance when she crawls down the veranda wall to save Heritage by distracting the foes. Sir Archibald is left with no other choice than observing her:

> The girl had sprung back from the window. "I cannot bear it. I will not see him murdered in sight of his friends. I am going to show myself, and when they see me they will leave him.... No, you must stay here. Presently they will be round this house. Don't be afraid for me—I am very quick of foot."
> "For God's sake, don't! Here, Princess, stop," and he clutched at her skirt. "Look here, I'll go."
> "You can't. You have been wounded. I am in command, you know. Keep the door open till I come back."
> He hobbled after her, but she easily eluded him. She was smiling now, and blew a kiss to him. "La, la, la," she trilled, as she ran down the stairs. (197)

The soldiers do however attempt to protect her. When Saskia shows signs of ‘weakness’, as “her speed was failing” (198) and she was “drooping with fatigue” (199), “Sir Archie, game leg or no, was on the parapet preparing to drop down and hold off the pursuit were it only for seconds” (199). However, his opportunity to heroically save the princess is counteracted by a tall man who appears out of nowhere and rescues her before Sir Archie even gets near. Consequently, Saskia does not comply with the image of the woman who helps the restoration of the returned war-disabled soldiers’ masculinity. There is no evidence that she attracts Archie the way she does Heritage, and he has no romantic pretences towards her. Saskia however does confirm the heroic masculinity of the tall stranger, who happens to be her fiancé, Prince Alexis. When Alexis appears, Saskia gives up her leadership. However, when he is not present, she automatically takes on the leadership of the disabled soldiers.
4.2.3. Lady Chatterley’s Lover

At the beginning of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, the narrator expresses that Clifford is weary of the ongoing war: “The gay excitement had gone out of the war... dead. Too much death and horror. A man needed support and comfort. A man needed to have an anchor in the safe world. A man needed a wife” (12). Just like Basil, Clifford longs to start a conventional household, and he marries Connie during the war. When he returns disabled from the war, Connie takes up the role as his carer. Clifford’s brother died during the war, turning Clifford into the official heir of Wragby. Therefore, his father urged him to marry and provide offspring to carry further the family name. However, when he returns from the war partially paralysed and impotent, he cannot fulfil this wish: “Clifford was shipped home smashed, and there was no child” (12). He cannot take up his masculine role of fathering children: “Crippled for ever, knowing he could never have any children, Clifford came home to the smoky Midlands to keep the Chatterley name alive while he could” (5). To be able to pass on the Chatterley name, he suggests to Connie she might have children with another man. Clifford would then act as their father and provide them with his name:

'It would almost be a good thing if you had a child by another man, he said. 'If we brought it up at Wragby, it would belong to us and to the place. […] If we had the child to rear, it would be our own, and it would carry on. (43-44)

I mean it would be awfully nice to have a child running about the house, and feel one was building up a future for it. I should have something to strive for then, and I should know it was your child, shouldn't I, dear? And it would seem just the same as my own. (111)

Give me the child of any healthy, normally intelligent man, and I will make a perfectly competent Chatterley of him. It is not who begets us, that matters, but where fate places us. (183)

Having a child would primarily offer him a position in the household, as head of his family. Secondary, as Beal argues, Clifford’s desire of a son as well ensues from his need to rule the working class (88). Clifford’s desire for a child is part of his wish to keep on going the family traditions, and to keep Wragby in possession of the family: “That's why having a son helps; one is only a link in a chain,' he said” (43). If Clifford would have an heir, the future of the family and the estate would be more secure. He would be able to take up his role as head of a family, and he would change from a passive object of care into a carer.
However, Connie does not help him to restore his masculine roles. Only when Mrs Bolton, his nurse, comes into his life, he realizes that “Connie kept him apart, and made him sensitive and conscious of himself” (107), while Mrs Bolton “made a man of him” (107) and “put a new fight into Clifford” (106). He felt that “the woman like Connie, his wife, could lame him fatally” (109). Not his disability, but rather his wife, is ‘laming’ him and is refusing him his masculinity. He starts to get quieter when he is in Connie’s presence, and “[o]nly when he was alone with Mrs Bolton did he really feel a lord and a master, and his voice ran on with her almost as easily and garrulously as her own could run” (109). She manages to make him feel like a man again. Mrs Bolton, and not Connie, is the woman who helps the disabled Clifford to recover his position as head of the household: “And in this Mrs Bolton triumphed. ‘How he's getting on!’ she would say to herself in pride. ‘And that's my doing! My word, he'd never have got on like this with Lady Chatterley. She was not the one to put a man forward. She wanted too much for herself.’” (292). According to Mrs Bolton, Connie did not achieve supporting Clifford in the recovery of his masculinity, as she did not give up her own needs for his needs. However, when Connie asks Clifford to divorce her, he refuses. The end of his marriage would imply the end of the possibility of having a household, in which he can pass on the family name.

On the other hand, although Clifford starts to feel masculine again, he becomes very dependent on Mrs Bolton, reducing him even to a child-like man. I will discuss this further in the chapter on infantilization (see section 4.3.3).

4.2.4. Not So Quiet…

In Not So Quiet..., Helen and Roy get engaged when they see each other during their short stay at home. While Helen was sent back shell-shocked, Roy is on leave for a week. They both desire to be out of the war and to start their own family. Helen prefers to comply with the role of the conventional wife to going back to the front, waiting for her man to return from the war. She muses: “Soon leave would come round again and I should be waiting at home for him” (202). However, Roy and Helen both return to the front, where Roy is badly wounded. Bourke states that the war-wounded returned to their wives and families, where their masculinity would be properly restored (73). Nevertheless, they often felt haunted by feelings of embarrassment. Roy as well fears Helen’s reaction to his impairments, and feels most embarrassed about his impotence. His sexual impotence is the only impairment unknown to
Helen’s mother and Mrs. Evans-Mawnington. However, it will be exactly this impairment which will interfere with Roy’s reintegration in the masculine position in the household: he cannot have children. Just like Clifford Chatterley, he will not be able to pass on his name to his offspring. His impairment as well has implications for Helen’s feminine role of reproduction. She will not be a mother. Kingsbury comments that Helen has been prepared to conform to “upper-middle-class British femininity”, which entails becoming a proper wife and mother (239). Roy and Helen will thus not be able to answer to the gendered stereotypes that society imposes upon them, and even rebel against these gender roles. Roy does not want to force Helen into a position in which she never can become a mother, and therefore offers to annul their engagement: “There will never be a perambulator on that lawn of ours, Nell. You understand? I couldn’t expect you to marry me. You’re brick enough to stand the blindness and the limp, but the other is too much to ask any woman. So I release you from your promise” (231). Helen nonetheless accepts his disabilities and decides to marry him despite of them. In doing this, she both accepts and challenges the role of the disabled ex-serviceman’s wife. On the one hand, she will be the wife who will care for her disabled husband and help him restore his masculinity. This is exactly what her mother and Mrs. Evans-Mawnington would expect of her, and even consider to be an honour. It was the task of the exemplary single English woman to ‘do her bit’ by marrying a war-wounded soldier and be of his service. Helen’s mother believes she is an example for other women, who refused to marry disabled war-veterans:

Isn’t it wonderful that Roy had had the M.C.? Wonderful and sad. Our poor blinded hero. And my little girlie is to marry him and be his eyes [...] [Y]our example ought to do a few of these appalling creatures good who have refused to marry their wounded heroes. [...] Darling, what an inestimable privilege you have, marrying one of England’s disabled heroes, devoting your life to his service!” (228-229)

Indeed, as Albrinck righteously claims, the mothers “are ironically shown to be blinder than the blinded soldier, for Roy does not perceive a marriage with him as “an inestimable privilege”” (287).

On the other hand, Helen defies the image of the woman as a mother. Before marrying Roy, she is well aware of them not being able to have children, and even tells him she does not desire to have any at all: “I hate kids, anyway” (232). While her own mother and Mrs. Evans-Mawnington both are emblems – and virtually caricatures – of the good English mother, sacrificing their children to England, Helen will never take this position.
4.3. Portraying the disabled: heroic disability versus infantilization, feminization and the demonic

Disability is approached in different ways in the novels, from attributing to disabled characters a status of heroism to their infantilization or feminization. Boyle has shown the existence of a disability hierarchy, which places the heroically disabled at the top (88). They are considered to be more masculine because they made a sacrifice: they sacrificed their own body while doing their duty. Those who additionally can overcome their disabilities approximate the heroic status of disability more than those who cannot. This idea is reflected in the depiction of the two different groups of disabled characters in Huntingtower. The disabled ex-soldiers embody heroism, while the congenitally disabled do not. However, disabled soldiers did not stay emblems of masculinity. The war furthermore caused a crisis in men’s masculinity (Robb 48). The overwhelming presence of physical disability and the confrontation with shell-shock, which was seen as a male form of hysteria, contrasted with the heroic ideals of the war. Therefore, emasculation came to be a recurrent theme in post-war literature (49).

Bourke argues that disabled ex-soldiers became, by the mid-1920s, associated with passivity. They were perceived as “helpless children who needed to be looked after for the rest of their lives” (75). Clifford Chatterley, for instance, answers to this image of the disabled man. Wounded soldiers were first reduced to the level of children to be made into ‘real’ men again. Moreover, they needed to get rid of the “feminizing tendencies of disability” (74), like their image of passivity. Nevertheless, the responses of pity and fear cause disabled men’s infantilization and feminization (Gerber, Disabled Veterans 5). Gerber states that people often react with fear to disability because they are confronted with their own vulnerability, and with pity for the suffering of the disabled person (“Heroes and Misfits” 549). In all four novels, instances of pity and/or fear can be seen in the treatment of disabled people. Additionally, the response of pity can further feminize the disabled male, because it can provoke indecision, weakness, passivity and dependence in him (Gerber, Disabled Veterans 10).

The response of fear is illustrated by the image of the ‘Demonic Cripple’. Not only does the disabled person evoke fear because he makes people apprehend their vulnerability, but, according to Kriegel, he even frightens the non-disabled because of his need of vengeance (35). In cultural representations, the Demonic Cripple’s disability is his very essence. In Huntingtower, the congenitally disabled characters are examples of ‘demonic cripples’.
4.3.1. Non-Combatants and Others

Basil was wounded while serving England, and therefore is one of his country’s heroes. His disability is interpreted as a heroic one. Evie admires him for being a soldier. Mrs. Vinney also says to him: “Well, I must say one can't help admiring the men that go and fight for their country, though one should allow liberty to all...” (39). However, Basil’s impairment is not easily visible, as it is the loss of a finger. He therefore is not treated by everybody as a ‘hero’. For instance, during his stay in England for recuperation, he meets a woman on the street who criticizes him for not being at the front, accusing him of being a coward.

Alix is depicted differently. Not only is she a girl, she moreover acquired her impairment at birth. Mademoiselle Verstigel – who is a Belgian refugee living at Wood End – is convinced that Alix’s disability renders her incapable of doing anything. She takes Alix “as a huge joke” (5), and reduces her to her lameness: “‘Mais elle est boîteuse, la pauvre petite,’ put in the Belgian girl, with the literalness that makes this people a little difficile in home life. ‘What can she do?’” (6). This attitude also illustrates the infantilization of Alix by Mademoiselle Verstigel, as she thinks Alix is a “pauvre petite” (6) who has to be taken care of. She treats Alix with excessive pity. Furthermore, Alix’s physical appearance is repeatedly described as ‘childish’ (8, 16), and she is referred to as, for instance, “child” (13, 14, 16, 44, 59), “darling child” (36), “frightened child” (66), “dear child” (75), “my poor baby” (77), “my poor child” (78), “this child” (78) … However, Alix does not wish to be seen or treated as a child nor to be taken care of, which she similarly states to her aunt: “I don't like being taken care of, Aunt Eleanor” (14).

Additionally, as Alix cannot partake in the war, she is denied any form of heroism. Most of all, she is frustrated because she is considered ‘unfit’. She wants to be seen as a real participant in society, capable of contributing. She links her non-participation to the situation of certain male non-participants: “‘Funny,’ Alix mused still. […] 'Clergymen can't fight either, they're like me. Perhaps religion helps them to forget” (26). Thus, Alix is denied any participation, and is infantilized and seen as ‘an object of care’. On the other hand, she is empowered. She expresses herself artistically and proves to be an actor, rather than a passive recipient of care. She strives for visibility in society (Andree n.p.), which is again demonstrated when she decides to fight against the war. In this way, she pursues recognition of her being a part of society. This fight might enable her to be a heroine.
Alix moreover decides to join the church. Earlier on she already made the remark that religion might help clergymen to forget their being denied to partake in the war. Therefore, at the same time of becoming an active participant in fighting against the war, she tries to find a way to forget she has been denied to fight in it. She expresses this as well in a conversation with her brother Nicholas: “As I can't be fighting in the war, I've got to be fighting against it” (92).

4.3.2. Huntingtower

In Huntingtower, the company of disabled ex-soldiers is described as a party of which “three were lame, one lacked an arm, and one was a girl” (191). Macdonald points out that “Buchan makes an explicit alignment of male physical impairment with being female, an equal handicap against the norm of able-bodied masculinity” (15). It is especially noteworthy that the entire group is being directed by Dougal, who is a child. Dougal refers to the group of disabled soldiers as “a herd of elephants” (191), which is under his direction. Although the entire household of Archibald consists of ex-soldiers, they are placed under the leadership of a boy. Dickson McCunn wants to take care of these boys, and does see them as children. Nevertheless, they take command over the adult war-wounded ex-soldiers. Sir Archie complains: "I've been in about forty battles, and here's that little devil rather worried about my pluck, and talkin' to me like a corps commander to a newly joined second-lieutenant. All the same he's a remarkable child, and we'd better behave as if we were in for a real shindy” (194). He thus believes that Dougal doubts his courage, but nonetheless accepts the child’s leadership.

Later on, in absence of Dougal, it is Saskia who gets the lead over the soldiers. Saskia herself is compared several times to a child by Dickson: “Dickson’s first impression was of a tall child. The pose, startled and wild and yet curiously stiff and self-conscious, was that of a child striving to remember a forgotten lesson” (76); “Again Dickson was reminded of a child, for her arms hung limp by her side; and her slim figure in its odd clothes was curiously like that of a boy in a school blazer” (80); “it was the appeal in those haggard childish eyes” (83); and, “What was to become of that child if he failed her in her great need? “(98). Yet, after Dougal – who actually is a child –, she is next in command. She orders the soldiers about: “I am in command, remember. I order you to serve out the guns” (194); and, “I am in command, you know. Keep the door open till I come back” (197). The disabled soldiers are thus placed under the command of a child and of a childlike young woman, partly ‘infantilizing’ them.
On the other hand, they actually are seen as ‘real men’. Macdonald states that Buchan shows that “a ‘cripple’ can be selflessly brave in a hopeless cause” (16). They are thus represented as heroes. This is also confirmed by the soldiers overcoming their disabilities, which places them on top of the disability hierarchy as described by Boyle. According to Boyle, persons who acquired their impairment while doing their duty are the ‘heroic disabled’ (88). The ex-soldiers meet these terms, as they were wounded sacrificing themselves for their country. Moreover, they seem to be able to partially overcome their disabilities. For instance, the one-armed Sime turns out to be quite athletic when climbing the walls of the estate. Sir Archie does encounter some trouble and points out: “set me to something where my confounded leg don’t get in the way, and I’m still pretty useful” (191). Yet, to save Saskia, he “went downstairs at a pace undreamed of since the days when he had two whole legs” (199). Their ability to control their impairments to a certain extent places them not only high on the disability hierarchy, but also emphasizes their masculinity. The impairments being war-inflicted, they seem only to confirm the soldiers’ heroism and masculinity. When these are established, it is no longer necessary to mention their impairments. In contrast, the congenitally disabled are repeatedly described by their impairments. For instance, Spidel is characterized by his hobbling and limping walk:

It was the lame man whom Dougal had called Spittal […] he was an odd-looking being, lean as a heron, wry-necked, but amazingly quick on his feet. Had not Mrs. Morran said that he hobbled as fast as other folk ran? […] He seemed to be in a greater hurry than ever, as he locked the garden door behind him and hobbled along the west front of the House till he was lost to sight. […] he hobbled steadily along the house front till he was lost to sight. (73-75)

It was Spidel, who limped round the Tower. (180)

Dickson is hurt during the adventure. It is striking that his temporal impairment, which causes him to limp, only emphasizes his heroism. While he could have gone home, he volunteered to help the princess and therefore put his own life in danger. His wounds are inflicted when he is captured by the enemy and bound to a tree. The vocabulary used to describe Dickson’s tread after being wounded corresponds to the vocabulary used in the description of the congenitally disabled Spidel. They both “hobble”: “Dickson hobbled towards the village in a state of excitement which made him oblivious of his wounds” (178), and later he is found “hobbling by the Auchenlochan road into the village of Dalquharter” (209).
Nevertheless, Spidel’s hobbling is part of his uncanny, malicious being, while Dickson’s hobbling tread is temporary and symbolizes his courage. According to Macdonald, Buchan uses Spidel’s impairment to illustrate his untrustworthiness (14). Moreover, his fast tread suggests uncanniness: “Had not Mrs. Morran said that he hobbled as fast as other folk ran?” (73). As Longmore observes, a character’s impairment can symbolize the deformity of the soul and inhumanity (68). Spidel is accordingly described as “both evil and furious” (75) and Léon as “a monstrous child” (50). Their impairments make them into grotesque, demonic beings who induce fear. The disabled villains above all cause fear in the other characters. However, Dickson also pities them. When, at the end, he finds the body of the Bolshevik leader Paul Abreskov, he “observed that there was a slight deformation between the shoulders” (222). To Dickson, Paul’s physical impairment explains his wickedness: “Poor fellow, he said. That explains a lot... As my father used to say, cripples have a right to be cankered” (222). The impairment makes Paul uncanny (Macdonald 14). However, Dickson also expresses feelings of pity for individuals with disabilities.

Pity is likewise the central sensation in the description of the war-wounded Quentin Kennedy. He is introduced at the beginning of the novel, in the midst of the First World War, sitting on a sofa in Nirski Palace where a ball is going on. As he has a wounded leg, he is not able to participate in the dance. He has an “air of fragility” (14) and calls himself an “old crock” (14). Saskia refers to him as “poor Quentin” (14), showing her compassion with his situation. Macdonald emphasizes that he is dependent and feminized. He cannot take part in the dance or in war (13). However, his disability is of a temporary nature. His leg does heal and he returns to the war. He is one of the heroes who dies at the front, defending his country. He is accordingly remembered by Mrs. Morran as a “brave sodger” (48). Quentin is thus both feminized and heroically disabled. In contrast, the congenitally disabled characters are pitied and feared as the villains of the story.

**4.3.3. Lady Chatterley’s Lover**

On the one hand, Clifford’s masculinity and independence enhance as a result of his work in the mining industry and his relation to Mrs Bolton. On the other hand, it is exactly the relationship he has with Mrs Bolton that infantilizes him. Throughout the book, he is repeatedly referred to as a child or as childlike.
Clifford’s childlike behaviour is first referred to when he starts working on his mining project. The narrator tells us that “he let [Mrs Bolton] shave him or sponge all his body as if he were a child, really as if he were a child” (109). Because of his disability he needs assistance with certain physical tasks. In the beginning, Connie would take care of these, helping him to get dressed and assisting him in all other intimate things. When Mrs Bolton takes these tasks over, Clifford depends each time more on her help, and she even starts carrying out tasks he is physically still able to do, liking washing his own body. At the same time, he is represented as being very dependent on Connie as well: “She was not even free, for Clifford must have her there. […] The curious pulpy part of him, the emotional and humanly-individual part, depended on her with terror, like a child, almost like an idiot” (110). Sagar states that Clifford only wants to be with Connie out of weakness and dependence (180). Clifford needs her to be there for him as his wife and carer. Another example that underlines the infantilized characterization of Clifford is his statement to Connie: “You are the great I-am, as far as life goes, […] but for you I am absolutely nothing” (111-112). He shows himself to be completely dependent on her. Clifford is also treated as a child by some of the other characters. For instance, when Clifford is upset, Mellors spoke to him “in a quiet voice, almost as if to a child” (189). In this scene, Clifford needs help when his motorized wheelchair does not push up the slope. In his complete helplessness, he is treated as a child by both Mellors and Connie.

When Connie informs Clifford of her decision to leave him, he is represented more explicitly as a child. The following scene is representative for the infantilization of Clifford in the story:

And she drew him to her, and held her arms round his great shoulders, while he laid his face on her bosom and sobbed, […] whilst she softly stroked his dusky-blond hair and said: 'There! There! There! There then! There then! Never you mind! Never you mind, then!' And he put his arms round her and clung to her like a child, wetting the bib of her starched white apron, and the bosom of her pale-blue cotton dress, with his tears. He had let himself go altogether, at last. So at length she kissed him, and rocked him on her bosom, and in her heart she said to herself: 'Oh, Sir Clifford! Oh, high and mighty Chatterleys! Is this what you've come down to!' And finally he even went to sleep, like a child. […]

After this, Clifford became like a child with Mrs Bolton. He would hold her hand, and rest his head on her breast, and when she once lightly kissed him, he said! 'Yes! Do kiss me! Do kiss me!' [...] And he lay with a queer, blank face like a child, with a bit of the wonderment of a child. And he would gaze on her with wide, childish eyes, in a
relaxation of madonna-worship. It was sheer relaxation on his part, letting go all his manhood, and sinking back to a childish position that was really perverse. And then he would put his hand into her bosom and feel her breasts, and kiss them in exultation, the exultation of perversity, of being a child when he was a man. [...] And they drew into a closer physical intimacy, an intimacy of perversity, when he was a child stricken with an apparent candour and an apparent wonderment [...]. While she was the Magna Mater, full of power and potency, having the great blond child-man under her will and her stroke entirely. (290-291)

On the other hand, although Clifford is infantilized, his masculinity seems to be enhanced at work. While he becomes a childlike man at home, he proves his masculinity in business:

The curious thing was that when this child-man [...] emerged into the world, it was much sharper and keener than the real man he used to be. This perverted child-man was now a real business-man; when it was a question of affairs, he was an absolute human, sharp as a needle, and impervious as a bit of steel. [...] The wallowing in private emotion, the utter abasement of his manly self, seemed to lend him a second nature, cold, almost visionary, business-clever. (291-292)

Moreover, Clifford is described as being quite masculine: “He had never been one of the modern ladylike young men: rather bucolic even, with his ruddy face and broad shoulders” (15). However, the narrator immediately adds that “his very quiet, hesitating voice, and his eyes, at the same time bold and frightened, assured and uncertain, revealed his nature” (15). He is feminized by other characters and the narrator. Mellors for instance sees Clifford and his aristocratic friends as “[t]he sort of youngish gentleman a bit like a lady, and no balls” (196). When Connie asks him for a further explanation, he tells her: “A man’s balls [...] When he's got none of that spunky wild bit of a man in him, you say he's got no balls. When he's a sort of tame” (196). When Clifford is talking about sexuality with his friends, the narrator specifies that he was “uneasy as a woman in such talk” (35). Additionally, during Clifford’s career as a writer, the gender expectations seem to be reversed: Clifford becomes reclusive and confined to the house – for he “was really shy and self-conscious now he was lamed” and “hated seeing anyone except just the personal servants” (15) –, whereas Connie leaves the house as much as possible to go into the woods and dreams of traveling. Already at the beginning of the book, Connie is suggested to have had “an aesthetically unconventional upbringing” (6). Before marrying Clifford, she travelled to several cities, was free to do as she liked, had several love affairs and consequently did not have a youth in which she was solely
confined to the house. She and her sister are described as being “just as good as men themselves: even better, because they were women” (6). She is thus from the beginning on contrasted with Clifford, who grew up in a family isolated from the rest of the world, making him “shy and nervous of all that other big world” (10). Male and female gender roles are switched around: Connie longs for the outside world, while Clifford is mostly confined to the house and his restricted social circle.

Thus, on the one hand, Clifford is represented as masculine, and on the other hand he is infantilized and feminized. Furthermore, he is referred to as “inhuman” (292), “a hurt thing” (15) and his face is described as showing “the slight vacancy of a cripple” (6). These descriptions make him almost demonic. According to Hough, “there is a sharp opposition between the expansion of Connie’s nature by the warmth of sensual love and the narrowing of Clifford’s by the cold lust for power” (162). Moreover, Beal refers to Clifford as a “caricature monster” (95), and Moynahan sees Clifford as “not human at all”: he is not a villain, nor an object of sympathy (80-81). Nevertheless, in the beginning of the book, he is described as a rather handsome and intelligent man. He is progressively degraded to a demon, when the narrator makes Connie the main focalizer of the story.

Clifford is an object of pity. He is a “poor devil” (79, 168). Connie feels pity for him, and he, in turn, needs her. He is the recipient of the compassion of others. At first, Connie feels she cannot divorce Clifford because he needs her compassion. However, Michaelis – the Irish playwright with whom she has an affair – points out that Clifford should not use his disability to trade on: “If a fellow's going to trade on his disabilities, I might beg in to say how lonely I am, and always have been, and all the rest of the my-eye-Betty-Martin sob-stuff! Damn it all, if a fellow's got nothing but disabilities to recommend him...” (53). While Connie acts out of feelings of pity, Michaelis ridicules these feelings. He acknowledges Clifford as a man, a man whose most important impairment is that he is “entirely wrapped up in himself” (52), and therefore does not deserve Connie. When Connie finally decides to leave Clifford, he ‘loses’ his masculinity. Mrs Bolton uses pity to help Clifford get through his feelings: “Any attempt to rouse his manhood and his pride would only make him worse: for his manhood was dead, temporarily if not finally. He would only squirm softer and softer, like a worm, and become more dislocated. The only thing was to release his self-pity. Like the lady in Tennyson, he must weep or he must die” (290). Gerber argues that pity infantilizes and feminizes the male (Disabled Veterans 5). In the novel, Mrs Bolton believes that manhood and feelings of pity are mutually exclusive. When his feelings of masculinity are gone, only (self-)pity is left.
4.3.4. Not So Quiet...

Not So Quiet... is full of soldiers with all kinds of wound and impairments, but none of them is depicted as ‘heroically disabled’. As Kaplan states, the daily confrontation of the ambulance drivers with the severely wounded body made it impossible for them “to believe that the human body was heroic” (42). Therefore, the concept of heroism itself is criticized in this novel. The narrator, Helen Z. Smith, does show that, during the war, the disabled soldiers were seen as heroes, but at the same time ridicules this romantic representation of the war-veteran as hero. She criticizes her mother and Mrs. Evans-Mawnington, who represent patriotism at the home front and encourage young men and women both to actively engage in the war. They even send their own children – Helen and Roy – to the front to heroically serve their country. Roy remarks to Helen: “The way I’ve got to pretend I’m the little hero, Nell” (189). In an interior monologue, Helen addresses herself to Mother and Mrs. Evans-Mawnington, showing them the severely war-wounded and shell-shocked, satirizing the idea of these war victims being heroic: “It isn’t pretty to see a hero spitting up his life’s blood in public, is it? Much more romantic to see him in the picture papers being awarded the V.C., even if he is minus a limb or two” (91). For the patriots at home it does not matter if soldiers return disabled, as long as they deserved their Victoria Cross for their outstanding courage. As long as they are heroes, the loss of “a limb or two” does not matter. Referring to the severely maimed men, Helen Smith asks the two women to “gaze on the heroes who have so nobly upheld your traditions” (94). She shows the tragedy of the massive quantity of impairments acquired during the war, denying these a heroic dimension. All these casualties, wounds and disabilities are completely senseless and therefore not heroic at all. Helen Smith believes heroism cannot exist in this absurd war.

When Roy is badly wounded, Helen is informed about his situation by the Unit Administrator. She tells her he has been blinded and lost a leg, but that he will get the Military Cross for his bravery: “Smith, let that console you. The M.C. It helps, doesn’t it? The M.C.” (225). According to the Administrator, he has been heroically disabled. This opinion is clearly shared by Smith’s mother and Roy’s. The former writes in a letter to her daughter: “Isn’t it wonderful that Roy had had the M.C.? Wonderful and sad. Our poor blinded hero” (228). And about Mrs. Evans-Mawnington she says: “She is grieved at his affliction, but, as she says, how much worse if he hadn’t been recommended for an M.C. It really is a great compensation. I’m sure the dear boy thinks so too” (228). Roy’s mother agrees in her letter to Helen:
a piece of shrapnel caught his face and his eyesight was ruined for ever. My poor brave son. But they gave him an M.C. [...] It is a terrible calamity, but I refuse to weep for my son. I gave him to his country [...] I am proud of his blindness and his disability. The sight of him will be an object lesson to the men who have allowed others to fight their battles for them. If the sight of his blindness shames one of the cowards then he has not suffered vainly. (230)

Both mothers stress the importance of Roy’s courage. His disability is a sad side-effect, but was undoubtedly worth it: he served his country well. In contrast, when Helen returns home traumatized after witnessing the death of Tosh, her shell-shock is not acknowledged. A physical impairment would be a badge of honour, but shell-shock was not recognized as such. Like Helen says, paraphrasing the words of her mother: “It isn’t as though I was a wounded soldier” (181). She denounces the difference made between physical and psychological ‘war wounds’: “what I do not see is pity or understanding for the war-shocked woman who sacrificed her youth on the altar of the war that was not of her making, the war made by age and fought by youth while age looked on and applauded and encouraged” (166). Thus, heroic physical disability and heroic death exist, but ‘heroic shell-shock’ does not. Nevertheless, although Roy’s disability is seen as proof of his heroism, he and Helen know better: he would have preferred to die instead of being disabled for the rest of his life. In a letter to Helen, he expresses this desire: “I only wish to Christ they’d left me another five minutes in the trench” (231). By contrasting these different opinions, the narrator shows the futility of this ‘heroism’. She shows the reader that, although people who are not directly involved might see war-wounds and disabilities as patches of honour, these are not heroic at all. Heroic disability does not exist. Moreover, Price wrote her novel in a time that the disabled heroes ceased to be conceived as heroes and became part of the general civilian disabled population.

Whereas in the other novels the characters with disabilities were feminized and/or infantilized, in Not So Quiet... they are reduced to objects or described as animals. Additionally, several references are made to the bodies of men. The ambulance drivers see multitudes of severely wounded men pass each day: “mangled bodies” (33), “torn bodies (34), and “sad bodies” (90). To cope, they do no longer focus on their being human beings, but start to see them as mere bodies they transport in their ambulances. In some instances, they describe the men as animals. They are ‘animals’ in two different senses. First of all, they are men who obey other men, and are therefore seen as a sort of ‘cattle’. Even when they are wounded or impaired, they keep on obeying orders. They are just part of a group, and not
individuals. For instance, Smith refers to them as “torn and bleeding and crazed men pitifully obeying orders like a herd of senseless cattle, […] as senseless as a flock of senseless sheep obeying a senseless leader” (29). Secondly, the sounds these men make when wounded, are described as animalistic: they are “men shrieking like wild beasts” (33). In other instances, the wounded soldiers are described as things: “cases” (15), “painful writhing things” (31), “mangled things” (57). They once were men, but now are degraded to passive objects of care. These representations emasculate them as well, as they lost their masculine roles as authoritative figures. In their passiveness, they bear more resemblances to the female stereotype.

4.4. Sexuality and beauty

As Davis states, disabled characters are frequently desexualized (“Identity Politics” 53). The main example would be Clifford Chatterley. He is asexual, in contrast to the sexualized Mellors. The sexualisation of the disabled body is seen as a “threat to conventional sexual identities” (Hall 43). However, the post-war society was obsessed with beauty and sexuality (Carden-Coyne 200). The experience of war focused the attention on the sexually disabled (165). According to Carden-Coyne, “citizenship was shaped in the biological terms of health and reproductive competence, in the social terms of sexuality and beauty, and in the economic terms of bodies that produce and consume” (4). Moreover, domestic harmony supposedly required beauty and intimacy (217). Sexuality and beauty were therefore pivotal in the soldier’s recovery.

Nonetheless, the physically disabled in war literature used to be represented as impotent. The wounded soldier was no longer a real man (Carden-Coyne 176). Hays contends in his book The Limping Hero that physical disabilities are often used to indicate sexual sterility and moral inadequacy. The disabled man is usually represented as situated between ‘masculine potency’ and ‘disabled impotency’ (Barnes & Mercer 519). In literature, they are depicted as desperately trying to deal with their disability (Davis, “Identity Politics” 536). Disabled women are additionally portrayed as being asexual (Thomson 25). Harlan Hahn argues that these women are confronted with ‘asexual objectification’ (qtd. in Thomson 25). It is assumed that any manifestation of sexuality is improper in the disabled woman. In the next section, which discusses Non-Combatants and Others, I will analyse sexuality and beauty in the depiction of Alix, in contrast to the portrayal of Evie.
4.4.1. Non-Combatants and Others

Garland Thomson demonstrates that disabled women are frequently confronted with the judgement that sexuality is not appropriate in disabled people. The body of the disabled woman is assumed to be asexual and unfeminine, and is therefore socially ‘invisible’ (25). The character of Alix illustrates this idea. In the beginning of the book, her face is described as “a pale, narrow, delicate, irregular sort of face, broad-browed, with a queer, cynical, ironic touch to it, and purple-blue eyes that sometimes opened very wide and sometimes narrowed into slits” (4). She is contrasted with both her cousins and Evie. Her cousins “were both very nice to look at” (8), while Alix “looked thin, childish, elf-like” (8). Evie has a “lovely grace” (15), while Alix has “thin arms, like a child’s arms” (16).

Throughout the entire story, Alix is repeatedly depicted as pale and frail, suggesting perhaps ill health. She limps slightly and needs to walk with a stick. When Basil sees her, he first of all focuses on her stick and her ill-looking appearance, but then also recognizes she looks pretty (38). Alix seems to challenge the normative ideas of beauty. Though she is frail, pale and thin, and has a disability, she is also pretty. Moreover, her being an artist suggests her longing for beauty, to create beautiful things. For instance, she talks about Evie, saying that she is “ripping to draw” (39). Nevertheless, Alix is not ‘whole’, and consequently not suitable as a sexually desired woman. Basil for instance expresses his desire for ‘whole’ women:

He would have liked a healthy, pretty, jolly sort of girl like that to go about with ... some girl with poise, and tone, and sanity, and no nerves, who never bothered about the war or anything. A placid, indifferent, healthy sort of girl, with all her fingers on and nothing the matter anywhere. He was sick of hurt and damaged bodies and minds; his artistic instinct and his natural vitality craved, in reaction, for the beautiful and the whole and the healthy.... (37-38)

He furthermore admits to Alix: “You know,’ said Basil, thinking it out, 'being out there, and seeing people smashed to bits all about the place, and getting smashed oneself, makes one long for people like that, sane and healthy and with nothing the matter with their bodies or minds. It gets to seem about the only thing that matters, after a time.’” (40). Alix does not fit this description, and “hated [Basil] because she was lame and he hated lameness and loved wholeness and strength” (46). Although Basil might have felt attracted to her before the war, his experiences cause him to desire whole-bodied, healthy women now. Carden-Coyne argues that the First World War provoked a major consciousness of body and beauty (219). Due to
the perpetual confrontation with death and impairment at the front, Basil now desires to be surrounded by whole-bodied, healthy people. Alix is thus rejected because of her disability, and when she declares her love for him, “Alix saw horror in his eyes before he veiled it” (69). Her disability almost seems to make her unfeminine and asexual in this case, which, according to Garland Thomson, are characteristics commonly attributed to disabled women (25). Moreover, Basil himself has a slight impairment. He is looking for the stereotypical ‘feminine woman’ who can assert him in his masculinity. This type of woman he finds in Evie, who is contrasted to Alix. Alix is sickly and disabled, while Evie is healthy and non-disabled:

Evie sat doing nothing at all, healthy, lovely, amused, splendidly alive. The vigorous young bodily life of her called to Basil's own, re-animating it. Alix sat by her, all alive too, but weak-bodied, lame, frail-nerved, with no balance. (41)

Evie, […] with her wide, far-set, haunting eyes and sudden dimples, was a vivid note in the blurred world […]. [H]er natural high spirits and young buoyancy were lifted from the commonplace to the charming by her face and smile. Alix by Evie's side was pale and elusive and dim; her only note of colour was the dark, shadowed blue of her black-lashed eyes. She coughed, and her throat was sore. (45)

Alix and Evie are compared as well in their walking. Evie walks “like Diana, straight and free, with a swing” (46), while Alix’s tread is consistently described as limping (see pages 4, 5, 6, 14, 15, 22, 26, and 46). Alix’s stride denotes her disability, while Evie’s only further confirms her attractiveness.

Though both Alix and Basil have an impairment, primarily Alix’s impairment seems to interfere with attraction and sexuality. Basil’s impairment is a badge of his service: he lost a finger for his country. As stated by Bourke, women would be quite fond of falling in love with the wounded soldier (56). Similarly, Mrs. Buller says in the novel: “Girls and a uniform—it goes to their heads like drink” (55). Evie enjoys Basil’s flirtations. She is attracted by the disabled soldier. However, she leaves him for Captain Gordon, who so far came through the war physically unharmed.

In spite of Alix’s rejection by Basil, she is not represented as asexual as such. She “seemed prepared to play round at large with so many young men, and to flirt, when that was the game, with a light-handed recklessness” (21). Moreover, she shows her sexuality in her relationship with Tommy Ashe. Both Alix and Tommy are denied active participation in the war, and
therefore feel bitter and angry. This rejection draws them together. Their flirtation is described as a way of forgetting their exclusion:

They were in the same case. […] Also he admired her unusual, delicate, ironic type. Anyhow it was the fashion to have some special friend among the girls at the school, and it helped one to forget. So he and Alix plunged into a flirtation not normally natural to either. […] Alix and Tommy Ashe went off together and lost the other two, and lay on the grass, and became rather more intimate than they had ever been before.

(21)

Though Alix is rejected by Basil because of her disability, she is admired by others. Some the characters might see her as unfeminine, but Alix herself fights this idea and expresses her feelings and her desire to engage in a relationship.

4.4.2. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*

From the beginning of the story onwards, Clifford Chatterley is represented as a rather asexual man. He does not really valuate sexuality, but instead looks for a more profound intimacy. Even before his war-disability, he was not interested in sexuality:

He had been virgin when he married: and the sex part did not mean much to him. They were so close, he and she, apart from that. And Connie exulted a little in this intimacy which was beyond sex, and beyond a man's 'satisfaction'. Clifford anyhow was not just keen on his 'satisfaction', as so many men seemed to be. No, the intimacy was deeper, more personal than that. And sex was merely an accident, or an adjunct, one of the curious obsolete, organic processes which persisted in its own clumsiness, but was not really necessary. (12)

Moynahan argues that Clifford was spiritually disabled even before acquiring his impairment during the war (80). He therefore was already desexualized before the disability. For Lawrence, sex is the strongest experience of connection. Because of his asexuality, Lawrence shows that Clifford misses out on an important aspect of life (79). The narrator comments in the beginning of the book that “something inside him had perished, some of his feelings had gone” (6). Only a sexual experience would make the individual feel his aliveness (Moynahan 79). In this interpretation, sexuality is directly connected with masculinity: not being able to perform sexually emasculates Clifford. He therefore denies his impotence to be of a
permanent state. He says to Connie: “The potency may easily come back, even if the muscles of the hips and legs are paralyzed” (147). Connie uses this idea to spread the impression that, if she would have a child, it actually would be Clifford’s, and tells Mrs Bolton: “It’s only muscular paralysis with Sir Clifford – it doesn’t affect him” (147).

Connie refers to Clifford as a mere ‘parasite’, when she contemplates their intimate relationship: “The fine flower of their intimacy was to her rather like an orchid, a bulb stuck parasitic on her tree of life” (83). While Clifford seems to yearn for an intimacy deeper than sex, this intimacy does not satisfy Connie. It literally seems to draw the life out of her, and she becomes ill. Connie craves for an ‘able-bodied’ man, who is able to perform sexually. This desire is for instance illustrated by her thoughts on legs. Whereas Clifford’s legs are paralysed – they are described as “dead legs” (48), “inert legs” (48, 179), “crippled legs” (73), and “no real legs” (138) – the narrator tells us that “Connie woke up to the existence of legs” (254).

They became more important to her than faces, which are no longer very real. How few people had live, alert legs! She looked at the men in the stalls, great puddingy thighs in black pudding-cloth, or lean, wooden sticks in black funeral stuff. Or well-shaped young legs without any meaning whatever. Either sensuality or tenderness or sensitiveness, just mere leggy ordinariness that pranced around. (254)

Connie’s growing desire for wholeness is moreover represented in the deteriorating depiction of Clifford’s physique. In the beginning of the book he is described as a healthy, handsome man. He has a “ruddy, healthy-looking face, and […] pale-blue, challenging bright eyes. His shoulders were broad and strong, his hands were very strong. He was expensively dressed, and wore handsome neckties from Bond Street” (6). He is handsome and takes care of his appearance. However, later on he is described as “fat”: “To Connie, Clifford seemed to be coming out in his true colours: a little vulgar, a little common, and uninspired; rather fat” (100). Moreover, he is increasingly described as a child and as inhuman. His initial beauty and attractiveness seem to deteriorate throughout the story.

Cavitch suggests that Clifford represents “the maiming of man’s emotions by our anti-sexual culture” (195). Clifford’s condition is thus interpreted as a metaphor for society. Yet, he does long for a profound intimacy, which indicates his emotions are not entirely ‘maimed’. Although he loses his intimacy with Connie as the story develops, he starts a new intimate relationship with Mrs Bolton: “She was thrilled to a weird passion. And his 'educating' her
roused in her a passion of excitement and response much deeper than any love affair could have done” (100). She feels a passion beyond love, just like Clifford was looking for an intimacy beyond sexuality. The intimacy he has with Mrs Bolton makes him feel masculine again. These feelings and his involvement in the coal industry rouse sensations of (sexual) potency in him:

He had said: 'Of course I may have a child yet. I'm not really mutilated at all. The potency may easily come back, even if the muscles of the hips and legs are paralysed. And then the seed may be transferred.' He really felt, when he had his periods of energy and worked so hard at the question of the mines, as if his sexual potency were returning. (147)

However, when he does behave sexually, this is portrayed as a perverse kind of sexuality. The sexual actions between him and Ivy Bolton consistently happen in a context in which Clifford is infantilized, emphasizing the deviant nature of his sexuality. Although Clifford is portrayed as a childlike man, and therefore is supposed to be asexual, he does enter in a sexual kind of intimacy with Mrs Bolton. As Hall appropriately points out, the sexualisation of the disabled body seems to threaten conventional sexual identities (43). Whereas the sexual relationship between Connie and Mellors is depicted as acceptable and even as a logic result of the lack of sexuality in Connie and Clifford’s marriage, Clifford and Ivy Bolton cannot enter in acceptable sexual intimacies. The disabled body intervenes and converts sexuality into perversity.

4.4.3. Not So Quiet…

The female ambulance drivers of Not So Quiet... are each day again confronted with wounded and disabled men: “shattered men” (11), “torn and bleeding and crazed men” (29), “painful writhing things that once were men” (31), “helpless men” (151), “maimed men” (169) … Just like Connie and Basil, the drivers start to long for able-bodied partners. For instance, when the fiancé of Helen’s colleague Edwards loses a leg during the war, Helen sees this as a perpetual reminder of the horrors of the war and decides: “When I marry it will be someone whose straightness and strength will erase from my mind these mangled things I drive night after night” (57). Later on, she has an internal discourse about “the beauty of men who are whole” (163), wondering if she will ever meet a man who is whole and untouched by war.
Helen does not want to share her life with someone with a (war-inflicted) disability. It is not the maimed body as such that she wants to avoid, but the maimed body as a symbol for the horrors of the war. Every time she closes her eyes, she sees a procession of maimed men before her. She fears them, because she is afraid “they will stay with [her] all [her] life, shutting out beauty till the day [she] die[s]” (163). When she returns to England for a while, she has a one-night stand with a healthy young soldier who is on his way to the front. She sleeps with him because “his body was whole and strong-limbed” (174), but even more because he can – temporarily – stand between her and the eternal procession of maimed men which haunts her.

Nevertheless, she decides to marry the war-wounded Roy anyway. Although he has been blinded, lost a leg, and is now impotent, and therefore offers her to cancel their wedding, she responds to him: “Don’t be a silly ass” (232) – and will marry him. Although earlier on she expressed the desire for ‘whole’ bodies, she now seems to accept a ‘shattered’ one. At the end of the novel, a third person narrator takes over to tell the reader that Smith’s soul dies: she is severely shell-shocked and no longer cares. Moreover, as she will marry one of England’s maimed soldiers, she will always be reminded of the war, doing away with beauty in the world. However, in the end she clearly does not give any importance anymore to either sexuality or beauty.
5. Conclusion

As this dissertation demonstrates, the literary representations of gendered disabilities problematize the masculinity and femininity of respectively male and female characters in the studied novels. Rose Macaulay, John Buchan, D.H. Lawrence and Evadne Price all used physically disabled characters in their novels. I examined these characters and their relations to others. My analysis was divided into four parts which dealt with gender roles and attitudes towards disability. In this chapter, I will summarize my findings, relating them to the theories and ideas presented in the literature review. I will start with the disabled female character, and next discuss the male characters with disabilities by novel.

The only female character with disabilities is Alix, in *Non-Combatants and Others*. Contrary to Davis’ and Garland Thomson’s assumption that disabled characters do not tend to be protagonists, the congenitally disabled Alix is the main character of the novel. Because of her gender and disability, Alix is excluded from both the roles for women and those for men: she cannot be a soldier, nor can she work as a nurse. The imposed exclusion from war work makes her feel bitter. Ash and Fine coined the term ‘rolelessness’ to describe disabled women’s exclusion from full participation in society (239). Garland Thomson adds that this exclusion leads to social invisibility (19). However, Alix searches for her own role in society, and attempts to redefine her gender role by her new occupation. When she joins the peace movement, she rejects all (male and female) war efforts and claims her own position, which is different to the prescribed occupation of the woman who should ‘do her bit’. In doing so, she attempts to reject a war that had already excluded her on physical grounds. By becoming a peace activist and by her artistic expression, she searches a way to both fight the war and fight her exclusion from it. Her activism challenges the supposed passivity attributed to disabled people. Moreover, although she is pitied and accordingly infantilized by some of the other characters – like her aunt and Mademoiselle Verstigel – she is not described as pitiable by the narrator. She wants to be independent and tries to find her own voice. The depiction of Alix therefore does not comply with Davis’ assumption that disabled characters tend to provoke pity in the reader (*Enforcing Normalcy* 41). Garland Thomson stated that disabled women are often seen as unfeminine and asexual (25). In the text, Alix is accordingly confronted with this idea, as she is rejected by Basil, who – due to his war experiences – came to dislike disabled and unhealthy bodies. Being a frail and pale disabled girl, Alix is contrasted with the
beautiful able-bodied Evie. As Carden-Coyne observed, the First World War caused a heightened body and beauty consciousness (219), which can be seen in Basil’s attitude. Alix is however attractive to Tommy Ashe, who, similar to her, is excluded from participation in the war because of physical unfitness. Hence, she is not represented as asexual by the narrator.

Male characters with disabilities were present in all the novels, both with congenital disabilities and with war-inflicted disabilities. *Non-Combatants and Others* depicts the war-wounded Basil. His impairment does not so much interfere with his masculine independence, though it does with his occupation as an artist. However, Basil decided to become a soldier instead of an artist, and he still can continue the latter with his impairment: at the end of the story, he is sent back to the front, where he can assume his masculine position once again. However, fitting in with Bourke’s conclusions on the importance of the household (21), the horrid war experiences do evoke a desire in him to have a traditional household to return to, with a wife waiting for him when the war ends. Whereas before the war he primarily looked for intelligence in potential partners, he now searches for beauty and simplicity in a woman. As already mentioned above, Alix does no longer answer to this image of a potential partner, and his ideal switches to the superficial Evie. However, as he is rejected by Evie, he does not succeed in this desire. Basil’s war-wound makes him fit into the group Boyle named the heroic disabled: he is a wounded war hero. Accordingly, he is generally treated with respect, and does not lose his masculinity because of his disability. Moreover, in contrast to Davis’ idea that disabled characters are often desexualized and devitalized (“Identity Politics” 536), Basil is not: he engages in a (temporal) relationship with Evie.

The disabled characters of *Huntingtower* can be divided into two groups: the heroic war-wounded soldiers and the congenitally impaired villains. The depiction of the latter group is consistent with Davis’ theory that disabled characters frequently are the bitter or envious villains of the story (“Identity Politics” 542). They are true ‘freaks’, as defined by Garland Thomson (11). They are uncanny and demonic, and primarily evoke a sense of fear. The ex-soldiers, in contrast, are on top of the disability hierarchy (Boyle 88): they sacrificed themselves while fighting for their country, and are now willing to sacrifice themselves again for a good cause – saving Saskia and liberating the village from villains. Additionally, they are able to overcome or control their disabilities when necessary. Though ‘infantilized’ at determined moments and to a certain extent – as they are commanded by a child and a girl during the battle and do not assume any leading position –, they generally remain symbols of
masculine honour. Furthermore, despite their impairments, the ex-soldiers have steady jobs, which guarantee their economic independence and, according to Koven (“Remembering” 1188), affirm their masculinity. In contrast, the congenitally disabled villains of the story hold uncertain and temporary work positions, which do not confirm their masculinity.

Clifford Chatterley is the only disabled character in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. At first sight, Clifford might be considered to be completely reduced to his disability, which would confirm Davis’ theory that it usually is the character’s disability what the story is all about (“Enforcing Normalcy” 41). Nonetheless, much can be said about Clifford’s position in the fictional universe and his relations to other characters. I argued that Clifford is both infantilized and regaining his masculinity at the same time. One the one hand, he is dependent on care for the rest of his life, which would cause others to treat him as a child (Bourke 76). Accordingly, he is repeatedly infantilized by his environment: there are several references to his childlike behaviour – often in his relationship with Mrs. Bolton –, and he is very dependent on Connie. Connie’s treatment of Clifford seems to ‘lame’ him even more, which contributes to his emasculation. Moreover, he is pitied by other characters, which, according Gerber, infantilizes and feminizes disabled men (*Disabled Veterans* 5). Additionally, Clifford’s impotence impedes him from being sexually productive. As sex and intimacy were considered to be essential in the restoration of men’s masculinity (Carden-Coyne 217), Clifford is emasculated by the lack of productivity. He is generally depicted as a desexualized disabled character. The emphasis on Clifford’s impotence in the story confirms Davis’ statement that disabled characters are generally desexualized (“Identity Politics” 536). Clifford seems not to care for sexual relationships at all and longs for something beyond sex, a more profound intimacy. Likewise, he is seen as asexual by Connie, who regards him as a parasite and yearns for a ‘whole-bodied’ man – just like Basil desires to be with a whole-bodied healthy woman.

On the other hand, Clifford partly restores his masculinity. Firstly, he takes responsibility over the coal business. As Koven contends, work would help the male to take up his masculine role in society (“Remembering” 1188). Indeed, Clifford’s occupation makes him feel masculine again. He becomes less confined to the space of the house, and accomplishes results in the outer world. Secondly, Mrs Bolton restores him to head of the household, and, moreover, succeeds in rousing his sexuality, consequently recovering his feelings of masculinity. Thus, Clifford’s sexuality gets roused in the story, but only in absence of Connie and in presence of Ivy Bolton. Only in his intimate relationship with the latter he recovers his masculine potency and feels manly again. His sexuality, however, is consistently portrayed as perverse.
The disabled characters I discussed in Not So Quiet... are the wounded soldiers at the front and Roy. The novel was written in a time in which the disabled war-heroes had lost their special status (Bourke 31). Evadne Price already knew the fate of the disabled soldiers when she wrote her novel. Therefore, it is made clear by the narrator that heroic disability does not exist. Though Roy and other wounded soldiers would belong on top of Boyle’s disability hierarchy (88), and the mothers at the home front clearly see them as heroically disabled, the narrator ridicules this romantic representation of the war-veteran as hero. Roy emphasizes he is not heroic at all. Although seen as a true hero by his mother, Roy knows that the reality of warfare is too cruel to be heroic. Similar to Clifford Chatterley, instead of being depicted as heroes, the wounded soldiers in the novel are generally infantilized because they are seen as objects of care. Unlike the disabled soldiers in Huntingtower, they are not heroic at all. This can be explained by Gerber’s statement that hospitalization and rehabilitation infantilizes the wounded men because they cannot care for themselves (Disabled Veterans 10). Being passive objects of care emasculates them, as they lost their masculine roles as authoritative figures. In their passiveness, they lose their heroism and bear more resemblance to the female stereotype. Moreover, in Roy’s case, he is further emasculated by his sexual impotence. He feels that his impotence interferes with his masculinity. Non-productivity was unacceptable in society according to Thurer (14), and therefore obstructs the restoration of Roy’s manliness. Just like Clifford, Roy’s sexual impotence impedes him from starting a family.

In conclusion, the representation of disabled characters interferes with their masculinity or femininity. In some cases, work proved to confirm masculine gender roles, as it entails economic independence and consequently the means to provide for a family. However, it was shown that none of the characters are part of a conventional household, withholding them from practicing these expected gender roles. However, it should be mentioned that some of the characters deliberately rebel against these roles – for instance in the novels by Macaulay and Price. In all narratives, disabled characters were – in different degrees – infantilized and/or feminized. Masculine passivity leads to males’ emasculation, and feelings of pity seem to infantilize both male and female characters. Furthermore, disabled characters were frequently depicted as sexually deviant beings. They were either completely asexual, sexually impotent, or, in Clifford’s case, even violating the sexual ‘norm’. Solely in Macaulay’s novel, the problematic nature of disabled characters’ sexuality is brought up: they are not desexualized, but are disappointed in love, struggling with rejection due to their physical impairments.
Bibliography


