

# [That than just the sight of the](https://assignbuster.com/that-than-just-the-sight-of-the/)

That Heinous Beast: SexualityIn the novel Wiseblood, by Flannery OConnor, one finds an unpleasant, almost antagonistic view of sexuality. The author seems to regard sex asan evil, and harps on this theme throughout the novel. Each sexualincident which occurs in the novel is tainted with grotesquem.

Differentlevels of the darker side of sexuality are exposed, from perversion toflagrant displays of nudity. It serves to give the novel a bit of amoralistic overtone. The “ Carnival Episode” illustrated Hazels first experience withsexuality.

The author depicts an incident surrounded by an aura ofsinfulness. Indeed, the shows promoter claims that it is “ SINsational.” In his anxiousness to view the sideshow, Haze resorted to lying abouthis age. He was that eager to see it. When he enters the tent, Hazeobserves the body of an obese naked woman squirming in a casket linedwith black cloth. He leaves the scene quickly. This first bout with sexuality was certainly a grotesque one, and onewhich, perhaps, helped fortify his resolve not to experiment with sexfor years to come. Haze reacted to the incident on different levels.

Before watching the “ show,” he was filled with curiosity. So badly hewanted to view this “ EXclusive” show. After glancing at the body, hefirst thought that it was a skinned animal. When he realized what itwas, he at once left the tent, ashamed, and perhaps frightened of theobject before his eyes. Hazels reaction was not unnatural. The sight with which he wasconfronted would invoke both fear and embarassment within mostten-year-olds.

Not only was the body nude, but it was inside a casket aswell. The author parallels this vulgar display of sexuality with deathitself. But Hazel reacted to more than just the sight of the object. Heat once realizes that he was not supposed to watch the naked lady, thatit was sinful to do so. He feels ashamed for having gone inside thetent, and punishes himself.

Here, it is evident that the author means toshow that Sexuality is a sinful creature. This moral tone is reinforced by the behavior of his parents during theepisode. Whilst inside the tent, Hazel hears his father remarkappreciatively about the nude body: “ Had one of themther built intoever casket, be a heap ready to go sooner.” After returning home, Hazels mother realizes that her son has experienced something that heshould not have, and confronts him about it. Though he does not admitwhat he has done, he proceeds to punish himself. It is inferred thatHazel respects his mothers attitude toward the matter. OConnor seemsto propose that Hazel must do penance for what he has done, or, on alarger scale, for witnessing vulgar displays of sexuality.

Perversion reaches its height when OConnor introduces the reader toEnoch Emery. During Enochs various dealings with women, one witnessesvulgarity in all its forms. The events surrounding the first of theseincidents is tinged with a bit of mystery. OConnor paints the portraitof a Peeping Tom, an adolescent Enoch Emery watching a topless womansunbathe while hidden in between abelia bushes. Strangely enough, the woman has a “ long and cadaverous” face, with a” bandage-like bathing cap.” Ironically, the woman also has pointedteeth, with “ greenish-yellow hair.

” The woman is portrayed as acorpse-like figure who is surprisingly similar to Hazels one-timemistress, Leora Watts. Sexuality comes in the form of a corpse, anallusion not to be missed. The narrator depicts Sexuality as beinganalogous to spiritual death. In this episode, however, one sees more than just the grotesque. EnochEmery introduces us to the grimmer side of sexuality, a side in which apredator spies on an unknowing woman, and gains pleasure from it. Themeaning behind the scene is somewhat masked by the lascivious behaviorof a typical eighteen year old, but its aim is clear.

Here is sexualityat its darker side: one in which women are violated unbeknownst to them. Enochs other dealings with women are also on the perverse side. Heenjoys making “ suggestive remarks” towards them. The fact that they donot respond to him results from two things.

Firstly, the women do notfind him appealing in the least bit. At the “ Frosty Bottle,” thewaitress refers to Enoch as a “ pus-marked bastard,” and a “ son of abitch.” Secondly, the author points out that sexuality and perversion inall its forms is evil. Perhaps one of the most grotesque representations of sexuality in thenovel is