

## Influence of Gerda's Character In Supporting Einar's Transition Into Lili In *The Danish Girl* Film

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### Abstract

This research aims to show how Gerda Wegener, as a supporting character in *The Danish Girl* film, could significantly contribute to the main character's transition from Einar Wegener (male) to Lili Elbe (female) through Gerda's character and personality depicted in the film. This research uses the descriptive qualitative method. The writer uses the theory of the Big Five personality factors, characterization, and altruism to support the analysis. This research shows that Gerda's character and personality are the leading cause of the conflict that occurred in the film, on how the main character, Einar Wegener, overcame his gender dysphoria to transform into a woman named Lili Elbe fully. Based on the Big Five personality factors, this research discovered that; Gerda's personality in agreeableness and openness are highly relatable in influencing Lili's transition. Moreover, Gerda's behavior in altruism is also found to be the main reason she chose to support the main character's gender transition despite the massive loss upon her. In conclusion, Gerda Wegener, as a supporting character, played the most significant role in stirring the plot by her influence in supporting Einar Wegener's gender transition. It also shows that someone can be so selfless regarding the person they adore. Finally, it gives a new perspective on how significant the role of supporting characters is in a film based on their character and personality.

**Kata kunci:**

Analisis Karakter  
Transisi Gender  
Kepribadian  
Karakter Pendukung

**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menunjukkan bagaimana Gerda Wegener, sebagai karakter pendukung dalam film *The Danish Girl* dapat memberikan kontribusi terbesar dalam transisi karakter utama dari Einar Wegener (laki-laki) ke Lili Elbe (perempuan) melalui karakter dan kepribadian Gerda yang digambarkan dalam film. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Untuk mendukung analisis, penulis menggunakan teori *Big Five* yaitu faktor kepribadian, penokohan, dan altruisme. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa karakter dan kepribadian Gerda ditemukan menjadi penyebab utama konflik yang terjadi dalam film tersebut, tentang bagaimana karakter utama, Einar Wegener dalam mengatasi diforia gendernya untuk sepenuhnya berubah menjadi seorang wanita bernama Lili Elbe. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa, berdasarkan faktor kepribadian Lima Besar; Kepribadian Gerda dalam keramahan dan keterbukaan sangat berhubungan dalam mempengaruhi transisi Lili. Selain itu, perilaku Gerda dalam altruisme juga ditemukan menjadi alasan utama mengapa ia memilih untuk mendukung transisi gender karakter utama meskipun kerugian besar pada dirinya. Kesimpulannya, Gerda Wegener sebagai karakter pendukung memainkan peran terbesar dalam menggerakkan plot dengan pengaruhnya dalam mendukung transisi gender Einar Wegener. Ini juga menunjukkan bahwa mungkin saja seseorang begitu tidak mementingkan diri sendiri dalam hal orang yang mereka kagumi. Terakhir, memberikan perspektif baru tentang betapa pentingnya peran karakter pendukung dalam sebuah film berdasarkan karakter dan kepribadian mereka.

الكلمات الرئيسية:  
تحليل الشخصيات  
تغيير الجنس،  
شخصية داعمة

**ملخص**

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تصوير «غيردا ويغدر» كشخصية داعمة في فيلم «الفتاة الدنماركية» ومساهمتها الكبيرة في انتقال الشخصية الرئيسية من «إينار ويغدر» وهو ذكر إلى شخصية «ليلي إلب» وهي أنثى من خلال شخصية غيردا المصورة في الفيلم، متناولة الموضوع بمنهج الوصفي. واستخدم الباحث في التحليل نظرية الشخصية الخمسة الكبرى، وتظهر النتيجة أن شخصية غيردا هي السبب الرئيسي للصراعات في أحداث الفيلم وعلى رأسها كيفية قيام الشخصية الرئيسية «إينار ويغدر» بالتغلب على اضطراب الهوية الجنسية، مؤكدة أن شخصية غيردا وهي شخصية ثانوية في الفيلم تلعب دورا مهما في مجريات الأحداث طبقا لأحوالها المختلفة.

## INTRODUCTION

Film as part of literary works cannot be separated with the role of characters in the making process. Film or cinema is a form of art that have been considered as popular art since its first widespread throughout the world a decade ago. Although the main feature of film is visual, film is considered as a branch of literature due to the narrative aspect it has – literature gives verbal literacy while films give visual literacy. Like any other literary works, films also have the elements of intrinsic, and character is one of them. To create the perfect portrayal of a narrative, the characters played in a film are expected to be able to convey what the directors/filmmakers intended to be portrayed in the film. Therefore, to make a good portrayal of a character, the personality of a character plays a significant role in a film – but sometimes a character’s personality can also influence another character in a film.

In a film, the most human element are the characters (Petrie & Boggs, 2012, p. 49), and the statement that a character’s personality can also influence another character in a film is usually performed by a supporting character toward the main character. Supporting characters can create the conflicts necessary to bring out the protagonist’s character as well as to help show different aspects of the protagonist (Martell, 2012, p. 6). Hence, it can be said that the role of supporting character is one of the most significant aspect in film or any kind of story in order to bring out the conflicts; which often occurred by the influence of supporting characters. Without supporting characters, the protagonist will have no one to talk to, no one to interact with, and eventually no development on the plot or story. Thus, supporting characters are needed in a story – because the purpose of supporting character is to support the main character, the story, and the theme.

Often, the main character in a film is influenced by the supporting character to do things that eventually bring out the conflicts for the plot. The influence can be considered as the support given by supporting characters to create story. It is because supporting characters exist to help the main character get through the conflict in their story, and are necessary to tell the story (Martell, 2012, p. 9). The supporting character’s influence toward the main character can be rooted from the character’s personality and behavior; and designing characters with personality is significant to make one character distinct to another.

Other than personality, as an audience, people might also wonder as to what motivates the supporting character to support the main character to a certain extent along with the movement of the plot. Sometimes, certain type of supporting characters is willing to do anything to support and help the main character in achieving their goal. By that, willfulness is needed for the character to continue striving to fulfill their yearning (Corbett & OverDrive, 2019, p. 21). Hence, as to what makes a supporting character to willingly support the main character’s goal is depend on their motivation.

In accordance to the above explanation, this research analyzes a literary work in a form of film entitled *The Danish Girl*, directed by Tom Hooper, focusing on the supporting character, Gerda Wegener. The issue that will be discussed in this research is about how Gerda’s character and personality could affect Lili’s character during her transition as well as the plot of the film. Before being adapted into the cinematic motion pictures in 2015, *The Danish Girl* is originally a novel written by David Ebershoff within the same title published in 2000. Although the issue of LGBTQ+ during early 2000s was not really common for people to casually discuss with, the success of the novel then result into the *Focus Features* to produce the film under the same title fifteen years later with Tom Hooper as the director. Hence, this film is a loosely inspired adaptation from the real biography of the painter couples from Denmark, Einar and Gerda Wegener during the mid-early-centuries period.

The person who is always by the main character's side throughout the film, the supporting female character, Gerda Wegener radiates a vivid and strong personality from the very beginning of the film. Gerda Wegener is a Danish professional painter with portraits as her specialty. She is also the wife of the main character, Einar Wegener/Lili Elbe who is overcoming his gender dysphoria throughout the film. In this film, Gerda's character is portrayed as a strong, independent woman, who is not really feminine but still able to portray the graciousness of a woman. However, due to Gerda's character and personality in this film, it then caused the character like her husband, Einar, that resulting on the decision of Einar to be a transgender and leave his status as Gerda's husband. Hence, Gerda's character and personality in this film is found to be the biggest influence of the main character, Einar Wegener's story in his transition into Lili Elbe.

The story began when Gerda Wegener (Alicia Vikander) playfully asked her husband, Einar Wegener (Eddie Redmayne) to put on a woman's dress and shoes to be a stand in model for Gerda's painting in absence of the real model of the painting, Ulla Paulson (Amber Heard) which inadvertently triggers Einar's feminine side when he saw himself dressed in a woman clothing. Later on, it continues to their game of Einar's cross-dressing in woman's clothing by Gerda's suggestion in regard to attending a party called the Artists' Ball as another person. Gerda even made Einar to learn about women's gestures and how to puts make up on. After that incident, Einar found to gradually seek for women clothing and quietly learn about the femininity in women, questioning his identity as a man, and even having a relationship with another man named Henrik Sandahl (Ben Wishaw) which he met during the Artists' Ball where he dressed as Lili. Einar did all that without Gerda knowing, and when Gerda found out about what her husband did behind her back, she did get angry and disappointed at the beginning. However, she chose not to resent him, rather, she gives her best to support Einar's decision to become a woman completely despite knowing that she will lose her husband for that decision. Gerda's way of influencing Einar to take the actions in this film then correlates with how the main conflict in this film is originally rooted – that it was rooted from Gerda's character and personality.

In characterization, Petrie and Boggs argues that if audiences are not drawn by the characters as the most human elements of a film, there is little chance that we will be intrigued to watch the film as a whole (2012, p. 49), since a character can be the medium of a narrative. Whereas, different from character, characterization is defined as the process by which a character's personality revealed through the writer's writing (Manggalasari & Luthfiyati, 2018, p. 89) – the way in which the directors/filmmakers create an individual through the characterization they give to their characters. Thus, according to Petrie and Boggs, characterization can be analyzed through their appearance, dialogue, external action, internal action, reactions of other characters, dramatic foils, caricature and leitmotif, and choice of name (2012, pp. 50–55).

Whereas, personality is considered as the biological and cultural blueprinting of man, a unique combination of the genetics and the environment (Abood, 2019, p. 161), and the personality of a character often become the biggest source in analyzing one's behavior, attitude, or way of thinking. In contrast with physical characteristics, personality traits are abstractions that cannot be directly measured and must instead be inferred from complex patterns of overt and covert behavior (McCrae & Costa, 1997, p. 510). It is because personality is the whole complex of the mutual influence of human nature (heredity) and what is expressed in different contexts (culture) (Abood, 2019, p. 161) – which is why there are many psychologists around the world who have developed various way of analyzing one's personality through the theory of personality. Thus, the Big Five personality traits are one of them.

According to Abood in his citation of Cloninger, in the 1980s, the five traits achieved wide recognition as one of the major theories of personality (2019, p. 162), The Big-Five personality factors made a long journey towards a strong performance in the psychological arena during the last decade of the twentieth century (de Raad). According to Vinney (2018), The Big-Five personality traits resulted from the contributions of many independent researchers across the world. In 1936, the pioneer, Gordon Allport and Henry Odbert first formed a list of 4,500 terms relating to personality traits. Then, the Big-Five personality traits itself was developed further by Lewis R. Goldberg who deprived the five primary factors in the Big-Five from Raymod Cattell's 16 fundamental factors, and the work was expanded upon by Robert McCrae and Paul Costa. However, Robert McCrae and Paul Costa are the ones who "confirmed the model's validity and provided the model used today: conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness to experience, and extraversion" (Lim, 2020). Furthermore, according to de Raad and Mlačić (2015), "'The 'Big Five' or Five-Factor Model (FFM) is the personality trait model constituted by the five factors or dimensions Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Intellect or Openness to Experience" (de Raad and Mlačić).

Therefore, according to McCrae and Costa in their citation of Digman, the five-factor model is convinced to be the best representation of trait structure by many psychologist now (1997, p. 509). Moreover, according to the five-factor model (FFM), most personality traits that have been developed so far can be described in terms of five basic dimensions that are also abbreviated by initials, which are; Neuroticism versus Emotional Stability (N); Openness to Experience or Intellect, Extraversion or Surgency (E); Imagination, or Culture (O); Agreeableness versus Antagonism (A); and Conscientiousness or Will to Achieve (C) (McCrae & Costa, 1997, p. 509).

As for a character motivation to support other character's goal in a film is often referred to the act of altruism. The idea of altruism is often referred to the act of selflessness without expecting for anything in return. The term altruism itself was first proposed by a philosopher named Auguste Comte from the French '*altruisme*', the combination of the word *alter* and *ui* in Latin which means 'to this other' in literal (Scott et al., 2007, p. 1). Altruism also correlates with empathic concern in which the present theory often mentioned that 'emphatic concern produces altruistic motivation' or *empathy-altruism hypothesis* (Batson, 2011, p. 11). The act of altruism is formed by an altruistic motive that emerges from one's empathic concern toward the other party. The emphatic concern in altruism includes a whole constellation of emotions from the feelings of sympathy, soft-heartedness, sorrow, tenderness, compassion, upset, sadness, concern, grief, and distress (Batson, 2011, p. 11). The emphatic concern one's felt for someone whom they consider in need which produce altruistic motivation is the evidence that humans able to value more than their own welfare (Batson & Ahmad, 2009, p. 1). In other words, the ultimate goal of the act of altruism in human is to increase another's welfare, or a desire to benefit someone else for his or her sake rather than their own (Batson, 2011, p. 20).

Altruism in human according to the above explanations is most likely correlates with one's self-sacrificing act for another. Another case in altruism is, the subject person of the altruistic behavior performed by someone is often connected with a personal tie between them. It is said when one person values, cares for, or loves another, then they will most likely to perform altruism toward the person they valued (Batson, 2011, p. 46). The simplest example is; the relationship between family members which are expected to be altruistic; when member *A* of a family voluntarily treats member *B* extremely kind and fully promote

member *B*'s welfare, then it can be said that member *A* is performing an altruism toward member *B* which is mainly motivated by the kinship connection that they had. On the other side, member *B* who is given the altruistic treatment by member *A* is most likely to treat member *A* in similar altruistic behavior in spite of repaying member *A*'s kindness toward member *B*. Other than kinship, altruistic motivation can also occur between those who are emotionally attached like lovers or partners. However, the situation where the welfare of a loved one is threatened can also evoke a range of emotions, including emphatic concern which is the root of altruism (Batson, 2011, p. 46). Hence, it is fair to state that the people whom people treat altruistically are often those whom they have a sentimental attachment, or towards whom they feel grateful like the example above (*Altruism (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)*, 2016).

Thus, the real meaning of 'true' or genuine altruism as intended by Comte makes the 'altruistic personality' in humans become possible by the statement in which increasing another's welfare is the end goal and main motivation, where any feelings of self-reward or alleviation of personal distress are the result of achieving the end goal (Feigin et al., 2014, p. 4). According to Batson, he view someone in altruism if a person experience of another's suffering will evoke an empathetic desire to relieve it, then they are considered as altruistic (Scott et al., 2007, p. 68).

There are other researches that have been conducted regarding the film within different issues or focus, and most of them are more focused on the issue of the main character's gender dysphoria. The first one is a journal article by Anggraeni and Ari Widayanti (2019) entitled *Ethical Dilemmas as Seen Through the Major Characters Reflected in "The Danish Girl" Movie Screenplay Written by Lucinda Coxon*. Their research discussed about how an ethical dilemma of the major character, Einar Wegener, upon facing his gender dysphoria throughout the film. According to Anggraeni, Einar's personality is shy and introverted, in contrast with when he becomes a woman as Lili, who is flirtatious, playful, and seductive (2019, p. 78). Their research also shows how Einar's personality takes a role in influencing his ethical dilemma throughout the film, which is closely related on how Gerda's character and personality also influence other characters and plot in this film.

On the other hand, the second journal article entitled *"This is truly me": A Lacanian Approach to The Danish Girl (2015)* by Sans (2017) propose the psychoanalytic approach to analyze how the protagonist, Einar Wegener, find a solution in front of an impasse to which each subject, independently of its anatomic sex and its insertion into a confronted social discourse: sexual difference. In his research, Sans argue that "for psychoanalysis, sex is neither a mere biologic reality nor a pure cultural one, but it is rather placed in a frontier between these two domains, which refers to the specificity of the one of the major Freudian concept: the drive" (Sans). This is the different perspective of Einar's gender dysphoria as a phenomenon. Thus, also related on how Gerda's personality traits took part in driving Einar's trans-sexuality process from male to female.

Also, the third research was conducted by Nurdin (2020), a journal article entitled *The Analysis of A Transgender Identity In the Novel "The Danish Girl" By David Ebershoff* which discussing about the issue of transgender identity based on the novel within the same title, *The Danish Girl* by David Ebershoff. In this research, Nurdin (2020) suggests that there are two major factors that causing Einar to build the transgender identity in him; biological and environmental – and according to his research, environmental factors includes person like family and friends, or any other people involved. More than that, the story itself is related to the author himself, as Nurdin stated, "the phenomenon of transgender in the movie is the reflection of the social environment of David Ebershoff as the author of the story" (n.d.,

p. 111). Thus, the social environment mentioned in that quotation as well as how Nurdin suggest that environment is one of the factors in influencing Einar's transgender identity shows that the people around Einar does have a major participate in constructing Einar's change of behavior and turns into a transgender. In this case, Gerda as the closest person to Einar shares the most contribution in the process of Einar's change of identity – which is still related to this thesis discussion regarding how Gerda's personality influence Einar in terms of decision making throughout the film which eventually lead him to change his identity and be a complete transgender.

Those three previous researches are the portrayal on how most researches within the same corpus are mainly discussed about the issues of the main character's (Einar Wegener/ Lili Elbe) gender dysphoria, and not particularly conducted to describe the supporting role like Gerda in this film. Other than that, the use of Big-Five personality factors in analyzing the influence of a fictional character's personality toward another character is quite new in literature. Gerda's character as a supporting role also holds such complexity to be analyzed. Therefore, the writer of this research is interested in doing a research of a supporting role like Gerda to tell how significant a supporting role is in influencing several aspects in a film/ story by analyzing their character and personality.

Based on the statement above, the writer is intrigued to analyze the supporting character, Gerda Wegener of *The Danish Girl* film by Tom Hooper as on what motivates Gerda to fully support her husband's transition and to understand better the cause of her actions in this research. Other than that, the character and personality traits of Gerda needs to be discovered and discussed further because it will also affect on how the audience will able to see how particular characters and personalities of a person could cause the change or transition of people close to them. This will lead into the audiences' awareness on how a person's characters and personality traits could be the cause of someone's change or transition, it will also help them to find the proper way if they were facing the similar problem as Gerda in this film.

Thus, the writer will discover how the personality traits of Gerda's character, as well as analyzing how Gerda, as a supporting character who adopt such personality traits could influence the main character (Einar) in his transition into Lili in this film using the Big Five personality factors by Robert McCrae and Paul Costa. Besides analyzing the character's personality traits, the writer will also describe the characterization of Gerda Wegener using the theory of characterization by Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs along with what motivates Gerda Wegener to fully support Einar Wegener's transition into Lili Elbe using the theory of altruism by Auguste Comte.

## METHOD

In this research, the writer used descriptive qualitative method using the theory of personality by Robert McCrae and Paul Costa, characterization by Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs, and altruistic motivation by Auguste Comte. This research used a film entitled *The Danish Girl* which was published in 2015 by *Focus Features* and is directed by Tom Hooper as the unit of analysis. This research was done by analyzing the collected data from the film using the qualitative method. The qualitative method used in this research is based on Creswell's design on data collection procedure through the qualitative audio and visual materials (in this case a film), using the non-participant observations by taking notes on the behavior and activities of the intended individuals (in this case the characters in the film). As for the instrument of this research, the writer used herself to re-watching, collecting, and classifying all the collected data, then eventually analyzing the

data according to the research problems. The collected data about Gerda's character and personality then are analyzed descriptively with the theory of Big Five personality factors by Robert McCrae and Paul Costa, the theory of characterization by Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs, and the theory of altruism by Auguste Comte. Hence, the last part of this research is to write the discussion/analysis and the conclusion statements.

In the process of accomplishing this research, the corpus of this research was taken by downloading *The Danish Girl* film through *Netflix.com*. Thus, as the technique used for this research is descriptive qualitative, the writer have done these following steps to analyze the collected data. During the first step, the writer gathered the data from the primary source, the film "*The Danish Girl*" by watching the film several times, reading the script attentively, and marking some scenes or dialogues that are related to this research, and collecting any relatable data to the corpus and topic from secondary sources through books, articles, journals, etc. Then, in the second step, the writer analyzed the collected data whilst looking for the evidences to support the writer's argument that correlates to the theory of character-characterization by Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs, theory of the Big-Five personality factors by Robert McCrae and Paul Costa, and theory of altruism by Auguste Comte by using secondary sources from books, journal, articles, websites, etc. Finally, in the third and final step, the writer then concluded all the results from this research.

## DISCUSSION

In this part, the writer will analyze the research data found in *The Danish Girl* film by Tom Hooper to answer the research questions regarding Gerda's character in this film. During the first part of the discussion, the writer will describe about Gerda's character analysis based on her characterization, then followed by identifying Gerda's personality in which considered to influence Lili's transition based on Big-Five personality factors for the second part, and finally find out the reason behind Gerda's action and behavior in supporting in Lili's transition based on the concept of altruism.

Gerda Wegener's character in *The Danish Girl* plays such a huge role in maintaining the plot of the film despite from being a supporting character. Gerda's role as the supporting character indirectly influences the main character's (Einar Wegener/Lili Elbe) transition into a transgender from male to female. Gerda's profession as a female portrait painter during the early 1920s period was not really bring her good fortunes – unlike her husband, Einar Wegener who is entitled as the best landscape artist in Denmark. Overshadowed by her husband, Gerda did not even think of giving up in her career as a portrait painter, instead she keeps on going until she finally found her so called 'muse' for painting which is none other than her husband, Einar who was captured as a female in Gerda's painting. All that began when both Gerda and Einar agreed to play their game.

At first, Gerda just indifferently asked her husband to model for her painting while putting on woman's stocking, shoes, and dress to her husband. Not long after, both Gerda and Einar agreed to level up their so called 'game' where Einar has to dress up as a woman to attend a party called the Artists' Ball as another person. Gerda helps Einar to act as a proper woman by teaching him things such as how to wear make-up beautifully or how to walk gracefully. By that, Einar has successfully turned into Lili (Einar's name as female) with Gerda's help and able to attend the party without being exposed. Without realizing, Gerda has helped Einar in creating Lili and fully wakes her small entity within Einar's body. Hence, the writer assumes that Gerda's character and personality are found to be the most reason in influencing Einar's transition into Lili in *The Danish Girl* film. Therefore, the writer collects the data from the film by focusing on Gerda's character that can be considered as evidence to support this analysis.



## Gerda's Characterization

During this sub-part, the theory by Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs is used to describe Gerda's characterization based on her appearance, dialogue, interaction with other characters, as well as her internal and external actions. According to Petrie and Boggs, characters must seem real, has the ability to be understood, and worth caring about in order for a story or plot to be interesting (2012, p. 49) – and in *The Danish Girl*, the character of Gerda is notably interesting for her role as a devoted wife, friend, and supporter of the main character, Einar Wegener/Lili Elbe. Based on the appearance alone, Gerda's character is seen as a smart-looking Danish woman in her late thirties with natural wavy-brunette hair, deep-dark eyes, and a beautiful smile line. As how Petrie and Boggs stated that audience will make certain assumptions about the characters portrayed in a film by their facial features, physical build, dress, and mannerism (2012, p. 50). In this film, by the way Gerda moves, her facial features, and dress, it can be said that she is portrayed as a graceful mid-class of late modern century woman with bright-positive energy.

In this film, Gerda's character is shown to be in contrast with her husband's, Einar, who is more in the passive side. It can be seen through Einar's response for Gerda's notice about a party.

Gerda : I had a coffee with Ulla. She asked me about the Artists' Ball.

Einar : I'm not going.

Gerda : Don't worry. I told her no.

Einar : You should go. You enjoy it.

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 00:22:02 – 00:22:17)**

According to Petrie and Boggs, the way in which other characters view a person can be referred as characterization (2012, p. 52). In above dialogue, Einar who refuses to join the party said '*You should go. You enjoy it*' to Gerda which indicates that he knew Gerda likes to attend that kind of event. Another conversation that shows the contrast between Gerda and Einar's character is when they were in a party talking about how they first met each other to the fellow guests.

Einar : It was the first time we met, I was leaving the academy and she was sitting on steps, flaunting said ankles. And she propositioned me.

Woman : Is that true?

Gerda : When I said hello to him, he actually blushed. He was so shy so I asked him out.

Ulla : And you said yes.

Einar : Well, she made me. She seemed so sure.

Gerda : I was sure. I still am.

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 00:16:47 – 00:17:15)**

The way Gerda and Einar describe each other through their conversation shows that Einar views Gerda as the active one, the initiator, and the forward type. The way Einar describe his views about Gerda then became Gerda's characterization in which her character here is seen to be active, forward and sociable.

Being seen as an active, forward and sociable character both in private and public, Gerda's character also shows to be playful which can be seen from her flirtatious action towards Einar that indicates her as a playful person. Gerda will get playful whenever she is with her husband, Einar. In fact, both of them enjoy to playfully flirting with each other. One particular scene shows Gerda's playfulness when she asked Einar to act as Lili by putting some make-up on him to model for her sketch.

Gerda : Lili. I want to sketch you. Sit.

Gerda : Lean to the side. Knee over. Head up. Oh, look at those hands. Relax.  
Don't make her a slut.

Einar : It's your fault. You excite her.

Gerda : My, Miss Lili. You are forward.

Einar : You have no idea.

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 00:23:49 – 00:24:40)**

As Petrie and Boggs suggested, that the best reflections of a character is by their own actions (2012, p. 52). In minute 00:23:50, Gerda was playfully asked Einar by putting a scarf around his neck and called him "Lili" to pose for her sketch. Einar then play along by exaggerating his pose to tease Gerda. Gerda's action in pulling Einar by a scarf and putting him make-up on shows how playful she is. In further scene, Gerda even helps Einar to dress and act as a woman in order to disguise Einar's identity as a man, and attend an event called the Artists' Ball as Lili (Einar's name as female) just to play around because she thinks that it would be fun.

Gerda : Why not give them something different? Go as someone else?

Einar : Do you have someone in particular in mind?

Einar : No.

Gerda : You'd be very convincing.

Einar : That is outrageous.

Gerda : Oh, you might even enjoy it.

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 00:22:34 – 00:23:05)**

During the scene between minute 00:23:18 – 00:26:10, Gerda is shown to be fully enjoying her time as she was playfully teaches Einar on how to put make up on, how to walk like a lady, and to choose the best outfit for Einar to wear for the Artists' ball event. She enjoys every moment she spent with Einar when they were planning their game on disguising Einar as Lili for the Artists' Ball. Gerda and Einar's relationship as a married couple for six years sure is look harmonious by the way they treat and act around each other during that particular scene. Every action that the character takes in some way could reflect the quality of their particular personality (Petrie & Boggs, 2012, p. 52). Thus, Gerda who acts playfully around Einar just showed how her characterization through the external action she did – on how playful she is.

However, despite having such bright character, the life of a female painter who lived during the middle 1920s Copenhagen sure is tough. Gerda's work was not as recognized as many remarkable painters who are mostly men such as her husband, Einar who is entitled as the best landscape painter in Denmark. Despite that, she never gives up on paintings even when being rejected and told that her paintings were not really the 'thing' people were looking for. She is overshadowed by her husband's success in the world of painting – there are even people who compared her works with Einar or mindlessly asked her to change her style in painting to match Einar's style so that she could follow Einar's step and be as successful. During one particular scene, Gerda was seen to be venting her pent-up emotion toward Einar after meeting an art dealer where she got another rejection for her works and unintentionally said something terrible to him.

Gerda : Could you please not speak to Rasmussen about me again?

My work is my business. Stay out of it.

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 00:09:22 – 00:09:34)**

As how Petrie and Boggs suggested that fictional characters in a film can naturally reveal themselves by what they say (2012, p. 50), Gerda's words to Einar shows Gerda's character through that single dialogue she said. Through that dialogue, Gerda was not simply showing her anger about what happen to her at the time, but also implying her character as an independent and matured woman by the way she put the stress, pitch, and pause patterns on her speech in minute 00:09:22. She looked dejected, disappointed, and angry, but she suppressed it all at the end and immediately made up for what she said to Einar because she knew that it was not actually Einar's fault that she was not able to seal the deal with the art dealer. Also, Gerda's choice in telling Einar to stay out of her business indicates that she is independent. She did not wish for Einar's help in lifting her career up, and believes that she is able to walk on her own two feet to reach her desired goal as a painter. Hence, it can be said that Gerda's character as a matured and independent woman can be seen through her dialogue.

Other than that, Gerda's character is also seen to be loyal, caring, and good-natured by the way she acts around other characters in this film. Petrie and Boggs stated that a character should have a clear relationship with his or her actions, and every action taken by the character somehow also reflects the quality of their particular personality (2012, p. 52). In this film, Gerda especially shows her loyalty and kindness by the way she acts around Einar.

According to Ladd (1972), 'Loyalty is therefore not universal, but concerns a relation with or to particular people' (Yastanti, 2019, p. 192). Thus, the above scene is the evidence of Gerda's loyalty. That scene happened during an incident in the Artists' Ball – an incident where Gerda witnessed Einar who consciously kissed Henrik Sandahl (minute 00:33:15) which ended with Einar getting a sudden nosebleed. Rather than leaving him behind, instead Gerda rushes toward Einar who got a sudden nosebleed (minute 00:34:00) despite just being cheated on physically. Then right after the incident, on the next day, Gerda shows her genuine concern to Einar despite the thing that Einar did to Gerda the night before. In this scene, Gerda who was just arrived at home then asked about Einar's condition.

*Gerda : Another headache?*

*Einar : It's nothing.*

*Gerda : Can I get you anything?*

*Einar : I'm fine.*

*Gerda : Maybe you should see a doctor.*

*Einar : Gerda... I'm fine.*

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 00:36:27 – 00:37:05)**

At the scene from the above conversation, Gerda is still disappointed over the incident that occurred during the Artists' Ball, however, upon seeing Einar who looks kind of frustrated while holding his head in front of his painting, Gerda who was supposed to detest Einar for what he did with Henrik Sandahl, instead, she shows her concern and even tried to make Einar feel better by asking about his condition. The way Gerda did not leave Einar after the incident during the Artists' Ball and still give her concern toward Einar afterward are the evidences of Gerda's loyal, caring, and good-natured characterization—it shows through the actions taken by Gerda which eventually reflects her quality in personality as suggested by Petrie and Boggs.

Referring to the analysis above, the writer concluded that Gerda's character such as active, sociable, playful, and forward are the features in which made Gerda to be the right person for Einar whose character is in contrast with Gerda. In addition, she is shown to be an independent woman since she has a job as a painter despite the circumstances where women painters are still considered to be rare during the early 1920s period. Other than

that, Gerda also shown to be loyal, caring, and good-natured; it can be seen through the way she acts and treats Einar who is struggling in overcoming his gender dysphoria in this film.

### Gerda's Personality in Influencing Lili's Transition

As a supporting character, Gerda's presence in this film is undeniably significant in helping the flow of the storyline from beginning to end. Without her character, the main protagonist will never coming out of his shell and chose to do what his heart desires to – and Gerda's personality is found to influence Einar's transition into Lili either it is intentionally or not. Especially considering Gerda's status as Einar's wife as well as the closest person by Einar's side at that time, Gerda's presence in influencing Einar's life is unavoidable. As stated by Phelps, a psychologist, that the people whom we have interacted with throughout our lives is one of the factors that shapes ourselves (Phelps, 2021) – and in this case, Gerda's personality has influenced Einar's life especially when he was overcoming his gender dysphoria.

Personality can be defined as one's characteristic set of thoughts, behaviors, and feelings (Azhari et al., 2020, p. 2), and there are a number of personality models including Allport's trait theory, the HEXACO model, and the Big Five model. Hence, in this writing the writer uses the Big Five model to analyze the personality of the subject being discussed. The Big-Five or also known as Five-Factor Model (FFM) is a set of personality trait model formed by the five factors or dimensions including; Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Intellect or Openness to Experience (de Raad & Mlačić, 2015, p. 559). Furthermore, this personality trait model has been validated as the best representation of trait structure by many scientists. Also, traits are considered as generalized dispositions, thus we must look for evidence of consistent patterns in behavior or reactions across a range of situations (McCrae and Costa 37). Therefore, the writer have found evidences in Gerda's consistent patterns of behavior or reactions which indicates two particular traits from the Big-Five that are considered to be the most influential personality traits in Gerda to influence Einar's transition into Lili in *The Danish Girl* film.

#### Agreeableness

Agreeableness is one of the dimensions of the Big Five model of personality traits. According to McCrae and Costa, agreeableness individuals are trusting, believing the best possible of other individuals and are rarely suspecting others' hidden intents (2003, p. 50). Therefore, it made Gerda's personality to match with agreeableness' traits. In this case, Gerda's trusts on Einar indirectly influence Einar to explore his hidden self in female as Lili. At the beginning, Gerda has no idea that the entity of 'Lili' in Einar's body was created long before she met him. She always thought that 'Lili' was created through a game they played when Gerda asked Einar to model as a woman in absence of Ulla (a ballerina, the real model), little did she knew that the 'Lili' has always been inside Einar's body which he always try to suppress during his whole life. However, as Gerda is high in agreeableness, she indirectly allow 'Lili' to come out and took control over Einar's body.

Einar : It's new.

Gerda : That's very observant.

Einar : Oh, no, leave it on. It's pretty.

Gerda : I might let you borrow it.

Einar : I might enjoy that.

**(*The Danish Girl* film, 2015: 00:15:19 – 00:15:51)**

The conversation above happened when Gerda was about to take off her night gown, but then Einar stopped her and began to caress Gerda's gown as if he was enchanted by the pretty gown on Gerda's body. Gerda was not suspicious upon hearing Einar's words when he said '*I might enjoy that*' referring to the possibility of him borrowing her night gown, without knowing that Einar actually meant what he said.

Not long after that, at night after attending a party, when Gerda was about to undress Einar, she then startled and confused when she saw the night gown they were talking about the night before was actually worn by Einar. Upon seeing that, Gerda said nothing to Einar as if there is nothing wrong for a man to secretly wear his wife's night gown for the entire night, even when they were still at the party—a public space. It shows how much Gerda's agreeableness affect her treatment towards Einar. As what stated by McCrae and Costa that agreeableness individuals are rarely suspect others' hidden intents (2003, p. 50), in this scene, Gerda's agreeableness trait made her unable to tell that Einar was actually had hidden intention when he started to unusually compliment her night gown and just respond jokingly about offering Einar to borrow her night gown; it then made Einar to think that Gerda will be alright with him wearing her night gown.

Another one was when Gerda helped Einar to dress fully as Lili and attend the Artists' Ball as her company. Gerda believes that the help she gives to Einar for dressing as Lili was solely for the game they both agreed to play, nothing more than that. She also believes that Einar would not feel anything as he dressed as a woman, and she trusts him for that. However, an incident occurred during the party which made Gerda then realized that the presence of Lili has changed Einar's self.

As stated by McCrae and Costa, people who is high in agreeableness is seen in selfless concern for others (2003, p. 46), in their considerateness, and desire to help others—a facet we call *Altruism* (2003, p. 50), which will be discussed further in the next subchapter. In this case, Gerda's selfless concern for Einar then encourages Einar to be Lili. Despite the change in Einar's self which ruined their six years of marriage time, Gerda is still willing to help Einar to overcome his gender dysphoria.

Gerda : Are you all right?

Einar : No.

I've been seeing Henrik Sandahl.

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 00:44:46 – 00:45:05)**

Einar : *I thought you perhaps knew.*

Gerda : *No. not this.* So... are you in love with Sandahl?

Einar : No. No, I love you. Gerda, only you. It's Lili, she...

Gerda : Be honest.

Einar : I need you to believe me, Gerda. You of all people to understand.

Gerda : All right. You need to tell me when Henrik and Lili are together, they what?

They... they kiss? Has it gone beyond that?

Einar : *No. No, Lili has never gone further than that with a man. She wouldn't. She's...*

Gerda : *There have been other men?*

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 00:45:47 – 00:46:36)**

Gerda : Einar?

Einar : *I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry, I'm not feeling well.*

Gerda : *Einar, what is it?* Einar, Einar, Einar! Einar. What happened? What's happening?

Einar : I'm all right. I'm all right.

Gerda : What? Do you have pain?

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 00:47:17 – 00:47:32)**

Agreeable people are indicated to be more prosocial and empathic, they are also positive and cooperative rather than aggressive with others (McAdams et al., 2019, p. 176). As shown on the conversation above, even after Einar's confession regarding how he had been secretly seeing someone else behind Gerda's back, but when she saw Einar was in pain, she could not help but to feel worry about him. She even accompanied Einar to different doctors and experts with the hope that he can be cured – which shows the empathic and non-aggressive side of Gerda. Also, as suggested by Graziano and Eisenberg (1997), that agreeableness can be referred to the motivation to accommodate to others, with the goal of maintaining smooth interpersonal relationships (McAdams et al., 2019, p. 177) – in this case, Gerda tries her best to maintain the good relationship she had with Einar as a married couple for years by putting Einar before herself and naturally helps Einar because she has high agreeableness toward Einar. It then made Gerda's considerateness and desire to help Einar eventually also helps Einar in fully becoming Lili as Gerda also believes that Lili's existence in Einar's body is not an illness, but a real entity.

Another main trait of agreeableness is nurturance – as individuals who are high in agreeableness enjoy helping others as the form of their nurturance and tend to be self-effacing and modest as the form of their abasement (McCrae and Costa 54). In this film, Gerda's character mainly shows her nurturance through the way she has been treating Einar throughout the film.

- Einar : Do you think I'm insane?  
Gerda : Did a doctor say that?  
Einar : I'm sorry. I know we agreed no more, but... look at me.  
Gerda : You are not insane. Did I do this to you?  
Einar : What?  
Gerda : Sometimes, I... I wonder... If it hadn't been for the paintings...  
Einar : No. Gerda, no. You helped bring Lili to life, but she was always there.  
She was always waiting.  
Gerda : Now she's making you ill.  
Einar : I don't know what to do.  
The doctors can't help me.  
Gerda : Do you want to try one more?

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 01:20:57 – 01:22:16)**

The conversation above was just a glimpse of the many scenes where Gerda been constantly giving both emotional and physical nourishment as well as care towards Einar who was contemplating about his gender dysphoria. Gerda is shown to genuinely gave her concern and solicitude to Einar by the way she comforted him, she even tried to blame herself to make Einar feel less wistful and said 'Do you want to try one more?' to Einar as in to tell him to not lose hope. As suggested by Digman and Takemoto-Chock that 'agreeable individuals are meek, deferring to others rather than aggressively pushing for their own ends. This facet is called *Compliance*, a nod toward *Friendly Compliance*, an old label for agreeableness domain' (McCrae and Costa 50). Gerda who convince Einar to not lose hope indicate how much she deferred to Einar's need rather than her own – and her compliance in putting Einar before herself just prove that she is an agreeable individual.

Through the above analysis, it can be concluded that Gerda's character indeed is high in agreeableness. The way she act and treat Einar shows that she is emphatic, considerate, unprejudiced, and nurturance, which then made Einar to be dependable on her – because it made Einar to obtain the thought that Gerda will never leave his side. Thus, Einar took

Gerda's agreeableness' personality for granted and eventually able to create Lili with the help of Gerda's agreeableness.

### *Openness*

Other than agreeableness, another dimension of the Big Five model of personality traits, openness, also can be found in Gerda – in which also influences Einar's transition into Lili. As discussed during the prior subchapter about characterization, Gerda's character is indicated to be active and sociable—which still correlates with her traits in openness. Individuals who are high in openness are willing to try any new things such as tasting a new dish, seeing a new movie or traveling to a foreign country (McCrae and Costa 49), in short they are curious. In *The Danish Girl* film, Gerda is seen to be high in openness as she is willing to try new things that is still considered taboo during the early 1920s period – which is a man dressing as a woman, especially the subject is none other but her own husband. As shown in the film, Einar tries his best to suppress his other identity as Lili and lived his life accordingly to the society's norms. However, Gerda's openness then triggered the 'Lili' inside Einar's body and helps Lili to come out.

Gerda : Could you help me with something?

Einar : Anything.

Gerda : Ulla has an extra rehearsal, she cancelled again.

Einar : Oh.

Gerda : Would you try on her stockings and shoes? I'm just so behind, I don't know how I'll be finished in time for her opening.

Einar : Yeah, I'll... I'll do it. It's fine, I'll do it.

**(*The Danish Girl* film, 2015: 00:10:15 – 00:10:37)**

Gerda : No, I need the dress.

Einar : No.

Gerda : I need to see how the hem falls.

Einar : No, Gerda. I'm not putting it on.

Gerda : Well I haven't asked you to.

Just relax. The sooner I start, the sooner I finish.

**(*The Danish Girl* film, 2015: 00:12:06 – 00:12:35)**

The above conversation is the beginning of how Gerda's personality in openness influences Einar's inner identity as Lili to emerge. As suggested by McCrae and Costa that "Open individuals appreciate variety (Change), intellectual stimulation (Understanding), and aesthetic experience (Sentience), and are adventurous (low Harmavoidance) and unconventional (Autonomy)" (2003, p. 54) – and Gerda who is high in openness is not really bothered by the fact about a man to dress like a woman to model for her painting, which surely is not a common thing during early 1920s period. At that scene, Gerda who is in due for her commissioned painting then asked Einar to model for her, and even persuaded Einar to put on female attire like the dress. Through that, it is shown that she appreciates the change of men in women's attire and is unconventional upon her actions for indifferently asked her husband to model for her painting. Little did she know that her openness in making Einar to try on those female attires also triggered Einar's inner identity as Lili.

As suggested by Schwaba that openness individuals tend to approach and create novel stimuli, which can be seen through how the open people tend to prefer the new over the familiar, and dare to approach the unfamiliar concepts and experiences rather than avoid it (McAdams et al., 2019, p. 186). Hence, the above pictures are snippets of scenes where Gerda shows her trait in approaching and creating novel stimuli. In minute 00:20:55, Gerda

first started to sketch Einar who was asleep after the scene where Einar secretly wore Gerda's night gown. However, she sketched Einar as Lili to capture the images of Lili's beauty inside her mind. The way Gerda imagines Einar as a woman and capture it through her sketch is the evidence that she is bold enough to create the unfamiliar concept for her sketch. Therefore, the sketches and paintings produced though Gerda's boldness in creating unfamiliar concept is also considered as the source to influence Einar's transition into Lili. Einar who never dare to imagine himself in female form felt a tingle feeling when he saw Gerda's artworks and indirectly evoke his desire to change.

Gerda : We're a little short of money at the moment.

Einar : I know.

But now that I'm back, I can sit for you again.

Well, it worked well before.

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 01:07:11 – 01:07:22)**

Later on, it was shown that Einar even continuously act as Lili in regard of helping Gerda and model for her painting – the conversation above is the evidence. *'But now that I'm back. I can sit for you again'* suggests that Einar just declared that his body is fully taken by Lili at that time, and that he is able to model for Gerda's painting again as Lili. Whereas, Gerda who finally got the recognition as a painter by submitting her paintings of Lili had no choice but to accept Einar's suggestion and lets Einar to dress as Lili to model for her paintings.

As motivation to create novel stimuli also captures the drive of openness individuals to create art and able to 'think outside the box' (McAdams et al., 2019, p. 186), Gerda who is highly open then just grab the chance by allowing Einar to model for her painting as Lili because she is driven by her openness trait to create her 'out of the box' art. In between minute 01:07:38 – 01:07:46 shows how Einar who dressed as Lili was being painted by Gerda, while miunte 01:08:03 shows Einar/Lili who was comparing himself with Gerda's painting of Lili. The way Einar see the painting is as if he is being encourages by that painting, as if it is trying to convince him that he can be a woman entirely just like how Gerda captures Einar as Lili in those paintings. Thus, it can be said that that scene just show how Gerda's paintings been affecting Einar's inner identity as Lili and indirectly encourages him to be the Lili in which portrayed in Gerda's paintings.

As a wife, Gerda also did not wish to completely lose her husband who is constantly changed to be someone else. She did try to persuade Einar to be back to his old self as her husband.

Gerda : We do these things together.

Lili : That was you and Einar.

Gerda : Stop playing that stupid, stupid game.

Lili : Please, Gerda.

Don't you think this is a game.

Gerda : You should have been there!

Lili : How could I?

Look at me.

Gerda : Not everything is about you.

I need to see Einar.

Lili : Let me help, please.

Gerda : I need my husband.

Go get him.

Lili : I can't



Gerda : I need to talk to my husband. I need to hold my husband.  
I need him.  
Can't you just get him?  
Can't you at least try?

Lili : No, I'm sorry.

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 01:10:48 – 01:12:05)**

The conversation above addressed Einar as Lili as he was assuming himself as Lili, it was happened when Gerda reaches the limit of enduring the pain of losing her husband to Lili and try to speak out. During that conversation, Gerda sounds to desperately beg for her husband to be back, but failed eventually. However, rather than trying to force her ideal conception on what she wants Einar to be, she tried to understand Einar better by helping him to find the solution for Einar's gender dysphoria. Other than the obvious that open individuals are open-minded, they are also tolerant, and willing to listen to opposing arguments (Leary & Hoyle, 2009, p. 263) – in this case, Gerda is willing to listen to Einar whose goal is not favorable for her. Einar who wants to fully become a woman made Gerda to lose her hope in maintaining their marriage. Thus, as Gerda is high in openness, even though she clearly opposes the idea of Einar to be Lili, Gerda is still willing to listen to Einar's opposing argument and eventually chose to understand him better.

Following the above analysis, according to McRae and Costa, people who is high in openness values knowledge for its own sake and are curious—and because of that, they are willing to think of different possibilities and to empathize with people in their or different circumstances. Also, open people is most likely to be liberal in values, they tend to admit that the wrong and right for an individual may not be applicable for another or in other circumstances (2003, pp. 49–50) – which closely correlates with Gerda's condition. Gerda who is high in openness made her to think more about Einar's circumstances without having any prejudice about Einar's female identity in Lili. She empathized Einar's condition, she knows that what best for her will not necessarily be best for Einar as well – which is why she gives way to Einar and lets Einar to fully transform into Lili at the end.

Thus, Gerda who is high in openness made herself to inadvertently open a new gate for Einar to explore his inner identity as a female named Lili. Broadly speaking, everything is started because of Gerda's boldness in trying new things. Her traits in openness made her to be bolder upon facing something new or unfamiliar in diverse contexts. In this case, Gerda unintentionally drives Einar to explore his other self as Lili by making Einar as the subject of her paintings. Einar who is unsure about his own identity at first is slowly being influenced upon seeing himself as a complete woman in Gerda's paintings. Gerda who is open-minded is also shown to be tolerant and willing to listen to the opposing arguments. She did not force her own belief about what is right to Einar, and willingly try to understand Einar's circumstances better, which then causes Einar's transformation to be influenced by Gerda's openness.

### **The Reason Behind Gerda's Support in Lili's Transition**

Since *The Danish Girl* film tells about the struggle of a man named Einar in overcoming his gender dysphoria with the help of his wife, Gerda. The way Gerda helps Einar to fully become Lili in this film can resulting into many questions such as 'how come she's so loyal despite being betrayed by her husband?', or 'what makes her to support her husband's transition considering the huge loss she will get in return?'. In accordance to those questions, further analysis on finding the reason behind Gerda's action and behavior is necessary to get better understanding on why did Gerda chose to fully support Einar's transition into Lili from the

beginning till the end. Thus, according to the data found in the film, the writer assumes that Gerda's action in supporting Lili's transition was motivated by her emphatic concern toward Einar who was struggling in overcoming his gender dysphoria—despite having to put her own personal distress aside. In short, Gerda puts Einar before herself, and this kind of behavior is usually known for altruism—where “humans can value more than their own welfare” (Batson & Ahmad, 2009, p. 1). Therefore, this subchapter will solely focused on how Gerda's emphatic concern toward Einar then became the most reason for her to produce altruistic motivation with the main purpose of increasing Einar's welfare, in this case, by supporting Einar's transition into Lili.

### *Gerda's Altruistic Behavior*

As previously discussed in Gerda's agreeableness that empathy is one of Gerda's traits that indicates her high agreeableness; the emphatic concern in an individual can be considered as the source of altruistic motivation as well (Batson, 2011, p. 11). In this case, Gerda's emphatic concern towards Einar is mainly based on her compassion of love as Einar's wife for six years. As stated by Strauss et al, that the tolerance involved in compassion evokes a feeling of unpleasantness when one witness the suffering of others, and make them less likely to turn away (Minelius & Nilsson, 2020, p. 17), which similar to Gerda's situation in which she could not just turn away upon seeing her husband's suffering and eventually decided to help him—in other words, Gerda sees Einar as someone who is in need for help.

Minute 00:47:21 – 00:47:26 are part of the scene after Einar's confession about his affair with a man named Henrik Sandahl to Gerda. Right after Einar's confession, Gerda who was still in forlorn upon knowing what her husband did behind her back, went straight to help Einar who suddenly curled up in pain. This is correlates with Batson's argument for altruism as helping behavior—in which Gerda felt such distress upon witnessing Einar's suffering. Thus, it shows how Gerda's emphatic concern as the source of her altruistic behavior has hugely affected her decision to eventually support Einar's transition by the little help that she did which eventually grew bigger as the time goes by.

After that, she then continuously shows her support toward Einar by accompanying him to a doctor in hope to end Einar's suffering. The idea of performing altruism as benefiting another in order to reduce arousal caused by witnessing the other's suffering is another form of emphatic concern (Batson, 2011, p. 27)—in which Gerda performs by trying her best to help Einar to cure his 'illness' and reduce Einar's pain. Because it is already shown that if one's motivation is altruistic, then their goal must want to reduce the other's distress, which can be done by helping not by escaping (Batson et al., 1981, p. 292). In this film, Gerda chose to help Einar despite the huge loss she will get rather than turning her back to Einar knowing that she will gain nothing from helping him—which is why her action can be considered as altruistic.

However, Gerda who was there all along with Einar from the beginning of his gender dysphoria then gradually understand what Einar might feel. Gerda has learned that the pain shown by Einar was not a mere 'illness', but actually the pain of Einar's confusion upon his gender identity, which then drives her emphatic concern to help Einar even bigger. As stated by Batson that “emphatic concern requires that one *think* one knows the other's state because it is based on a perception of the other as in need” (2011, p. 13). In this case, there are scenes that indicate Gerda's understanding of Einar's situation and made her to help Einar according to his situation.

Gerda : I have a new dealer coming out later.  
I'd like you to meet him.

Einar : *I don't want a new dealer.  
It doesn't make sense. I'm hardly working.*

Gerda : *That might change.*

Einar : *I don't think so. I'm happy helping you.*

Gerda : *It's Hans Axgil.*

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 01:01:48 – 01:02:00)**

The conversation above was when Gerda asked Einar to reunite with his childhood friend, Hans Axgil fully knowing that there is a high possibility where Einar could consider Hans as his love interest just like back when he was still a kid. Despite knowing that, Gerda was willing to help Einar because she just could not stand Einar's condition that got even worse by day. Gerda comes into that conclusion because she thinks that she knew about Einar's state, and produces her emphatic concern toward Einar based on her perception about how Einar might feel even though at the end it did not turn as planned. After several failed attempts by Einar in finding his gender identity, by the suggestion of Ulla, Gerda and Einar then went to another specialist in hope to finally find a solution.

Prof. Warnekros : So, what do you think would explain what you've been experiencing, Mr. Wegener?

Einar : Professor Warnekros, the fact is.  
I believe that I'm a woman, inside.

Gerda : And I believe it too.

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 01:22:21 - 01:22:46)**

During their first meeting, Gerda said '*And I believe it too*' referring to Lili's entity inside of Einar's body. In other words, the conversation above just emphasizes more of Gerda's understanding of Einar's situation—which was the result of how she creates her own perception from the time she spends with Einar as Einar was struggling with his gender dysphoria. As altruism able to overlap with both emotion and desire, and it is also said that one must have a powerful reason to perform a duty in behaving altruistically, it then became the most reason to prompts the act (Scott et al., 2007, p. 25). Gerda could finally acknowledge Lili's entity at the end also indicates that she naturally performing her altruistic behavior where her emotion and desire in wanting to keep Einar by her side as her husband overrides her urge to help Einar.

As altruistic is generally referred to the act of selflessness, letting ourselves to suffer in order to increase the other's welfare is certainly not uncommon. It is because when the scale of empathy-induced altruistic motive is high enough to the point where some resources are allocated to the individual for whom emphatic concern is felt, then the self must suffer (Batson & Ahmad, 2009, pp. 11–12). In this case, Gerda must suffer for her decision to fully support Einar's transition with the consequence of her losing a husband.

Prof. Warnekros : Mrs. Wegener, I do believe I can help your husband.]  
But he won't be your husband when I've finished.

**(The Danish Girl film, 2015: 01:24:30 – 01:24:44)**

The statement said by Prof. Warnekros above was happened when they were talking about performing a sex-change surgery on Einar. The possibility of Einar to fully become a woman was the thing that he always wanted, and that surgery was his only hope considering the time setting of early 1920s Copenhagen where the sex-change surgery was never been performed before. In accordance, to fulfill that, Gerda must disengage her marriage status with Einar and let Einar to live his life with his new identity as a woman. It correlates with the statement that there is no certain limit to the altruism one could perform for the other, and they could get low to sacrifice their own interests at any time, to the point that it could

somehow led them to their own death (Scott et al., 2007, pp. 23–24). In this case, Gerda willingly sacrificed one of her sources of happiness which is being Einar's wife and let go of everything as long as it could lead into Einar's welfare.

In sum, Gerda's altruistic behavior was driven by her emphatic concern towards Einar in which seen as someone who is in need of help from Gerda's perspective. Gerda's emphatic concern also based on the compassion she had for the six years worth of marriage with Einar which then lead her to willingly sacrificed her future as Einar's wife and let her urge to help Einar to overrides her desire of wanting to keep Einar by her side. Thus, Gerda's motivation in supporting Einar's transition into Lili is considered to be altruistic as she solely focused on reducing Einar's distress upon facing his gender dysphoria without expecting anything in return.

## CONCLUSION

The role of supporting character in a story is significant especially in helping the main character to get through their problems or even influencing them to do something to bring out the conflicts of the story. Other than that, to make a character interesting, it is important to make the personality and behavior of a character to be distinct from each another. Thus, in *The Danish Girl* film, the character of Gerda Wegener is found to be the perfect portrayal to describe how the personality and behavior of a supporting character could bring out the main conflicts of the film by their association with the main character.

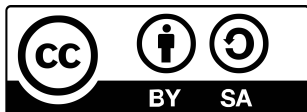
Gerda Wegener's character in *The Danish Girl* film is portrayed as an independent woman as well as a loving wife for her husband, Einar. Her outer appearance is shown to be someone who is active, sociable, playful, and forward; while she is also a loyal, caring, and good-natured person inside. In conducting this research, the writer proposes Gerda's personality to be the main reason of the conflict occurred in this film – where she either directly or indirectly influences the main character, Einar, for his transition into a woman named Lili Elbe. Based on the analysis using the Big-Five or also known as Five-Factor Model (FFM), Gerda is found to be high in agreeableness and openness in accordance with the way she could influences Einar's transition. Gerda who is high in agreeableness made her to be emphatic, considerate, unprejudiced, and has a sense of nurturance. These traits then constantly made Einar to be dependable on her and indirectly help Einar to transform into Lili as Gerda who is high in agreeableness never really opposing Einar's decision regarding his gender dysphoria. Whereas, the openness in Gerda made Einar who initially kept the entity of Lili hidden within himself, to be exposed to the outside world. The high openness in Gerda is indicated by her boldness in trying and discovering new things. In this case, she dares to try the game of dressing her husband up as a woman which then pulled the trigger in Einar. Gerda awakes Lili's entity in Einar by making Einar who dressed up as Lili to be the subject of her paintings, which drives Einar to explore his other self as Lili. However, Gerda's openness also allows her to be an open-minded person who is tolerant and willing to listen to opposing arguments. Subsequently, Gerda's motivation in supporting her husband's transition into a woman is based on her altruistic behavior. Gerda's emphatic concern towards Einar then leads her to perform altruism despite having to sacrifice many things in accordance of supporting her husband's transition. Gerda has such huge urge to help Einar who is seen to be in pain and is suffering from his gender dysphoria. The time she spends with Einar also take part in creating such compassion in Gerda for Einar, which then made Gerda to perform altruistic behavior towards Einar naturally by always by his side and keep on helping him regardless of the situation without expecting anything in return.

To sum up, this research shows how the personality of a supporting character could influence the main character and even creating the conflict for the story. It also proves that the influence of another person's character and personality could contribute in shaping and constructing one's self in becoming another, either directly or indirectly by the actions and words that they give to that person. In short, it is important to underline the significant role of a supporting character in shaping the main character as well as the conflict in a story.

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