When the film adaptation of *It* made the choice to portray one of the novel’s characters as queer, it recognized the hidden queerness in its source.

King stated that he liked the change in the film but had not intended for said character to be queer.

**Despite King’s intent, *It* is an inherently queer text, and it is crucial for readers to uncover and reveal the ways queerness is subtextually represented within work.**

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**Uncovering the Queerness of Stephen King’s *IT***

By: Mollie Bowman

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**Textual Queerness**

Many narratives with substantial queer coding tend to lack textually queer characters: this is not the case with *It*.

The first chapter set in the 1980s details the murder of a gay man who is killed only because he is gay. This solidifies this world as one of hatred, but also portrays queerness as something that is defined by tragedy.

One of the vilest human characters in the novel also engages in sexually queer acts, but that queerness acts as a signifier of his evil and perverse nature.

The text offers two realities for queer characters: tragedy or evilness.

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**Coded Queerness**

The majority of the queerness in the narrative is coded, or subtextually implied.

The Losers’ Club, or the core group of characters, act as a queer group, as they are separate from society due to their marginalized aspects and knowledge of It.

**Eddie Kaspbrak** is heavily coded as queer: he is a hypochondriac who views his queerness as a literal disease, and It embodies his fear of queerness as an illness in the form of a leper.

**Richie Tozier** is also heavily coded: he is aware that he could be seen as gay, making his constant impressions a form of repression; and the forms It takes on for him represent his internal and external fears of being openly queer.

**It** itself is also a queer figure. Its apparent lack of gender is a major source of what makes It frightening. The Losers are unable to defeat It until they can perceive It as mother, as a definable gender.