

Feministic Analysis Of A Doll's House

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Introduction

A Doll's House revolves around the issues of women. The treatment and the social status of the women are the main subjects of the play. The lack of true love and respect for the wife is also a concern of the play. Henrik Ibsen has unfolded the absence of dignity and justice for women in 19th-century society. The feministic critics have analyzed Ibsen as a realist and revolutionary thinker of the English literary society. Indeed, the play is concerned with the subjects of women's rights and the right to freedom in deciding their own lives. The appropriate portrayal of women's sacrifices in the play is applauded by many critics of a male-dominated society.

Discussion

The play of Henrik Ibsen is the blooming field of criticism for the feminist. The questions over the traditional roles of women and men in 19th-century marriage are the main issues discussed in A Doll's House. Ibsen was considered by the writers and critics as the benefactor of oppressed and suppressed women. In Norway and Europe, women had no active role in the construction of society. They are limited to household activities. The women of European society were not allowed to move outside for social roles and activities. The conventional style of marriage, where the husband was considered the dominant power over the women, was prevalent. The rights and the protection of the women were subjected to the roles of the husband.

The conventional and the provisional Norwegian society thwarts and frustrates the individuality of the women (Chen, 1105). The women had the view that they had the potential, like their husbands, for social roles. The main character of the play, Nora, is portrayed as a talented and successful member of the community. Their critical mind of Nora, their ability for any change, and their sense of justice show that she has the potential to play an active role in her Society. The inherent talents of Nora are destroyed by the hypocrite and the narrow-minded traditions of her community. The traditional rule for marriage in Norwegian society was meant as a holy activity. Many conventional writers have criticized the play of Ibsen and considered it as a sin against traditional values.

The discussion and the analysis of the play show that the main concern of the writing of Ibsen was to unfold the real position of women in society. Henrik Ibsen was asked about his intentions in the play; he claimed that it was not a feminist play. He argues that the play was about the humanist approach (Dees, 26). He means by his arguments that the themes of the play revolve around the needs of every individual, whether men or women. He further lamented that the motives of the play were first humanistic and then the rights of the women. He suggested that the play should be viewed with the

higher parlance of human concerns. Being a man, he was more concerned with a humanistic approach than following the feministic ideology.

The refusal of Henrik Ibsen to limit the meaning of the play as a feminist does not influence the emotional or psychological influence of the audience. The play deals with the predicament of women. The disillusionment of the wife is the subject of the play. The women win increases the sympathy of the audience. The play also ends with the drastic steps taken by the wife. These facts reveal that other than the intentions of the Ibsen, the play arouses and deals with the sympathy for the women's cause. Reflections of the play require justice for the betrayed women. The inherent cultural and male-dominated role of the late nineteenth-century society was challenged by the play (Eslamie, 98). Postmodern readers call the play a feminist strike against male members of society. The bleak picture and the sacrificial role of the women in the play provide significant evidence of the suppression of women in late nineteenth-century society.

The exemplification of the female character Nora shows the real picture of a male-dominated society. The conversation of Nora with her husband, Torvald Helmer, in Act Three of the play, reveals that men refuse to sacrifice their integrity and honour for females. In the same way, for the support of the brother and the mother, Mrs. Linde regrets her love and marries a richer male. Other female characters, like Anne-Marie, abandoned her child and worked as Nora's caretaker in order to support her own living. Upon getting her, she was very happy because no other source was with her to support herself. However, Nora, who is also the protagonist of the play, has economic privilege over the other female characters and never leads a difficult life.

The male-dominated society dictates that Torvald must be the dominant partner in the marriage. The dominance was the privilege for Nora to have a good economic condition.

The issuance of the decrees and condescending to Nora by her husband unfolded the sacrifices of female characters in the play (Eslamie, 98). Nora hides the loan from her husband just because she is aware that her husband will never accept her sacrifice, which was to save his life. Similarly, Nora must work in secret to return the loans because society declared it illegal for women to obtain the loan without the permission of her husband. The deception of Nora and Torvald's worst attitude leaves Nora to be blackmailed by the Krogstad.

The abandonment of the Nora children also sacrificed for her. Despite the love of Nora with her children, she left them because of corruption that might influence the children. She handed over the children to the female caretaker, who, according to her, would effectively care for the children (Hossain, 11). Such conversations and the incidents in the play reveal the real picture of 19th-century society. Many Europeans of the time considered that the Ibsen play was scandalous and against the holy tradition of marriage. The work of Henrik Ibsen was portrayed as a controversial attempt to demolish conventional social values. However, some playwrights like Gorge Bernard Shaw looked at and analyzed the play and found that it was without prejudice.

According to G.B. Shaw, the leaving of Nora to her husband was an attempt to find a life journey of

self-respect and apprenticeship. He further lamented that the revolt of Nora was the end of the chapter of human history. The condescending and disparaging behaviour of Nora's husband realizes that Nora has been greatly wronged. She told her husband at the end of the play. The treatment and the attitude of Torvald left Nora with the doubt she might not be able to raise her children. The husband, through his behaviour, creates trouble for the wife regarding the scandal of loaned money (Kaur, 06). She feels strange with her husband. She shares her issues with many women, which shows that she feels completely confused.

Henrik Ibsen was inspired by the belief that women in the modern society cannot be herself. It is because of the fact that an exclusively male society dominated the other genders. Similarly, the laws are also made by the males, prosecutors and judges who assess the conduct of the feminine with the muscular view. The critic Michael Meyer suggested that the theme of the play is not the rights of women but rather the need for every individual to think and assess humans from Ibsen's perspective. Ibsen, in his speech to the Norwegian Associations for Women's Rights, suggested that he must disclaim the honour of working on women's rights. He wrote that without having any propaganda in his play, he just described the sense of humanity.

The leaving of Nora's home is also depicted by many critics as the involvement of the departure from traditional and conventional behaviour. The slamming of the door by Nora represents the play itself (Kaur, 06). One of the critics revealed that the slamming of the doors reverberated across the doors and roofs of the world. The picture of the woman represented by the Ibsen was the reflection of her friend's life. Laura Kieler was a good friend and close with Ibsen. The relationship between Nora and Torvald also happens with Laura and her husband. Certain events are similar to Laura's real life. She also signed an illegal loan to save her husband.

Laura wanted to have the cure for the diagnosis of her husband's disease, tuberculosis. She contacted Ibsen to get a recommendation for her work. She was of the view that selling her books would help her return the loan. On refusal, she forged a check for the money. She was compared with Nora's character. In real life, when Victor gets news of the secret loan from his wife, he instantly divorces her. Two years later, she returned to her children and her husband at his urging. She became one of the famous Danish authors and lived to the age of eighty-three (Hossain, 11). The lives of women in the picture and in reality became similar to the comparison of both Nora and Laura. Both were exploited and suffered a lot.

The play has the element of social criticism. The criticism of traditional marriage, relations between males and females, and the control of males over females were the points of focus for the societal study. The play also raises a number of questions about the lives of civilized, happy, and loved couples (Meena, 773). The writer has looked at the problems that are associated with marriage. Henrik Ibsen emphasizes the number of issues in a perfect husband-wife relationship. The free woman, while deciding their conscience, must follow his own will. The woman must question the loyalty and the love of her husband. If a woman feels that she is being exploited in the name of love and fury, she must have the ability to get free from the dependency of her husband. Nora also lived in

a comfortable illusion of love with her husband.

The love and comfort of Nora with her husband do not last for a long time, as her husband reveals the true picture of hypocrisy in a time of crisis. An egoist and prideful man does not apologize even when he knows that he has done injustices to his wife. He left his wife as unknown at the time when both were grappling with the crises of love and honour. The husband very quickly forgets the lifelong sacrifices and the love of Nora. The unimaginable condition for Nora was very depressive, which broke her heart and soul. She was his doll, to which he called her as the petty possession. In reality, she was his material for luxury and for the fulfilment of his physical needs. She was not his friend or his real partner in life.

There was no dignity and honour for Nora in the eyes of her husband. She realizes that she has been in love with her image (Meena, 773). Nora brought up the children along with their necessities, but the husband, through his domination, thinks that children are his property. Nora saves the life of her husband, instead of saying thank you Torvald was concerned with the shame of safety by women. It shows that the women in the late nineteenth century were considered weak and half-minded. The exposure of the behaviour and the attitude of Torvald towards his life mate was significantly shameful. Henrik Ibsen also shows the emptiness of the culture, mind, and heart of nineteenth-century society through his play.

The collective societal behaviour of the Ibsen society was also unfolded by the writer in his play. Poverty and emptiness are clearly unfolded by Ibsen in the collective behaviour of the Norwegian community. Events in the drama were also realistic and appealing to the social concerns of women in society. The real episode is represented by realistic events in the play. The resemblance of Laura with Nora's character further explains the real picture of women's lives. The play was also banned by the authorities over the presentation of a realistic picture of nineteenth-century society (Hossain, 11). The blunt style of criticizing the deprived role of women in the actual society was the reason behind the ban and calling of a play immoral and vulgar. The play technically criticizes the lack of justice and sense of humanity in treating women like Laura Kieler.

In the postmodern world, drama is very relevant to the cases of women in different parts of the world. The twenty-first century is also facing the same crisis of depriving women of their due rights (Meena, 773). The norms and the values of nineteenth-century society are still persisting in the present world. When it comes to economic dependency and needs, women have always needed men. In the ordinary and common society, women are obliged to the needs and demands of the males. The times and the beliefs of nineteenth-century society are best reflected in the play *A Doll's House*.

The protagonist of the play was Nora, who was portrayed by Ibsen as an innocent and naïve child. She has no knowledge of what she's doing outside the world. However, in the later stages of the play, she is not only aware of the world but also knows what is going on with her self-respect and honour (Chen, 1105). The restrictions and the limitations of Nora show that the women in nineteenth-century society were not free and independent in deciding their fate and life decisions. With the advent of

industrialization and the enlightened society of Europe, women call for the protection and safety of their rights. The voice is still demanding justice for the equal treatment between the male and the female genders of the world society.

Conclusion

Concluding the discussion on the feministic analysis of A Doll's House, it is to say that Ibsen was more concerned with the humanistic approach than the protest for the rights of women. The betrayal and the male dominance of his society have restricted the voices of women. As human beings, we must strive for equality and protect female rights. The character of Nora in the play best describes the hypocritical and patriarchal society of the nineteenth century.

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