

Inequalities are
situations that benefit
from evaluation from



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Inequalities between men and women turn out to be one of the most controversial topics to discuss in any forum. There are many powerful literary characters which help us to understand the essence of these differences, and one of them is Mrs. Hale in Susan Glaspell's *Trifles*. In this play, the character of Mrs. Hale helps the reader look at gender differences and consider whether the characteristics by which genders are differentiated are legitimate. Mrs.

Hale proves that there are situations that benefit from evaluation from different perspectives, and a female point of view may be not just of equal importance but in fact in some circumstances more important, than the male. At the beginning of the play, the role of Mrs. Hale is portrayed as insignificant. Her presence in the room is dismissed by the men and the stage directions "The women have come in slowly, and stand close to the door." (Glaspell 668).

The authority and domination of the men is evident. The women characters have no lines until well into the fourth page of the play. Male domination is made evident by an off handed comment made by Mr.

Hale. "I was going to see if I can't get John Wright to go in with me on a party telephone. I thought maybe if I went to the house and talked about it before his wife, though I didn't know as what this wife wanted made much difference to John—." (668) Although Mr.

Hale charges that "women are used to worrying over trifles." (670), it quickly becomes evident to the reader that, albeit a gross generality, the natural attention to detail, instinct, intuition, sympathy and empathy

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possessed by women will be a critical factor is revealing what really happened at the Wright farm. We discover, only through Mrs. Hale's keen observations and extrapolation of meaning through the use of her instinct and intuition, that there are many pieces of evidence in the house to confirm the murderer, the motives and perhaps even the justification. She finds the broken birdcage and with her intimate knowledge of the vibrant Minnie Foster " She used to wear pretty cloths and be lively, one of the town girls singing in the choir.

" (672) and the cold John Wright " I stayed away because it weren't cheerful -...Wright out to work all day, and no company when he did come in. ...he was a hard man..." (675), she pieces together a credible mosaic of circumstances that brings into focus for the reader what likely happened at the Wright farm. In fact, the songbird in the play is one of the most captivating symbols for the feminine. Mrs. Wright could be seen as a songbird in a cage created by her husband from which she could never escape, except through death.

In her case the death of her captor. It's only fitting that Mrs. Hale can intuitively see this connection even though she may not express it in those exact terms. This ability is something that is quite possibly outside the realm and possibility of a stereotypical male thought process, certainly a typical patriarchal male of the time.

Works Cited

Glaspell, Susan. " Trifles.

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