

# Restraints of society essay



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Restraints of Society Since the beginning of time, women have been treated as second class citizens.

Therefore, women were forced to face many problems and because of this women were repressed. During the post Civil War era, the Napoleonic Code stated that women were controlled by their husbands and couldn't freely do their own will without the authority of their husband. Each character longs for freedom in a different way, but because of the men in their lives they are unable to make their own life decisions. In both stories, "The Story of an Hour," by Kate Chopin and "A Rose for Emily," by William Faulkner the use of literary elements such as foreshadowing, symbolism, and the significant meaning of the titles are essential in bringing the reader to an unexpected and ironic conclusion. From the background of both authors, who are from the South, we can conclude how they could describe the situations that they faced such as political and social presumptions and/or problems especially for women at that time. In the short stories "The Story of an Hour," by Chopin and "A Rose for Emily," by Faulkner, the main characters are both female.

Both women in these stories were bound by what society expected of them. Each woman in different ways tries unsuccessfully to gain her freedom. Emily and Mrs. Mallard live in male-dominated societies, and none of the women were free to do or be what they wanted.

Louise ("The Story of an Hour") and Emily ("A Rose for Emily") not only feel but live the demands that society and their family have placed on them. In Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily," the title character felt imprisoned by her life

and looked for a way to gain her freedom. Emily must endure her fathers never ending denial that there is any man suitable for his daughter. Emily was left lone after her father died, and the townspeople thought that some of her kin should come to her. Instead Emily lived by herself with only a black male servant. Mr.

Grierson, the father of Emily, prevented her from dating men because he thought they were not good enough for her. After the death of Emily's father she decided to date Homer Barron: " a foreman, a Yankee-a big, dark, ready man, a Northerner, a day laborer," in order to have company and a man that will share with her his time and will care for her just as her father did (470). When Emily realized that " Homer was not the marrying man" and that he sometimes paid ore attention to go and drink with his young male companions at the Elks lodge rather than going out with her, she felt that Homer will eventually leave her (471). Emily decided to do something in order to not lose him. She bought some rat poison and gave it to Homer.

The Yankee died and she kept his body for over fifty years in the upstairs room where no one would be able to find it. Emily had already lost her father; the only male figure she had in her early life. Now she did not wanted to lose Homer. She thought that the only way of having him by her side for the rest of her life was by killing him and staying with the corpse. She closes herself up in the house, never going out and never letting sunlight seep into the house.

The black servant would do all the work, and then if she needed anything from town, he would pick it up for her. The townspeople did not think this

was proper behavior either. Emily struggles against what society thought was proper and right for a lady to do and eventually only gained some kind of freedom by shutting out the rest of the world. And in the end of the story when they have already taken her body away the people find a single grey hair on the pillow next to where Homer was laying. Like Emily, the main character in "The Story of an Hour," Mrs.

Mallard, wants to be free because she feels bound by her marriage and her husband. When Louise Mallard is told of her husband's death, she "opened and spread her arms," because she saw the years ahead of her as her own (450). Louise, overcome with relief at her new-found freedom, ventures out to face the world, not as a wife, not as a Mrs, but as herself. She was trapped in her husband's life, free in his death, and then trapped again when he is found to be alive. She feels oppressed by her husband and marriage, and her reaction to Mr.

Mallard's death ay show that she thinks of her marriage as binding. The "patches of blue sky" represent the life that Mrs. Mallard sees for herself after the death of her husband (450). The storm is ending outside the window, and the storm within Louise Mallard is also ending. Louise's sister and a friend to her husband fear that the news of her husband's death will kill her, but they are utterly and completely mistaken, it makes her feel more alive then ever. Brently Mallard's death symbolizes the end of all restraints on Louise.

"She would live for herself," and that was all that mattered to her (450). This was her escape from society and all its confinements. "..

. a feverish triumph in her eyes... she carried herself unwittingly like a goddess of Victory," (451). Her freedom, however, is short-lived when she sees her husband walk through the door.

Society believes that she is overcome with such joy that the shock has taken her life. Chopin makes clear that it may instead be the loss of her new found freedom that stopped her heart from beating. Throughout history society has played a major role in the nurturing of its people. Society can cultivate and have strong influences on the choices and decisions of families and communities. Often society becomes the family and is the community in which one grows and learns the ways of life.

Society can also constrain and bind a person to its own views of life, morals and status. Some might even say that society creates a person, knows what one is thinking and why, and how that person will choose to act accordingly. The characters of "The Story of an Hour" and "A Rose for Emily" show how two perceivably delicate and fragile women, Louise and Emily, have been lost in a world created by society, cultured to its properness, constrained by its demands and expectations, and in the end, mistaken by its perceptions.