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The image of home life in *Why I live at the P. O.*, Eudora Welty depicts the damage to one's feelings of self worth in response to the sense of belonging in a family. Sister, who is the narrator in *Why I live at the P. O.*

, (Welty) is disturbed when her sister, Stella Rondo returns home with an adopted child, Shirley-T, after separating from her husband (Welty). Sister has lived in her sister's, Stella Rondo's shadow her entire life. Over the years, resentment and jealousy has manifested in Sister towards her sister Stella Rondo. The rest of the family is delighted to see Stella Rondo and the child. Sister makes the assumption that Shirley-T is the biological child of Stella and her husband (Welty).

The story is told from Sister's twisted point of view seeking sympathy from her readers. As the story begins, she immediately builds her case against her family revealing past hurt, judgment, and jealousy which cause the family to have a communication break down throughout the entire story. In *Why I live at the P. O.*, Eudora Welty uses diction, repetition, and solitude to depict the stability of a social system in a broken family.

Welty uses a distinctive speech pattern to emphasize each character's personalities and their Southern home setting. Welty uses distinctive style and font of the words to emphasize the tone of the character's speech. In the text, Welty uses "l-a-y-s", when Pappa Daddy lays his silverware down after he gets so angry about the comments made regarding his beard (Welty). The spaces in between the letters stress Pappa Daddy's dramatic movement. Welty also depicts Sister's manipulative characteristic by her tone.

Sister's manipulative tone eventually makes her an unreliable source.

Repetition is seen in *Why I live at the P. O.*, (Wetly). There is some family history that is repeated in the story.

Stella Ronda makes a comment to Sister telling her not to ever again mention that Shirley-T was adopted. Wetly makes reference to previous family history when Mama Rondo makes a comment to Sister telling her not to ever again mention the tragedy with cousin Flo (Wetly). Mama Ronda threatened to slap sister for disobeying her wishes. Another form of repetition is how Sister consentingly states that her family is against her. Wetly) In *Why I live at the P.*

O, (Wetly), the characters are withdrawn in what seems to be a loving family, while confining themselves in silence. The family represents both love and solitude equally. There are several moments in the story when each family member seeks to be alone. Without considering the heat, Stella Rondo keeps herself withdrawn from the surrounding world by keeping her windows and doors shut. Shirley-T is silent throughout the entire story except for one instance when she chants out "Popeye the sailor man" (Wetly).

Sister causes great commotion when she says Shirley-T is unable to speak (Wetly). Wetly uses Shirley-T's silence as a symbol of solitude. Another metaphor used by Wetly is when Uncle Rondo over exerts himself with his medicine while resulting into a vegetable state to his family. Then Pappa Daddy refrains from recognizing what's going on around him by resting in the hammock outside of their home (Wetly). The family also gets trapped in the solitude of lying when there isn't any silence.

The dramatic lies cause the family to express anger towards one another. (Welty) Sister causes a lot of animosity after her claims made to the family. The isolation continues as she decides to move out. In *Why I Live at the P. O.*, (Whetly) the post office represents freedom and solitude.

It is a place that she will be able to call her own, while getting a way from her family. She will not be totally free because she is escaping to a place that was provided to her by her father. Honest communication has been unattainable for this family. The family decided to increase the solitude by agreeing not to communicate with Sister while she resides at the P. O.

(Welty). Shirley-T quickly picks up the traits of the Rondo family. As Sister prepares herself to leave her home, Shirley-T sticks her tongue out at Sister. This behavior exhibits the family traits that are yet to be broken. She has picked up the bad habits of the broken family that Stella Rondo introduced her too. The story ends by Sister saying "I want the world to know I'm happy."

And if Stella Rondo should come to me this minute, on bended knees, and attempt to explain the incidents of her life with Mr. Whitaker, I'd simply put my fingers in both of my ears and refuse to listen" (Whetly). Sister's actions and words further demonstrate her contribution to her family's dysfunctional social state. She is equally guilty of all of the claims she has mentioned against her family in the story. She will continue to have lack of empathy that she desperately seeks for.

She is not able to listen because this has been learned and exhibited her entire life. Sister refuses to break the family cycle. This family can choose to

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have is better life if they learned how to listen and speak to each other. Sister should have let go of the past hurt that she has been holding on to for so many years. She could have focused more on making herself happy oppose to bring misery to her family.

If she would have done the opposite of what she has learned do as a child, she could have been free, mentally and physically in more ways than one.

Work Cites Wetly, Eudora. " Why I live at the P. O. " .

R. V Cassel & Richard Bausch. Norton Anthology of Short Fiction. 6th Ed. New York: W. W.

Norton & Company, 2000.