

Spiderwebs

[Sociology](#), [Feminism](#)



Spiderwebs A spider becomes caught in its own web. This is an example of an attempted manipulation that went awry. Hedda Gabler, by Henrik Ibsen, is a work about a woman who manipulates the fates of others in order to fulfill her own wishes. The title character is a woman who has recently returned from a six month "honeymoon" with her groom, Tesman, a man whom she does not love. She strives for freedom, but she feels as if she cannot leave her marriage. To occupy her time, she manipulates the lives of everyone around her. Hedda kills herself after becoming engorged in her own manipulations. Through the use of theme, setting, and then-current affairs, the play produces a work that uniquely portrays the sources of the motivations of this manipulative woman. Whether it be the burning of her former love's manuscript or supplying him with the pistol to shoot himself, Hedda's indignity shows the ability of man to have total disregard for the life of another. Hedda coldly manipulates the lives of everyone around her. Through these exploitive actions, she ruins the lives of all of her colleagues. Because she is not happy in her marriage, she attempts to forbid anyone else to live a content life. For example, after she persuades Eljert Løvborg to consume alcohol, he ruins his reputation and loses something that is most precious to him: the manuscript of a book that he had been writing with Mrs. Elvsted. Although Hedda realizes the importance of this manuscript to both Løvborg and Mrs. Elvsted, she lights it on fire and it burns. Because Løvborg and Mrs. Elvsted have put their souls into this manuscript, Hedda metaphorically relates her action to burning their child. This cold thoughtlessness demonstrates Hedda's disregard for the life of a fellow human being. Hedda's actions ultimately lead to her demise. After giving

Løvborg her pistol and saying that he must kill himself, Hedda's cruel intentions are finally revealed. Judge Brack learns of her dealings and, thus, gains an opportunity to take advantage of this situation. When Hedda realizes that she will always be at the mercy of Judge Brack, she does the only thing she can do to escape this situation; she shoots herself.

Throughout her manipulations, Hedda maintains a façade of innocence. Her truly hateful nature, though, is displayed through her actions that relate this theme of man's inhumanity to man. One may be able to determine the cause for Hedda's desire to manipulate when the setting is examined. The whole of the play occurs indoors. Therefore, Hedda is constantly submerged in a place in which she is unhappy. Because her husband Tesman is constantly occupied with other happenings, Hedda is left in a setting that lends itself to plans of manipulation. Hedda's true dreams and aspirations are those of freedom and independence. Her setting however, is an opposite to her favor. While Hedda maintains a desire to be free to do as she pleases, her situation is one in which she is confined in her home. Because she constantly remains in this monotonous setting, she occupies her time with scheming against everyone around her. This is perhaps the principal cause for Hedda's manipulations. In addition to the setting, the time period in which Hedda Gabler was written is key to the background of Hedda's manipulations. The late nineteenth century was a time for change for the women of the world. The women's suffrage movement brought forth the concept of the importance woman's rights. I am sure many would regard this play as being a feminist play, Hedda Gabler investigates the consequences of excessive feminism. Hedda Gabler is portrayed as an extremely strong-willed woman.

During the times in which this play is set, numerous women's rights and suffrage movements were occurring across the world. It can be seen that Hedda's moderately aggressive attitude is characteristic of the time period. To Hedda, it is absurd that she would have to be under the power of a man. At this time women across the world were adopting new ideas on their place in society. The atmosphere of the era provides an explanation of the source of Hedda's manipulations. The three aspects that explain Hedda's motivations for manipulation shed much light on Hedda's overall desire for manipulation. Truthfully, Hedda desires to manipulate the lives of others because she cannot manipulate her own life. She does not want to remain in her marriage, but she lacks the courage to get out of it. Because of the times and her situation, she feels that she cannot leave her husband. It seems as if these manipulations are a sick form of entertainment for Hedda. One could regard this play as a purely feminist work or as the story of a woman who has no regard for human life. In either way in which it is regarded, Ibsen realistically portrays the motivations of Hedda Gabler through his use of theme, setting, and current events.