

Example of research paper on a doll house

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



A Doll House is a play written by Henrik Ibsen in 1879 and is considered as one of the first feminist play ever written exposing, among other social commentary, women's oppression and subordination. The play deals with the lives and anxieties of the bourgeoisie and it is an example of a problem play. A problem play displays these concepts; first of all, it creates issues in the society with the subject of discussion in the play. Secondly, a problem play has a social critical perspective whereby certain things or people in the society are criticized and third, its setting is contemporary. Lastly, a problem play presents people's everyday's life and situations and what they have to go through as the rich, poor and middle class in the society. In essence, a problem play deals with controversial issues in the society in a realistic manner, it exposes social ills and how they affect people in the society.

The play A Doll House embodies the above traits of a problem play. The play has a dozen of problems propounded for it. After watching the play, there are so many questions asked at the end; " Was it right for Nora to leave her husband?" " Was their marriage an ideal one?" " Is a marriage that is not ideal a real marriage?" " Should Nora have deceived her husband?" " Was she justified in forging the note?" " Is one ever justified in breaking a law?" " Was Nora's conduct perfect?" " Does Ibsen believe in marriage without mutual trust?" " Must married women have to eat candy?" The main problem of A Doll's House play is with Nora's character with the questions if she was right to forge the note that saved her husband's life. The play revolves around Nora's character and how she changes the lives of women in a patriarchal society.

A Doll's House play focuses on women and how they are perceived in the

society and their marriage roles. Nora is treated as if she is a child by Torvald throughout the story instead of being treated like a wife. Nora is pampered, cuddled and patronized by her husband as he refers to her as “my little lark” and “squirrel” (Ibsen 10). He demands respect from her and demands her to be a dutiful wife and live with him as a dominant and strong husband. Like other men in the society, Torvald believes that a woman should be submissive and it is a sacred duty for a woman to be a good wife and mother and should be responsible for the morality of the children. The problem here is that women in this society are seen as children and helpless creatures whose duty is to be submissive to every demand of their husbands and therefore they are discriminated against. A Doll’s House play shows that men dominate the society and force women to do everything they want. In the case of Nora, she realized it and refused to pretend to fulfill all the roles that her husband, her father and the society expected from her anymore. As the play ends, Nora is able to find the strength to free herself from the oppression of the women in the society and walks out on her husband together with her children to find independence.

Nora’s everyday life was full of oppression from her husband whereby she has to be submissive to everything her husband demands. The position of women in the society was suppressed and Nora had to live with that in her marriage yet every human being has a right to be free to experience whatever they want in their lives. For Nora, she was not free but under her husband’s dominance but she made up her mind to run away from the contemporary society and its suppression against women.

A Doll’s House play can be judged as a problem play because it represents

the problems of the women's place in a contemporary society. Ibsen presents the troubles women have to go through as wives in a male dominating society and their lack of power and legal understanding regarding their position in the society. Nora is first presented as an ideal wife who plays the little "squirrel" for her husband by being submissive to everything he demands (Ibsen 8). Nora lacked legal understanding on how to deal with issue in the society and that is why we see her forging a note in order to save her husband. Women's rights in the society were infringed and if women had the right to borrow money on their own, all the blackmails would have not been there and the while situation would have been averted. However, the problem still remained because women were oppressed and dominated by their husbands and could not do anything on their own and this brought about all the blackmails in Nora and Torvald's marriage. A problem play presents people's everyday's life and situations in the society and how they can come out of the problems. A Doll's House play presents the problems women go through in the society and ends with how the inequalities in the society are ended and giving women freedom and a life of dignity and independence. Everybody should be free in the society as every human being has the right to be free. Throughout A Doll's House, the position of women in a patriarchal society was oppressed. This play questions the prejudices and inequalities that exist in the society. Nora was always treated as a child by her husband and her life was without dignity and freedom as she was treated as inferior. Something was to be done to solve this problem of making women inferior and subordinate and change such a society. When Nora left her husband, this was part of the solution of the

problem and this was to make men respect women and understand that they deserve freedom and they can be independent on their own. At the end of the play, Nora leaves her matrimonial home saying that her duty towards herself is more important and primary than to her duty towards husband and children and she has to be independent and stop being her husbands puppet.

A Doll's House play aims at changing the society by advocating for equality for all despite gender. When all individuals are equal and only they can live a life of freedom and dignity. Then only society as a whole will be a better place to live in and that is what A Doll's House play is all about, solving the problem of inequality in a contemporary society. Torvald saw women as puppets that could be manipulated do everything a man wants. This can be seen by the names she calls his wife Norah " little skylark," " featherbrained woman," and " helpless little mortal" (Ibsen 56) He never valued women as the men in the society at that time dominated women and never saw them as anything of importance in the society. He treated his wife like a child and never gave her freedom to do what she wants and this was contrary to what Nora believed and this is why she had to leave him and search for her identity as a woman and become free and independent. The problem of oppressing women in the society had to be solved. They were to be given freedom as other human beings to run their lives and become important people in the society just like the men.

The treatment of women in the society depicted in A Doll's House was extremely negative. Women were expected to stay home and fulfill domestic duties and also be submissive to their husbands. The play presents social

issues of women in society through the marriage of Nora and Torvald. Ibsen uses Nora Helmer in *A Doll's House* play to represent the negative treatment of women in the society during the nineteenth century. The roles of women were inferior to that of men, especially in marriages and they had to remain subordinate to their husbands and could not do anything on their own. The main duties of a woman were centered around the home; they were expected to fulfill their domestic duties, such as caring for the children, cooking washing, and cleaning the household. Ibsen's play *A Doll House* is a problematic play that represents women issues in the society but the protagonist was able to overcome them and become free and independent. Through her life, women can learn to become independent and stop being seen as inferior by their men in the society.

Work Cited

Ibsen, Henrik. *A Doll's House*. New York: Dover Publications, 1992. Print.

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