

Argumentative essay on scarlet letter with the claim women and honor killings

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Abstract

This paper presents an overview of the claim made on the greatly renowned classic novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*. I would claim that the novel portrays various characters where it would be acceptable to mention and link them to the very controversial topic Women and Honor Killings. This paper clarifies how the story of the *Scarlet Letter* is a fine example of how women and honor killings occur in different societies and cultures and also with proper evidences it will be made further clear how this claim can be interrelated with the Hawthorne's story and characters of the novel for instance, the character of Hester, Dimmesdale and Pearl give a look to character fighting the consequences of women violence also without any proper evidence.

Beginning to further lay an emphasis on Hawthorne's spectacular classic novel and the wonderful characters that reflect different images and point of views of the society and the Puritan ritual of justice that was being followed and then resulted in the consequences that took place and how they were the causes of many incidents in the storyline (Adams).

Hester Prynne is a mother who is falsely accused of adultery and has to face the consequences all alone as well as the punishment that involves her wearing the letter A around her neck to further cause humiliation for her and as a symbol of her sin for everyone to see. Her innocence is questioned by each and everyone and she is punished for loving someone unconditionally. She lives in a community where adultery is a sin not worth forgiveness at any cost. She is a powerless and hopeless woman who is left to bear the cruelty and brutality that someone else deserves. Also, she has a daughter

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Pearl who she had to raise on her own and who is the daughter of Dimmesdale who refuses to claim her as their child. Understanding the character of Hester and the accusations that took place it would not be inappropriate to provide some linkages of it with current women and honor killings.

The term honor killings have always been referred to as killing women in the name of family honor and many times it is not even the case rather just a term men use to wrongly murder or sexually abuse their sisters or wives (Tripathi and Yadav, 5). This scenario of women killings in the name of honor also include cases of forced marriages and also the women violence is also said to an act done by individuals who have deviated from their own culture. Cultures that certain communities follow are a vital part of such incidents of honor killings.

Cultural and sexual beliefs are said to play a significant role in such honor killings as usually such cases are said to present cultural evidences when presented in courtrooms. In the case of Hester Prynne who was again presented as an innocent women whose voice was left unheard just due to the cowardice of Dimmesdale's sin and his fear of being punished by the Puritan justice that was followed. He although being a man was not able to take the stand for Hester who was bearing his child and was going through cruelty and oppression from the people of her society everyday. This shows how the society is drenched in the male dominance and how their wrong acts and sins are neglected while women on the other hand have to bear the consequences without making a sound (Reddy, 8).

Women have been treated as commodities and property of men since old

times and due to this honor killings and are on a rise and no governmental actions and authorities try to take action against such acts. In this case Hester whose chastity was pointed upon by everyone was just treated like dirt by her husband Chillingworth and she had no option but to take it. Again she was made to be guilty for adultery which mainly occurred due to her forceful marriage with Chillingworth when she was interested and madly in love with Dimmesdale but she was neverable to marry him unfortunately as her society would never allow that. She being the women had to sacrifice and kill her desires in that matter as well.

The character of Hester also collides with antoher character presented by Shirley Johnson's ' The Lottery' in which Tessie Hutchinson becomes the victim of an antifeminist ritual that was followed in the society and she had to sacrifice her own life in order to safe her family (Whittier, 11). This famous classroom classic also presents a fair view of the male dominance that leads in many of the societies, cultures and countries. The characters of Tessie and Hester both show how the commodification of women and the concept of honor are totally ruled over by male power and women even today have no say in the community and have lost their decision-power. ' Women bodies are considered the repositories of the family honor and they are treated as property of their husbands (Abu-Lughod).

There have been many cases reported in which usually the woman is killed due to having a sexual relationship or affair outside of her marriage which is considered to be wrong is many cultures but in many cases men just falsely make up a story to accuse their women of adultery like it happened in the case of Hester from The Scarlet Letter. Also, minor reasons like not fulfilling

their domestic duties have surprisingly caused many cases of women and honor killings.

Middle Eastern countries, India, Europe, United States and United Nations have all had innumerable cases of women and honor killings some of which cases have been resolved while others have been left out due to many cultural difficulties that have to be taken care of when such immigrant communities exist in western societies. When such cases come across, countries have to take care of their multicultural concerns which is why most of the times such cases are handled through the cultural criteria that exist for a particular honor killing. As they may be backed-up by religious or cultural evidences that might actually prove an act to be wrong. As in the story that Hawthorne presented in the Scarlet Letter greatly lies around the culture that was followed by the Puritan culture in which committing adultery outside of marriage was obviously considered to be guilty but no man in this case Dimmesdale ever tried to come up to support her and expose that he was the actual culprit.

This mainly proves that Hester who was firstly Chillingworth's wife was actually found guilty for being found sexually involved with Dimmesdale and also, it clearly proves that Dimmesdale was not going to let anything hurt his honor and prestige amongst his people just due to a woman he loved so rather than showing support for her he decided to keep it hidden from everyone that it was his child, Pearl, that Hester bore and that she was not the one who should be guilty. While Hester powerlessly went through all the torture and punishments commanded to her, he also never admitted his sin just for the fear of losing his reputation and honor.

This basically proves that men are have this concept that women will be penalized even if they haven't committed any crimes they lack that importance in the community and this has also, resulted in many similar cases such as the one explained in the Scarlet Letter in fact when searched for you come upon such surprising cases in which brothers have killed their sisters brutally and men have killed their daughters and wives for such minute reasons and no serious actions have been taken by the authorities to show some importance to human right of the country.

This is why in Scarlet Letter it would be wrong to claim that it presents an exceptional example of women and honor killing and might as well support them and bring upon serious awareness amongst the people of the community.

Honor Killings are also emphasized as the behavior of a specific ethnic or cultural community which becomes the cause of many criminal violence incidents that take place in that society. Many Right Activists, popular writers, and scholar have all contributed to raising the visibility of the honor crime similarly as the Scarlet Letter has additionally been a great contribution to this neglected cause as well.

One of the famous work by Norma Khouri, Forbidden Love also presents the similar story of Dalia who is the women going to similar oppressions in the name of family honor and in this story Dalia has to put herself through many sacrifices just as Hester has to go through in order to save her child and her family (Wasti, 7).

Then we have another popular novel Burned Alive which had been a best-selling story which revolves around the character Souad who was burned

alive and survived it. This story was a contribution to Mukhtara Mai who actually was the character of Souad and was burned alive and had to fight for herself to punish the guilty culprits (Wasti, 8).

There are many similar examples that present real life stories of women who were killed or attacked in the name of honor falsely and had to face the trickeries of their men who were set loose without any punishment just because of the lack of evidence. All these evidences also support Hawthorne's point of view that he tried to present to his readers and also it would be correct to say that he also accomplished in conveying his message to the readers and now the Scarlet Letter seems to have become a regular read for all students and classrooms.

We can also say that there have been theoretical and practical responses to the violence against women and this paper also successfully presents a list of such incidents through the claims made against The Scarlet Letter.

Scarlet Letter which is the exceptional work of Hawthorne Nathaniel along with other works have created awareness amongst the people and have brought about many positive developments in the Islamic states as well as a tremendous development in the women's rights has taken place during the previous years which include the legal measures, protective measure and preventive measure altogether (Reddy, 10). As this is what any community that falls victim to such women honor killings lacks and any effective measure taken will help in reducing one Hester who had no one to fight for her honor lessened from the community.

Hester Prynne who was the single mother of Pearl had to fight for herself as Dimmesdales who said to be the love of her life refused support her at the

time when she needed him the most. She was made to wear the A and bear the humiliation all by herself just because of the male dominating rituals that were followed in Puritan community. No one came to fight for her justice.

Still, she never gave up and fought her own fight. This is exactly what happens in our society everyday and no one raises a voice against it.

Numerous solved and unsolved cases and culprits can be found who killed innocent women in the name of honor and no one took an action that would make the women like Hester feel protected.

Coming to the conclusion of the paper claiming that Scarlet Letter represents an example of women and honor killings would be accurate because Hester does present a woman who is punished due to the violation of the Puritan's ritual and taking part in adultery which results in her humiliation through the symbol A that she has to wear and cannot take off. But again no one asks her side of story and which clarifies the long followed concept of honor that is followed by men of over the globe. It also proves that the story is somehow the similar all over the world where although so much has changed but still men accomplish to dominate women one way or the other and that results in occurrences like the women and honor killings and innumerable honor crimes that are falsely done against women.

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