

On the way of the world essay

Literature, Russian Literature



Abstract Marriage is a very complicated issue. Especially if the two people entering into a marriage contract have very different goals in mind. Even if the two people love each other, they are sometimes bound to consider the people around them, like relatives, friends, and society. Love and commitment to that love is the most important factor in getting married but there are so many issues that can bind the true nature of what marriage is about. During ancient times getting married meant a total submission of woman to a man. A woman should follow her husband whatever he wants her to do. It was indeed a sacrifice for a woman getting into a contract of marriage.

This paper will discuss a different idea about marriage during seventeenth century. What Mary Astell has to say about marriage? What Philips wants her reader to understand in her poem? Or how the play " On the Way of the World" differs to each of those authors idea? One should know that marriage is a sacred ceremony, impressed in the fleshy hearts of man and women, etched in the concrete foundations of our commitment, and a blessing brought down from God... Not only just a mere contract written in the paper adhered to by the laws on justice " On The Way Of The World" is a play that shows a different kind of love story. The play was based on the love story of Mirabell and Millamant who love each other, but they are arguing about how they would deal with each other when they are already married. On Act IV, Scene V Mirabell and Millamant were talking about things they will do when they are married. It is just a mere compromise on how they will deal with each other, " an official contract" they agreed to before getting married. They were giving each other a provision on what and not what to

do. Mirabell wants that when they get married, Millamant will have to make changes in what she was used to do when she was still single.

He wants that she will avoid putting a mask of oils, cream and other products on her face. He even ask Millamant to avoid talking about friends who are not around, He wants Millamant to avoid gossips and some irrelevant talks with her acquaintances. He will not allow liquors in their house but he will allow cowslip wines, poppy waters and all dormitives (medicinal potions) are allowed. He also wants Millamant to be true and not to hide any secrets from him. He forbids her to talk with her friends about their private life, their intimacy like other wives are doing. Millamant on the other hand wants that Mirabell would not allow him to call her names like “ wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweet-heart” and any other names that some couples use. She don’t want that they will kiss in public places in order to show to people that they love each other. She don’t want to do such things like other couples are doing, like on their first week of marriage they showed love but then the following weeks they were apart.

She told Mirabell that she would be allowed to accept visitors (51). That she can receive and writes letter to whom she wants without him asking about it. To wear the kind of clothes that she wants. She even told him that she don’t have any obligation to talk with his acquaintances if she don’t like and that she will go to her room anytime she wants.

And lastly she told him, he should knock on the door before entering her room. In short, Millamant wants her liberty, a freedom to do her own even

they are already married. This is the “unofficial contract between lovers”. It is just a mutual agreement between them.

Mirabell wants Millamant to just avoid some things he doesn't like and in return Millamant wants her freedom. At the end of Act IV Scene 5, they both agreed on their individual conditions, He kissed her hand before leaving as a sign of their agreement of the contract. In a sense of understanding, they are both reasonable on what they have agreed; Mirabell has the point why he wants Millamant to avoid some things he doesn't want.

Even they were on seventeenth century time, they were able to prove that they don't have to follow their tradition that a woman should be totally submissive to their husband and follow everything he wants. Mirabell and Millamant love each other, and their love brings them this condition and agreement as unofficial contract prior to marriage. In Katherine Philips poem “To One Persuading Lady To Marriage”, it was her intention to contemplate the place of a woman in society and marriage and the choices made can be sweet if placed in proper order. The poem explores the intents of a youth's heart and the things confronted as a part of that, the feeling of love and loneliness, social standing, life long paths. “To other courtship may appear, 'Tis Sacrilege to her” (Line 3). The contradictions between those thoughts and the contemplation of what will be the right path for a woman. A woman should make her husband to be her priority, “First make the sun in private shine, and bid the world adieu” (Line 10).

It predicates a sensible path and that such a path need not to diminish nor define the woman, nor should it be or become a point of hardship to a man

to allow his wife to explore greater sense of herself outwardly to the world so long as such things do not commit shame or sins against the marriage or family. Mary Astell "Some Reflection Upon Marriage", indicates feminism that she is not agreeable with the traditions being imposed when getting married. She considered getting married to being a slave to a man and that a woman does not have the freedom to do for her own. She was able to come up with this idea when she saw a lot of women were being held in their own home to be just being a housewife and don't have the right to do what they want. Discussion To analyze the views of each writings compared to the play, Philips can say that contract between Mirabell and Millamant is just fair enough to the both of them, hence Mirabell was not that greedy and that he considers Millamant wishes upon their marriage. "She is a public deity; And were't not very odd She should dispose herself to be A petty household god?"(Line 5).

A woman should not demote herself for just being a plain housewife but even she already married she can still have place in society if she wants. Philips poem agrees with what Millamant did to Mirabell that before marrying they both put into account what they are going to do when they get married in order for them to maintain a happy and contented marriage life while not being unfair with each other. The idea of Astell on marriage will surely contradict with the unofficial contract stated between the lovers. As for Astell feminist idea of marriage she would surely say that the contract is not fair for Millamant. Astell, not being married herself, always thinks that getting married is just a sacrifice of woman's rights and freedom, and that marriage for her is just like being in prison for life.

“ If a Wife’s case be as it is her represented, it is not good for a Woman to Marry, and so there’s end of Human Race” (89). It is clearly being stated that she will recommend to woman not marry, and in the case of Mirabell and Millamant’s unofficial contract she would surely say that the contract is not fair enough for Millamant. Mirabell and Millamant’s contract cant really convince Astell’s standing regarding marriage, between the two lovers they were able to come up with a condition as lovers and to disregard what marriage tradition has to do with it. For Astell the proposal and condition of Millamant to Mirabell is not enough to make her to change her idea that getting married is a woman’s end for liberty and freedom. For her it is always a big mistake to get married. Being a feminist, her standing about equality of man and woman still remain and binding into a certain contract to marry would be impossible for her to believe that equality will stay between couples. Even maybe Mirabell and Millamant would grant that Mirabell wont make Millamant his slave and that she can do anything she wants when they already married because they love each other, it would be difficult for Astell to understand because she is still single.

Conclusion For final thought, the unofficial contract between Mirabell and Millamant by any standard is acceptable during our time, it is because the proposal and condition they had stated as an unofficial contract was being bound with love, trust and respect for each other. Getting married is not a sacrifice for woman nor for man, it is a sacrifice that each individual has to do, to understand and support each other. We all have different views of Marriage, each one has reason why they agree or disagree. And as to the above-mentioned authors, they have different ideas and belief about

marriage, we should consider it criticism or uplifting but we should also give respect to whatever ideas being presented about marriage. Marriage is a compromise between two people in order for marriage life to succeed.

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