

Hedda gabler



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In Hedda Gabler, Ibsen positions the audience to have some sympathy for Hedda's desire for control over her own destiny. Ibsen's historical context at the end of the 19th century has clearly influenced his depiction of the characters and their role in society. Although we might judge Hedda harshly from our present day standpoint, it is important to take into account the expectation placed upon women in the society of the time. Ibsen's view is that society should change to allow greater freedom for women.

The play endorses his views of equality between men and women and the idea of freedom of choice and individuality. The play criticizes interpersonal manipulation and submission of women; showing through the character Hedda, the result such things cause. The idea of freedom and equality play a central role in Ibsen's play to encourage the audience to feel sympathy for Hedda's desire for control of her own life. In the time and setting of Hedda Gabler society places high expectations on women and a limiting perspective of their role.

Throughout the play Hedda plays a victim of these expectations and desires freedom from society's rules for women and to be able to be an independent individual. When " Hedda crosses the room, raising her arms and clenching her hands, as if in fury. Then she pulls back the curtains from the glass door and stands looking out" she's showing her frustration with her separation from the outside world. Throughout the play the glass door is a reoccurring symbolic feature that represents Hedda's entrapment and lack of freedom.

The symbolic feature of the glass door criticizes society's views of that time because the audience is naturally compelled to sympathize with Hedda's

lack of freedom and therefore lack of control. In Hedda Gabler, one might suggest that with society's expectation restricting Hedda control over her own life she seeks control of others. Hedda frequently refers to herself as bored and lacking control of her life this leads to her desire "to have the power to shape a human being's destiny" and her manipulation of other people.

Hedda manipulation of people satisfies her desire for control of others and the ability to create scandal. Hedda sees the agreement of her statement, "So I, poor thing, have no power over you at all" from Lovborg as purely a challenge for her to regain the power she had over him before Thea took that power. The manuscript is a symbol of Thea and Lovborg's child therefore in burning it Hedda is stripping Thea's power over Lovborg and regaining it for herself. This action is also satisfying Hedda's desire of scandal by the destruction of others happiness.

It is easy to judge Hedda harshly when she is so cruel and manipulative, but Ibsen encourages the audience to sympathize with her in questioning the idea that society is the reason for Hedda's need of manipulation and control of others. Society's expectations for women play a big part for the way Hedda is. Ibsen critiques the lack of equality between men and women throughout the play. Through the character of Hedda the play shows that for some women the role of wife and mother alone is not satisfying even though society places such high expectations on women to do this.

He makes you sympathize for Hedda through sympathy for Aunt Julle and Thea. Aunt Julle plays the role of the mother and is left alone to look after

Tesman and her sister Rina and you naturally feel empathy for her when Aunt Rina dies and she doesn't know what to do with herself because she only knows the motherhood life. You also sympathize for Thea with society's high expectations on women; her bold move of leaving her husband is looked down upon (“ But, Thea, what do you think people will say about you “) even if it's her only way of happiness.

In creating these characters, Ibsen brings great understanding to the strong views and expectations of the society and allows you to feel sympathetic for Hedda because her actions may be her only way of gaining as much power she can in a society, which restricts women from such power. Ibsen encourages the questioning that society is the reason for why Hedda is the way she is by also creating the aspect of the pistols and how they may represent a false sense of power.

The pistols are an important symbolic feature for the audience of current culture to really understand the lack of power women had in that society. In telling Hedda, “ why didn't you shoot me down when you threatened to! ” Lovborg is giving Hedda a false sense of power by making her believe that the pistols give her power over him. The fact that Hedda takes her own life by her own pistols, represents Ibsen's criticism against society's views that power is everything and only for men by showing that endorsing these views encourages women to confide in a false sense of power which leads to destruction.

In the destruction of herself, Ibsen shows that because of society's expectations Hedda could never fulfill her desire for control of her own

destiny, which compels the audiences to feel sympathetic. In the play ‘ Hedda Gabler’ it is easy for the audience to judge the protagonist Hedda harshly, but Ibsen brings to head the question that whether society is the reason for the way Hedda is? The fact that Hedda desires control of others lives because she cannot gain proper control of her own is a great example the lack of freedom and equality women had in that era.

Ibsen views are reoccurring with Hedda’s characteristics of cruelty and manipulation and the question of if she is like this purely because she feels entrapped and bored? Ibsen’s final criticism of society’s views is shown through Hedda’s taking of her own life with her pistols which she believed possessed power and that is that the lack of equality causes women to create a false sense of power which leads to destruction. Therefore, Ibsen’s positions the audience to sympathize for Hedda’s desire for control of her own destiny.