

The american radical

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The American Radical

Introduction

Stephen Crane's 'Do not Weep, Maiden, for War is Kind' and Kate Chopin's 'Awakening' advance American values of equality through showing how America has gone to a civil war and challenging the existing customs and morality that confined women to marriages. By asserting that 'Do not weep, for the war is kind' Crane articulates the need for ending slavery and discrimination in the society (Crane 7). In this case, Crane advocates for struggles in the fight for equality by asserting that 'men were born to drill and die' According to Chopin, women desire both sexual and economic freedom, but their agitation for equality is thwarted by powerful and upper class men (Chopin 34). Chopin advocates for women transformation from the traditional wife roles to more economic participation. According to Chopin, women should be independent, sexually -liberated and self-realized since women were perceived as property of the husbands according to certain laws such as Louisiana law. For instance, Chopin demonstrates how Edna pursues her passion as an artist and has little regard for household matters that she has attained sexual awakening. Chopin describes Edna as a extraordinary woman who has refused to comfort to prejudices and traditions that hinder equality by asserting that 'even as a child she had her own small life al within herself' and further goes to saw that Edna's inward life questions the traditions existing in the society (Hart 63).

The American culture was experiencing radical changes due to shifts of the economy from agriculture to industry and women roles were also expected to change from domestic to more participation in the economy. Women struggled to express their desire for education and employment and Chopin

<https://assignbuster.com/the-american-radical/>

managed to address the need for equality in her literary work. Chopin's 'Awakening' manages to demonstrate the need for freedom, independence and equality in the society. The author outlines how the existing societal virtues of submissiveness, purity, piety and domesticity define women in the society and hinder the search for individuality and equality in the society. Chopin illustrates how self-determination of Edna enables her to develop individualistic attitude and personality that allows her to enter in to corporate world in order to generate income for her own rent. This illustrates that Chopin's assertion that 'the bird that would soar above the level plain of tradition and prejudice must have strong wings' (Chopin 17). Stephen Crane 'Do not weep, for the war is kind' aims at calling for equality through abolishment of slavery practices and discriminatory ideologies that hinder the full participation of all individuals in the society (Crane 78). The 'Awakening' was written during a transitional period to modernism when the social and cultural perspectives of the society were undergoing radical changes and managed to outline the importance of rights of women as individuals. The authors pointed out the struggle right to vote and acquire property rights. Chopin tells a story of Edna who realizes that the current social norms as a wife and mother hinders her from being an autonomous human being due to the lack of social, sexual, economic and political equality. The struggle for equality was violent and harsh, but the works of the two authors were instrumental in highlighting and facilitating the need for women to initiate divorce and remain in custody of their children (Buhle, Buhle and Kaye 85).

Conclusion

The authors significantly contributed to debate on women equality by

<https://assignbuster.com/the-american-radical/>

sparking feminism struggles that led to women's right to vote and own property. Accordingly, the authors advanced the equality of women in accessing education and drew attention to racial, class, religion and ethnic discrimination that oppressed women.

Works Cited:

Buhle, Mary., Buhle, Paul and Kaye, Harvey. *The American Radical*. New York: Routledge. 2013.

Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening and other Writings*. New York: Broadview Press. 2011.

Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*. New York: H. S Stone and Company. 1899.

Crane, Stephen. 'Do not Weep, Maiden, for the War is Kind'. 1899.

Crane, Stephen. *War is Kind*. Alexandria: Library of Alexandria. 1899.

Hart, James. *The Oxford Companion to American Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1995.