

Gender criticism

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Can-Can by Arturo Vivante This short story is based on the theme of adultery, and makes a great use of the aspect of irony. In this story, a married man is shown as leaving his wife at home and sets off to meet another woman. However, this man is also regretting what he is doing, as he knows it is wrong, but continues with his plans of seeing the other woman. This story says a lot about the often stereotypical expectations of men and women in marriage.

The author of the story features a situation whereby it is a married man cheating on his wife. This promotes the stereotype that it is mostly men that cheat in marriages. The husband in this case is the object of betrayal. The author allows the reader to view the thoughts and feelings on the side of the cheating husband, as he is shown to feel guilty of the affair. For instance, when the cheating husband was waiting for his lover, Sarah, in the café, he was hoping that she did not show up, as deep inside him, he felt he was doing wrong. He expressed this feeling of guilt by saying, “ How strange” (Vivante 2). Because of this, the story seems to go against the standard stereotypical gender role in adultery. Ideally, in a situation where a person feels guilty for betrayal or cheating, like in this story, it is stereotypical for a female character to play the role.

At the story’s conclusion, when the husband is with his lover, he keeps thinking of his wife. This represents double irony, as he cheats on both his lover and his wife. He thinks about his wife doing the can-can dance. His reactions to this can be considered to represent the male nature. He hopes for Sarah to be absent during the date, but continues to wait for her. Additionally, he has sex with someone he is not supposed to, but in the

process, he thinks of his wife, and is attracted to her. This shows this husband is confused and does not know what he wants. This can be considered to be stereotypical of males in society, as most cheat on their wives yet they are not ready to let go of them.

Overall, the aspect of gender criticism has played a major role in examining how the concept of gender has influenced the way this story was written. This has also made an important contribution to the revelation of different themes in the story. Using gender criticism, it has been possible to see how the story reveals some of the stereotypes that are linked with the male and female genders in society. These also include the expectations that have been socially constructed for men and women in the marriage institution. However, the story also manages to go against the standard stereotypical gender role in marriage when the stereotypical expectation of one gender is put on another gender. Nonetheless, gender criticism has been key in examining the writing and reception of this story in the context of gender roles.

Works Cited

Vvante Arturo. "Can-Can" PDF.