

Questions about justice in a jury of her peers

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A jury of Her Peers is one of Susan Glaspell has been one of the best-known novels alongside *The Glory of the conquered*. This short story is inspired by the Hossack's case where Margaret Hossack murdered her husband and was sentenced to prison, however, she was realised due to the insufficient evidence. The John Hossack case was never solved. The transformation of the real case into fiction is really interesting, the way she liberally supplies the missing evidence and motive in the story, and as a result, it with the characters, the search for evidence, the crime and the judgement gives a different way of viewing the situation. The books bring a lot of questions about justice and about judgement and punishment. It also brings the question about deception and loyalty between men and women that counterbalances law and justice.

In the story, there are many definitions of justice which opens up the possibility of more than one crime in the story. The strangling of John Wright is taken as revenge by Minnie Wright, she wants vengeance which is a more apparent view of justice compared to Mrs Hale's proposal. " Oh, I wish I'd come over here once in a while! ...That was a crime! That was a crime! Who is going to punish that" (p. 159, line 23-24). She suggests that she may have contributed to Minnie's abandonment. That shows another level of subjectivity which creates another form of justice by the women. They try to protect Minnie from guilt although they find out she is guilty of loneliness and abuse which is not viewed by the American legal system that is created by men, so they do not see these problems as crime, or even as legitimate reasons in order to take them into account in their analysis.

The men want foreseeing evidence where as Mrs Peters and Mrs Hale want to find clues to explain the crime. They discuss Minnie's past and they sympathise her past so they decide to build a puzzle for Mr Wright's murder which gets the men deceived, especially Mrs Peter's husband who is the sheriff. Because the men are reluctant to consider the fact the quilting, the preserves, and the stove are incriminating details to the crime. For instance, the idea of women using sarcasm to convince the men that trifles are important " The law is the law and a bad stove is a bad stove"(p. 153, line 3). Their deception shows loyalty to another woman instead of their husbands. After the men have searched the premises, they cannot make a decision. At the end, Mrs Peters tells that " a sheriff's wife is married to the law". When he asked if she sees it that way, she replies " Not-just that way".

The men investigating the crime are unsuccessful in finding incriminating evidence that would have caused Minnie to kill her husband because they are in the unfamiliar territory. The division between public and private life is clear. The women remain isolated in a private sphere subjugated as housekeepers, and the men are required to function as breadwinner. Women did not have knowledge of male's practices such as business, as well as men who have no knowledge in housekeeping. The realm of the kitchen is strange to the sheriff and other males that do not have the same understanding that women have. To the men, dirty towels is a sign of sloppy housework, but the women know that housekeeping is difficult, and the sign of dirty towels, broken jars, and hard work during the summer shows that Mrs Wright could not finish her tasks due to her profound depression at the time. Because the

men are unfamiliar with women's work, the men are quick to dismiss it and would not take it into consideration in their investigation.

Whilst Mrs Hale and Mrs Peter walk around the house Mrs Peters noticed that " All the sewing has been nice and even, but one and says she did not know what she was about" (p. 154, line 11-13). This quote refers to one of the important symbols which is the " quilt". The quilts represent Minnie's life. All of the quilts were neat and sewn properly except one, this shows that from the outside her life was neat, but the inside is made literally of scraps. When John killed the bird, it was Minnie's last bit of personality that she held for herself. She was angry, bewildered and did not know what " she was a about" The question that is posed for Minnie is whether she "quilts" or "knots it". She had to decide between quilt which means she had to live the rest of her life in pain, or she would knot meaning she would change her life for better.

Given these points, we can see that justice opens doors for more than one crime. The American legal system which created by men does not approve the fact that a Minnie is guilty of loneliness and abuse. Mrs Hale and Mrs Peter try to convince the men that trifles are legitimate evidence, although they do not get much recognition due to their role in society. They hide evidence from the men so they would understand that justice should be served even if they are different because obviously men do not have the same understanding as women do which results the men not finding any evidence that could solve the crime.