

Henrik isben: a doll house



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

A Doll House by Henrik Ibsen Norwegian nineteenth century playwright

Henrik Ibsen was stirring the waters in many ways with his seminal work A Doll House. He fills his play with a realism never seen before and thus many people didn't know how to react to a topic that everyone can relate to, such as the role of a women in the home. The women of A Doll House have a responsibility and personal power that was not seen any where in the 1800s. Nora, Mrs. Linde, and the nurse Anne-Marie all show an uncommon power because they realize that they have the power to help the situation around them and take the responsibility to do what they can, no matter what the sacrifices may be. At the start of the play, Nora Helmer is presented as a sweet innocent, little women who cares more for material goods than most anything else. Little by little, Nora reveals through conversations with the other characters that she is more than just the average careless giddy house wife that audiences are used to seeing presented in the theater. To prevent the death of her newly acquired husband she takes out a loan from a mystery lender (who turns out later to be an employee of her husband) that requires her to pay back the amount in a 7 year period. Not only is it illegal for women to take out loans without the permission of their husbands at this point in time, but Nora forges her dying father's handwriting to attain the loan. While on the trip to Italy for improving Torvald Helmer's health, Nora's father's health gives out and he dies. Effectively, Nora sacrificed her father and her dignity for her husband. Acting so brashly as she did is to lose your honor and dignity, for only those women without a husband or cultural outcasts dared handle money matter. She also risks losing her husband if he found out he had to depend on a women to save his life. Her husband is not the only one that Nora makes sacrifices for. After Torvald finds out about the

loan he ferociously bellows at Nora that " the ends do not justify the means" and then reneged it when he gets a letter saying there was no longer a risk to his honors, Nora finally sees the light about her situation with her husband and decides that she must leave for her own good. She has three children with Torvald and she must sacrifice them as well for her own well being. She feels that for the sake of the children she must not be an influence on them at all, she must leave them to sever the destructive line that flowed from her father into her and possibly into them as well. Nora says through it all, it was love that drove her, but her husband refuses to believe that anyone would give up honor for love, to which she replies that millions of women do it all the time. A fitting way to clarify the sacrifices that all women go through for the sake of their husbands. Some of those millions of women besides Nora can also be found in the play. Mrs. Linde also sacrificed the love of her life, the poverty-stricken Krogstad, to marry a financially secure man. She loses her happiness because she has a sick mother that needs tending as well as her two younger brothers need to be provided for. Though most of Mrs. Linde's situations are in contrast to Nora's (like money or work), she does share a sacrifice for her family to show the fact that women all over the world may differ, but they all have to make sacrifices for their respective families. The nurse Anne-Marie also had to sacrifice for her family, this time for her daughter. She had to leave her only child behind and move in with Nora when she was little in order to financially provide for her daughter. She gives up a happy life with the fruit of her womb in order to sustain her. This is the plight of women in the Nineteenth century. Restricted to their households, they began to break out of their finely constructed molds until

they could no longer be ignored, Henrik Ibsen shows the hardship that women must bear in his influential play *A Doll House*.