

Nora in a doll's house: behind gendered lines

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In classic Victorian marriages, the prevailing norm stereotypes roles in marriages that typify the male-dominated society classic of the era- women serving as decorations or as we know it today, trophy wives, to successful men.

This prevailing status quo is what the society in Europe particularly Norway where *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen was set, sees as the order it needs to be free from confusion and disarray that could threaten the very foundation of the society.

Nora is the personification of an emancipated female in that era- at first, the picture of an obedient wife whose very existence revolves around her husband but in the end, showing that women are not dolls who can be bribed to be the kind of persons their husbands want them to be. Nora therefore represents the modern-day empowered woman- strong, perceptive and willful to find her own happiness.

II. Thesis

This paper argues that human rights entail a dynamic reorganization of society and its norms fuelled by both men and women alike. First, women like men are subjected to stereotyping of roles that defines their roles that they may not like.

Nora and Torvald are both trapped in their roles. Second, it is the degree to which women and men embrace the deception and forgery that signifies their willingness to be emancipated. By the latter part of the discussion, it is evident that Nora had recognized her need to find herself and be educated in order to educate others and live happily free from deception. Third, women's

rights are human rights because in the process of liberating women, men are also liberated.

III. Introduction

In Victorian times, the very concept of women's rights is revolutionary and appalling. A Doll's House represented what most women in Victorian era in Europe experienced- though they were not subjected to harsh working conditions or sexual abuses, they are nonetheless abused (Coomaraswamy 16). However, to confine that it is only the women who are imprisoned in a world of lies and deception would be a gross misunderstanding of Ibsen's play.

This essay evaluates the classic play that disentangles the organization of European society (and most countries as well) to bring it into order. A Doll's House by Ibsen is critically analyzed on its perception of women's right vis a vis human rights and how it had been fuelled by disguise and forgery. Moreover, an evaluation on Act III particularly the virtues of idealism and cynicism will be examined in lieu with the central theme of women liberation.

IV. Nora in Ibsen's Play

First, let us start with the role of Nora and Torvald Helmer. In Act I, Nora comes home with Christmas shopping while her husband emerges from the study. Note that Torvald had called Nora a " little lark twittering" (Ibsen, pp. 2) and " little squirrel bustling" (p. 2) as a metaphor on how he had treated her in the whole play- a display and a doll that he can manipulate to whatever he wants to. Torvald by calling Nora such names establishes his authority within the family. Nora as his wife is his pet to whom he shelters.