

Journal of (the  
handmaid's tale) by  
margaret atwood



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of the of the The Handmaid's Tale Margaret Atwood's "The Handmaid's tale" is the story of a woman Offred who is being kept as a concubine in the totalitarian society of America. The story is set in the Republic of Gilead which has been formed after the dissolution of America. Male chauvinism is clearly visible in this society and so is the class system. From the babies that are born to the women living in the republic, everything has been divided into different classes. Margaret's main aim behind writing the story is to show the probable result of the attitudes and opinions held by the society. She has set up a society based on conservative beliefs such as restriction of women to their homes, and denying them the expression of freedom. Margaret has described the Republic of Gilead through the eyes of one woman and it is clearly evident that Offred does not have enough information about the on goings and this lack of information creates a far more dreading picture of the society in the minds of the reader. The society of Gilead that has been created is strictly divided into different classes. The commanders are at the supreme level and enjoy the utmost luxury and freedom while the women were treated with violence if they tried to raise their voice against the established system. Furthermore, they are treated like state property with their only purpose of living being reproduction. Margaret also draws attention to the problems that are engulfing the societies. One of her prime focus in the book is the infertility of women which is indeed an alarming issue in our societies. The increased dumping of chemicals in drinking water reservoirs and radiations from these chemicals have produced an adverse effect on the health of people and have resulted in increased incidences of infertility and deformed babies. Margaret, through her story has indirectly shown our reckless attitude towards the environment

and how it may lead to disastrous consequences. The society appears to be degrading women but there is also a positive side to it. Even though the women are not living a perfect free life, they are not teased on the streets and prostitution is less common and indeed protagonists of a totalitarian society come up with the same argument. Margaret Atwood, through her unique style has tried to warn the people of the outcome of the practices that are prevalent in the society as they could very well lead into the formation of ' Gilead'. She has raised her voice against the lack of respect that is given to the women in our society. The story presents a little different and stricter version of our society hence its genre cannot be classified as science fiction; rather it is a speculative fiction meaning that depending on the turn of events in the present world, the societies can take up the shape of Gilead. The handmaid's tale is truly a masterpiece which connects to its readers and incites them to rethink about the opinions and attitudes that are established in the society (Atwood). Works Cited Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale* . Anchor; 1st Anchor Books edition , 1998. Print.