

Women's oppression: a doll's house and death



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Women's oppression The two plays, *A Doll's House*, written by Henrik Ibsen, and *Death of a Salesman*, written by Arthur Miller, included the theme of women's role in society. Both plays depicted how the role of women in society at this time was. The women used for this theme in *A Doll's House* include Nora, Mrs. Lind, and the nurse. The female characters in *Death of a Salesman* are Linda, the woman from the hotel, and Mrs. Forsythe. In both stories, the female characters are given roles that are unequal to men.

In both plays, all women are treated unequally and are fighting to be equal in society, and some will go as far as to be prostitutes or even to give their children away. The author of *A Doll's House*, believes that women are treated poorly. Even though this is true, he does not say how to change this, instead he opens readers' minds to the oppression of women. His personal belief is that women were unable to conduct their own money, for which they needed the permission of the man who 'owned' them.

In result of this, single women were more free and had the right to the money they received. To show this, he creates the character, Mrs. Lind. The following passage is from Mrs. Lind: " My mother was alive then, and was bedridden and helpless, and I had to provide for my two younger brothers; so I did not think I was justified in refusing his offer" (Ibsen, 2). She is single and has the right to what she earns, but when she fails to earn money or get a good job, she is more prone to lose confidence, because she is single and has no one to push her.

Since she is single, she made a decision that would help her, but not necessarily make her happier. Mrs. Lind sacrifices the love of her life,

Sarasota, and marries a man who is wealthier. Another case that the author shows the struggle of females is with Nora. Nora sacrifices herself by borrowing money to help Dorval, and she loses the children she loves when she decides to pursue her own identity. Proving this point is the quote exclaimed by Nora: "How painful and humiliating it would be for Dorval to know that he owed me anything!

It would upset our mutual relations altogether" (Ibsen, 3). In this quote it is clearly shown how Nora cares for Dorval. No matter when it is, she will always defend her husband. The third female, the nurse, is also oppressed in society. She must give up her own children to look after other peoples' in order to make enough income. The author and many others realized that woman have no chance to advance individually. Instead, they are nearly self-sacrificial for their husbands and family. Females of this era live a life that society gave them.

In the second story, *Death of a Salesman*, The female characters have similar roles to those of the past story. Linda, is will's loyal and loving wife. No matter what, Linda is always there for her family. In this quote, it shows how much she supports her husband: "Wily, dear. Talk to them again. There's no reason why you can't work in New York" (Miller, 4). Throughout her marriage she has suffered through will's large dreams and self-delusions. Sometimes it seems as if she is "taken-in" by his dreams, but in other occasions it is opposite.

She helps wily despite his failures. Her role as a mother and women is to clean, cook, and raise her children. She is the most loyal person out of any

characters. She also cares for the relations of her husbands with his kids. While they are fighting, she insist that they get along and make up. Her role in society represents how Women were viewed. She works as society has always made her do so. The roles of the " hotel woman" and Mrs.. Forsyth are fairly different. Wily engages in an affair with a women in a hotel.

This is a disgrace to both his kids and Linda. This female is a more ashamed role in society. She represents women that would do anything for a slightly different role in society. She wishes to be more independent and less like Linda. The main role she has in this story is having an affair, which gives Wily a slight boost in confidence. Mrs.. Forsyth has a similar role. Happy and Biff, the sons of Wily meet two ladies in a restaurant. Mrs.. Forsyth and her friend are seen as prostitutes, because Happy continues to say that the ladies are " on call".

These two ladies searched for Independence and the only way this was possible was through prostitution. The author uses Happy saying that they are " on call" to show the society's negative appeal to women like these. Both stories, A Doll's House and death of a Salesman, have themes of woman's oppression. Both stories are representations of how women struggled during this era. Society has set a lifestyle for women to live and if they do differently then are not excepted. In these dramas, all women must make sacrifices o be excepted by society.

Either by giving up their children, borrowing money, marry someone they do not love, or being a prostitute, all women had to do whatever they could to stay alive financially. Both authors saw a problem in the way society forced

women into this lifestyle and they wrote stories like these to get attention on the subject. Works cited Ibsen, Henries. A Dolls House. Henries Ibsen play/drama:. N. P. Web. 07 Nov. 2012. ; [http://www. Radionuclide. Net/title/833/;](http://www.Radionuclide.Net/title/833/) Miller, Arthur. N. P.. Web. 1 May 2013. ; [http://www. Free-eBooks. Net/eBook/Death-of-a-salesman/PDF/view;](http://www.Free-eBooks. Net/eBook/Death-of-a-salesman/PDF/view;)