

# Women Identity in Henrik Ibsen *A Doll's House*

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Ibsen is often considered the greatest dramatist since Shakespeare. During his own life time, he was controversial but internationally honored writer who changed the direction of the modern stage. His realism and treatment of contemporary social problems have influenced many writers. It is now accepted that Ibsen's main concern throughout his career is an individual's need to be true to his or her own inner self. His plays have been explored from almost every conceivable critical standpoint. Like other great dramatists, Ibsen modifies the play formula for his own purposes.

Ibsen's play "A DOLL'S HOUSE" one of the turning topics of the day, women's place in society. Do they really know their identity? In this choice he was more influenced by his own conviction that the growing movement for the emancipation of women. The play was not written just to support or advocate feminism. His sympathetic attitude towards women was an off-shoot of his passionate belief in human freedom and to identify about herself.

This paper "A DOLL'S HOUSE" analyze the theme of the dependent women in this play. First I would like to discuss the following subject area. They are: female positivity; her economic and social dependence, and her dependence with her children. Ibsen argues that a dependent woman will be passive and unwilling to speak her mind. She will not try to understand the abstract reality of life, unless it contain to her life style at home. Instead she will let the title of her marriage suppress her. She will lose sight of finding her own dependence and instead becoming a doll living in a house. Nora the protagonist of the play plays and has such a qualities

At the same time there are equally obvious flaws of varying importance. There are several Sin against probability. The most prominent one is the personality of the heroine, Nora. Can so submissive a woman rebel against the male world and desert her husband? Where could she go? What could she do? What about the care of the children? To some extent, Ibsen has anticipated the objection by showing Nora's initiative in the original dealings with Krogstad, by Nora's carrying off many small deceptions of her husband, even by Nora's shifting of the blame for the macaroons to Christine. Nora emerges as a somewhat shifting of the blame,

not well suited to the picture of her husband has of her. Nevertheless the entire picture of Nora shows out her outburst. In truth, Ibsen, in this play, tries to probe the true value of the man-women relationship in of its most intimate forms, namely marriage . in the marriage how she lost her identity and the struggle faced by her and how she came to find her identity's pointed out by J.Larvin, the play does not concern with feminism as much as it concerns with those ethical and spiritual factors without which marriage remains a mere living together.

A woman cannot be herself in modern society. It is an exclusive male society, with laws made by men and with prosecutors and judges who asses feminine conduct from a masculine stand point. There are two kinds of moral laws, two kinds of conscience, one for men and one for women .They don't understand each other but in practical life, women is judge by Masculine law, as though she weren't a women but a man. she has committed forgery, and is proud of it; for she has done it out of love for her husband to save his life ,but this husband of hers takes her stand point, conventionally honorable, on the side of the law, and sees the situation with male eyes. Weighed down and confused by her trust in authority, she loses faith in her own morality, and her fitness to bring up her children. Bitterness. A mother in modern society, like certain insects, retires and died once she has done her duty by propagating the race. Love of life, of home, of husband and children and family.

Now and then as women do, she shrugs of her thoughts suddenly anguish and fear return everything must be borne alone. The catastrophe approaches, mercilessly in evitable. Despair conflict and despair

Right from the beginning the two women characters Nora Helmer and MRS. Christine Linde, sacrifices many of their own wishes and lost their own identity. Nora Helmer, the heroine of the play is the most complex character. She is pretty, young and attractive she has been married for eight years and has three lovely children. she is easily excitable and cheerful

Nora is a highly dutiful, loving and caring wife. She respects her husband very much She plays the skylark and squirrel to him for she wants him to retain his ego that he is the head of the family and she cannot do without him. She does everything to please her husband. It is her immense love for her husband and concern for his well being that makes her borrow money from krogstad without her husband's knowledge.

It is proved , from this play women play a bigger role in shaping men and taking care of the whole family through complete sacrifice and hard work and endurance. It is proved from the beginning of the play she did not borrow money for her own enjoyment but said as to finance the money to enjoy the money with trip to Italy. She did not reveal the secrets to anyone in the beginning and later revealed to Linde that it was krogstad who helped her to get money to recover the health of her husband Torvald . She was working hard to repay the money to torvald to repay the loan without involving her husband Torvald in this She doesn't want to disturb him.

Similarly, when things came worse and seemed to have hit a snag, when she was blackmailed by krogstad that her secrets will be revealed if she fails to convince her husband to retain him the back, she contemplated committing suicide. This was to show that she did not want her husband to sacrifice for her dead. the sacrifices women make despite their economic status in summarized with what Nora says in act 3.

“Although most men refuse to sacrifices their integrity,  
Hundreds of thousands of women have”(26)

Right from the beginning the two women characters Nora Helmer and MRS. Christine Linde, sacrifices many things in their life and their own wishes and lost their own identity for the sake of the family. Nora helmer, the heroine of the play is the most complex character. She is pretty, young and attractive. She has been married before eight years and has three children. She is easily

excitable and cheerful. Nora is a highly dutiful, loving and caring wife. She respects her husband very much she plays the skylark and the squirrel to him for she wants him to retain his ego that he is the hand of the family and she cannot do without him. She does everything to please her husband It is her immense love for her husband and concern for his well being that makes her borrow money from krogstad without her husband knowledge.

During her childhood days, she sacrificed her own wishes and got married to helmer according to her father's desire. She was being has a doll during her child hood days and even it continued to travel with her husband Torvald after her marriage, being as a doll. After getting married, she does not want to bother her dying father with the critical ailment of her husband's requiring an years stay in the warm country in the south. so she forges her father's signature in the bond to krogstad. she borrows money secretly as hr husband is dead against borrowing. She knows that her husband's self respect will not allow him to avail a loan to go to the health avail a loan to go the health resort. She cannot tell him that he would die if he is not taken to some warmer region as the doctors had advised not to do so. In keeping the loan as a secret, she has to face the threatening of krogstad and sage has to work secretly to earn money to play the installments

Nora never tells her husband that it was she who saved his life, because she knows if she tells him about her forgery she had done would blame himself and ruin his future In order to prevent that she even thinks of committing suicide .But in the end, Helmer who comes to know about Nora's forgery insults her and treated her very badly. Nora in the end saw a base reality of her life. She understands the selfish nature of her husband and realizes that she has lived with a stranger for eight long years. She decides to break all her marital ties with him and walks out of his house in quest of her identity. Nora realizes that she has been dishonest to herself. She is not content with being a mother And a wife. Nora needs to become a full individual, so she leaves her husband, slamming the door to follow her own identity, and her own destiny.

Coming to MRS. Christine Linde, she too sacrificed her life and her wish to take care of her parents. She was the school mate and friend of Nora. After several years she came to the town where nora lives and meet her. Christine is the former lover of krogstad. But she gave him up and married MR.Linde,a rich man, though she did not love him, because she was in need of money, to look after her bed-ridden mother and to support her two young brothers. Christine lost her husband and she became a young widow. Now her mother also died and all her two brothers were standing on their own legs. She comes to see Nora , hoping to get her job in her husband's bank.

Nora takes Christine in to her confidence and reveals her past to her. Christine is not jealous of Nora's happy lot. She gives her valuable and guides her properly, Christine is practical, honest and open in her dealings. She faces life boldly and advices nora to be open and honest to her husband. For the welfare of Nora, Christine decides to marry nills krogstad,although she knows about his shady past. She was ready to work for him and be the mother of his motherless children. Krogstad happily accepts her and on one condition , Christine made to promise not to disturb nors's life again by blackmailing her and not to enter her life again. But she advices him not to withdraw his letter of exposure of Nora's forgery to torvald,as she wants torvald to know the truth, so that there will complete understanding between the couple.

In this play "A DOLL'S HOUSE" Nora was affected by many incidents than Christine. Both sacrificed their desires and got married with different person's according to the words of their parent's. Both ladies' lost their identity and trying to find it out. Nora from the beginning she was a good daughter, loving wife, self-sacrificing, impractical and unworldly. She was an emancipated woman.

But none of these qualities worked out her endurance made her to burst out finally. She breaks the conventions of pseudo marriage and fragile domestic set up which does not offer any promotion

for the individuality of a woman, became a symbol of female revolt against a male domination. The step taken by her is a trumpet call for the women of the day to raise the banner of revolt to fight for their just rights

Finally Nora rises up and says that then she understood that she has been living with a stranger for eight long years and has born three children for him. She feels like tearing herself into bits for having committed such a blunder. So she walks out of his house, slamming the door and goes out in quest of her identity

In spite of the pressure of social and economic determinism, both MRS. Linde and Nora in their totally opposed ways, make conscious and responsible choices about the future lives as a result of painfully acquired experience. In both cases their future lives will be filled with problems. MRS. Linde as a step mother, married to a social outcast and Nora, fending for her as a dangerous divorcee to be kept away but both women have demonstrated their ability to face up to difficulties and seek for authentic solutions.

In the end Nora busted out and uttered can I never be anything more than a stranger to you?

Nora continued her speech, to be able to be free from call to be able to play and romp with the children, to be able to keep the house beautifully and have everything just as Torvald likes it. And that was the old before me, but now I must wake up my mind which is right society or I?

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