

# Feminist Analysis of Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*

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## Abstract

This article focuses on the attempts to give a feminist analysis in Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. Henrik Ibsen (1828 – 1906) is beyond doubt a major 19<sup>th</sup> century playwright. *A Doll's House* is a representative feminist play. This paper deals primarily with a desire of a woman to establish her identity and dignity in the society governed by men. *A Doll's House* is a blooming field for feminist criticism. Feminist critic has seen Ibsen as a social realist and a revolutionary thinker. This research it is found that Nora is positioned as private and domesticated woman. Nora is introduced as the weak, stupid, and dependent wife. Finally this paper it will show the system of marriage norms, fighting for individual identity and their freedom, in addition protesting to all restrictions in society with a deep analysis of character in *A Doll's House*.

**Keywords:** Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll's House*, Loss Identity, Freedom, Feminism Role, Individuality, Male-domination, Woman Struggle.

Literature reflects and expresses the life, the social condition in society to represent the community, the era and also describing the elements of society that occur toward men and woman are quite interesting because it presents at the order of life both of them socially and culturally.

*A Doll's House* is not only one of Henrik Ibsen's famous plays but also a great contribution to feminist literature even through the characters does not seem very outstanding at first sight. Usually a lot of credit and attention is given to the protagonists, Nora, who is more or less the epitome of a modern woman when it comes to choice and behavior by the end of the third and final act.

This paper will also analyze how Ibsen's female characters do not absolutely fit into any of the main stereotypical images of woman in literature as the angel in the home or the mad woman in the attic. Furthermore, it will explore how Ibsen challenged the public or private split of society. The transformation of Nora's images was noticed that change from Nora from doll like puppet. Nora is seriously thinking her identity. Nora realizes that woman allowed finding own particular identities.

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Another aspect of the play is the feminist point of view of economic condition. The woman was not allowed to work even if she wants to work. She had to depend upon her husband only after marriage. Before marriage woman has to depend upon father only. The work of earning money was assigned to man. Man is a master and protector of his family. On the one hand, Nora is an uneducated, materialistic woman. On the other hand, she is an independent and bold woman. She has to work to save herself and her family. Nora is a dynamic character because her character develops.

In *A Doll's House*, Nora struggles for her own right that is not given by her patriarchal system, but must struggle by her own. Nora has saved her husband life from serious illness. She thinks that a wife can do anything to save her family life. Nora also does not believe that she has no right to save her husband's life.

Feminist perspective has formed to figure out that women's position is equal as men. Women have their rights to get equal position as men in many aspects. Nora represented an equal position as woman and man who both of them are the human being without any differences. In the drama, woman's position is also presented by Mrs.Linde. She has a figure of having work hard for her family. Women's position is not determined from biologically, they can access the same status as men in terms of citizenship. Both of them have a right to develop themselves. Women's position is raised when they can challenge to authority, so the social status might make optimistic about possibility of realizing sexual equality in the world.

Finally Nora leaves Torvald and her family. It is the symbol of Nora's freedom and her effort to fight against the patriarchal system. She gives back her ring to Torvald and slams the door. It becomes the end of her marriage. Henrik Ibsen opens the way for women to fight the men's domination. Because of their condition, women struggle to grab their own right by rebelling against patriarchal society. In the drama Nora seems to be a symbol of feminist fighter who fights against the construct that woman is always weak, dependent on men and incapable to do something. Nora bravely breaks the type of women's position, role, right, and participation which are categorized by patriarchal society. *A Doll's House* awakes the women's spirit to go forward and do activities based on their abilities. Thus, Nora Helmer struggles of her patriarchal society for her right to be categorized as a feminist attitude.

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