

Feminist Writing

Trifles

-by Susan Glaspell

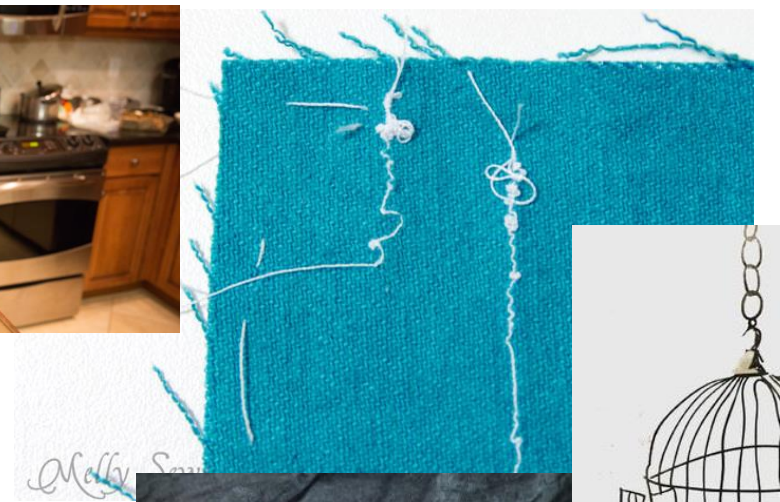


Susan Keating Glaspell

- 1876- 1948
- American playwright, novelist, journalist & actress
- 9 novels, 15 plays, biography & many short stories
- Explores social issues in her writing
- Pulitzer Prize for her drama “Alison’s House”
- ‘the first lady of Ame drama’ ; ‘Mother of American Drama’

Trifles

- Based on a true event
- Mystery of a farmer's murder
- Wife suspected and in custody
- Five people investigate Wrights' household
- Men ignore the kitchen & women; search upstairs room & barn
- Mrs. Hale & Mrs. Peters find evidence- quilt, cage, dead bird
- Women understand the mystery of the murder; oppression & trauma experienced by Mrs. Wright
- Women hide the evidence from the police.



Themes

- Patriarchal dominance
- Oppression of Women
- Gender roles/ Stereotyping
- Female Identity
- Loneliness
- Justice
- Women Solidarity



Patriarchal dominance:

- Patriarchy- social system based on patriarchal ideology in which men hold-power, authority, control, leadership & privilege
- Male dominance, Male centeredness
- Patriarchal ideology justifies the dominance & attributes it to difference between men & women.
- Women and their potential are underestimated
- Primary cause of oppression of women.

- In the play, men ignore women, their possession, conversation, household work as Trifles
- Women are kept under the shadow of their husbands.

Oppression of Women/ Gender Oppression/Sexism:

- Unjust treatment or the use of force... (in the name of Culture)
- Preventing others from being free or equal
- Male- dominant
- Women- inferior, subordinate
- Women treated like, a child or property
- Gender stereotyping, assigning gender roles
- Opposite of oppression is Liberation, Equality

(voting rights, dowry, reproductive function, unequal pay, property rights, gender specific language)

Gender Roles:

- Set of behaviours & attitudes considered acceptable, appropriate for a person based on their biological sex.
- Set by cultural norms
- Generally based on masculinity & femininity
- Men viewed as protector, provider; women viewed as caretakers of home & family (pretty, not too smart, not too outspoken)
- Influence a person's choice of dress, education & profession, relationships
- These roles are often seen as oppressive
- Individual may face negative consequences when violating these roles
- In Trifles, men comment on the untidiness of the kitchen & of Mrs. Wright. Mr. Wright is seen as a respectable man.

Thank You!!