

Self-Denial and Forceful Social Engagement in Ibsen's Hedda Gabler and Strindberg's Miss Julie¹

Zaid Tayyeh Mohammed, Ahmed Kadhim Jassim
General Directorate of Education in Najaf / Ministry of Education, Iraq.

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ABSTRACT

Feminism began to be visible in some writers' works in the latter half of the 20th century, despite neither being present nor being represented in the works of western academicians and writers. With a little care and examination, we may understand the feministic features of these works, even though we cannot talk with clarity about the characteristics of feminism in this work. Feminism can be seen as the outcome of Western society's brutal treatment of women's rights. Similar to this, the psychoanalytic theory deals with questions about the world surrounding one's own past and can be seen as a relationship with one's own past that has no rational component.

A significant Norwegian playwright, theater director, and poet of the 19th century was Henrik Johan Ibsen. He is regarded as "the father of realism" and is credited with founding modernism in theater. In reality, these two ideologies are fairly evident in the plays by Ibsen and Strindberg. Henrik Ibsen, a Norwegian playwright, is the author of the first, Hedda Gabler. It was published in 1890 and had a poor reception at its German premiere in 1891, but it has since come to be regarded as a masterpiece of realism, nineteenth-century theater, and international drama.

Johan August Strindberg, a Swedish playwright, novelist, poet, essayist, and painter, is another author. Strindberg was a prolific author who frequently drew on his own experience. Over the course of his four-decade career, he produced over 60 plays as well as more than 30 books of fiction, autobiography, history, cultural analysis, and politics. Miss Julie, an 1888 realistic play by August Strindberg, is the play that is appraised in this category. It takes place on a Swedish Count's estate on Midsummer Eve. In light of feminism and psychoanalysis, this essay examines self-restraint and assertive social involvement in Ibsen's Hedda Gabler play and Strindberg's Miss Julie.

Keywords: *feminism; psychoanalysis; forceful social engagement; Hedda Gabler; Miss Julie; Ibsen; Strindberg*

DEFINITIONS OF THE KEYWORDS:

A- Feminism: The Latin root of the word "feminism," which originally meant "the taken woman," is a French term. The Latin phrase *Femininus*, which translates to "the taken women," is the source of the descriptive terms *Feminine* in English and *Feminin* in French. "Women rights support," "the women freedom movement," "women self-respect," "women freedom," and other phrases have counterparts in Farsi.

Authors haven't offered a singular, exclusive definition of feminism. Some of them think that because it is not a cohesive movement, it is impossible to present a unilateral definition for this school of thought. According to them, despite the fact that all feminists share the same perspective on the plight of women in society and the need for action to secure their freedom, there are some fundamental differences among them regarding the causes of discrimination and sexism toward women (Wallace & Abbott, 2014).

There are two core beliefs associated with the term "feminism." First, because of their gender, women are in disadvantaged situations, and second, such disadvantaged situations need to be eliminated. A feminist is someone who holds the opinion that "women are discriminated against due to their gender. Women have specific needs that have

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been disregarded and unmet, and to address these needs, significant and fundamental changes in the social, economic, and political systems are needed (Heawood, 2000).

The supporters of feminist debates point out the diversity and abundance of this movement, but they also insist on its globalization. Only by establishing the bare minimum of feministic preparations as shared elements across all feministic trends, all nations, and all cultures, or by presenting one feministic trend as an international version, can the vision of feminism globalization be realized (Matthews, 2008).

Based on this, a broad definition that includes both concepts can be provided. In an effort to achieve social, political, and economic equality with men, feminism is a movement or awareness.

However, different feminisms address the disparities, oppositions, intolerance, and criticisms among its adherents. The most harmful and retarded of them all is radical feminism. Despite the need to critique other trends, radical feminism is the most important one. It took extensive research in noetic fields like ontology, anthropology, epistemology, and others to critique this movement.

Fundamentally, radical feminism was founded on the freedom of women; as a result, those who adhere to it are on the right side of history (Reid, 2005).

The feminist movement holds a unified perspective on every facet of human existence. This movement recognizes the suffering and degradation of the planet caused by men's historical oppression of women and seeks to do away with men from all spheres of society, despite the fact that a sustainable life cycle depends on social interaction and exchange between men and women.

Therefore, the greatest error of such feminists is to ignore the fact that men and women play complementary roles to one another in life and do not necessarily have any special superiority over one another (Watkins, J., 2005).

Liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, existentialist feminism, psychological feminism, homosexual feminism, and biological feminism are some of the major trends in today's feminism movements.

Men's efforts to uphold the status quo of the patriarchal system, for example, are included in the psychological feminism index. Some women, however, are against this system and connect men's use of this approach to their "fear of death" and "the dual relation of child with mother."

They hold that women lack this phobia or have less fear than men because of their ability to reproduce, whereas men are believed to have a fear of death because it puts an end to all of the individual moral and living challenges and he is actually hunted by this phobia. Their awareness of their mortality motivates them to dominate women and acquire power.

Men also attempt to acquire patriarchal rights, watch and rule over women's bodies, and envy the crucial role that women play in fertility. It is well known that when this occurs, sons adopt a dual posture toward their mothers or teachers. He or she depends on the mother while growing up in a patriarchal culture, so hate and love, need and dependency are among those senses that are raised with each other equally. As a result, the male child separates themselves from their feministic identification immediately and looks for a woman to own her in adolescence. (pin,2007).

Three major and well-known viewpoints that are emphasized on "sexual divergence," "sexual inequality," and "sexual cruelty" are the most significant ones among the various feministic theories; each of them has been formed in consideration of the particular social environment of expertise and the adherents. Feminism is said to present women's issues through these two aspects. One of the key theories on which concepts like divergence, inequality, and cruelty were built is the pathological approach. The feminist viewpoints have been widely reported in the media on topics like how westerners are oppressing women, how their rights are being violated, how feminist movements are presenting new definitions of family, partnerships, and mother roles, and how norms and traditions are being revised.

Numerous sciences, including social science, sociology, anthropology, political ideas, psychology, psychoanalysis, philosophy, epistemology, ethics, law, and other fields like aesthetics and art, literature, cinema, and other creative endeavors, have been greatly influenced by feminist efforts.

The analysis and criticism of feminism views in those pertinent sciences can be summed up in a few paragraphs, despite the fact that such influences have led to the creation of feministic artistic works in the related realms. Whatever the case, feminism theories generally lack a solid theoretical and scientific foundation. The feminists, however, have contributed a wealth of ideas and theories because they yearned for the practical and scientific theories like liberalism, structure-based socialism, and Marxism (Delacampagne, 2001).

B- Psychoanalysis

The Psychoanalysis Theory:

The psychoanalysis theory offers explanations for how the human mind works and how to treat mental illnesses. It is also one of the psychotherapy techniques. This theory holds that the majority of the time, the mental processes and the ways in which they are interpreted take place unconsciously. As a result, this theory necessitates precise and in-depth knowledge of the unconscious mind. According to Sadok (2013), the term "unconscious mind" refers to the unconscious portion of the mind that directs behavior. The mystery surrounding the human mind is revealed by this theory. To address queries about mental function, a psychoanalyst looks for the origins of human behavior and thought. He or she doesn't want to use psychoanalytic techniques to control one person. The psychoanalyst wants to confront the patient's disorder rather than ignore it.

The unconscious portion of the human mind is the origin of the deepest human tendencies. Unconscious inner tendencies, draws, and goals exist. When someone has an objective, they plan for it but struggle to understand why they are acting the way they are. These issues, however, are impersonal and beyond our control (Kodiver, 2002). Psychoanalysis is not just a form of therapy. As a result, it is regarded as the most practical method. Psychoanalysis is not a specific type of psychotherapy, and it fundamentally differs from all other forms of psychotherapy. In actuality, it is based on the principles of psychoanalysis and the connections between various human endeavors.

Then a person experiences neurotic headaches, depressions, or obsessions that alert them to a problem but which they are unable to identify on their own, they seek help from a psychoanalyst. In other words, the person is unable to identify the cause of their suffering. A psychoanalyst and a regular person are only distinguished by the fact that the former is completely aware of the mechanisms by which patients explain their pains by connecting them to gastrointestinal sensitivity, stress-related stomach ulcers, or irrational anxieties. Patients who want to effectively forget their pains use these methods to conceal the true causes of those pains. To put it another way, they exert effort to block out their trauma (Kodiver, 2002).

According to psychoanalysis, there are three categories that can be used to categorize fundamental human traits. These categories are Id, Ego, and Super Ego, which are translated into Persian as human nature, self, and super self. All instinctive energies originate from Human Nature, which also refers to all naive, antisocial, and primitive tendencies that are unchecked and happen unconsciously. As a child's mind develops gradually and he or she learns that they cannot effectively satisfy themselves, the second part of human character, or "self," is formed to control their needs. While "human nature" and "self" can be distinguished from one another and have an impact on one another, in actuality, "self" is formed based on the child's experiences. The goal of "self" is to manage and guide human nature in order to satiate it. The term "Superego" resembles the word "Conscience" in some ways. The super ego develops as a result of social criteria introjection, which eventually directs the "self" toward mental processes on the inside.

These three groups' interactions lead to the development of human character. According to Procheska (2011), the self is created for satisfaction, the super ego for prevention, and the self for reactionary realism. In general, only the psychoanalytic approach has the potential to significantly impact modern psychologists' beliefs and methods. When you attempt to analyze the growth, character, and motivational elements, these issues even start to become more effective. The psychoanalysis theory and method still have a significant impact on various branches of psychology, despite the suspicion and criticism of some psychologists who question the scientific validity of these theories. We can, however, assert that there are currently multiple psychoanalytical approaches available. Various methods have evolved over the years (Freud). These days, a lot of researchers examine this theory and its methods. Even Freud modified his original beliefs. Additionally, Freud's contemporaries Young, Adler, Rank, et al. changed the way analytical methods are organized. In actuality, they've put forth fresh ideas. "Modern psychoanalysts" are what Mohammadpour (2009) refers to as these psychoanalysts.

C- Forceful social engagement:

Forceful social engagements are when someone is required to adhere to social norms even though these norms and frames do not suit his or her natural and inherent tastes and needs. This phrase refers to the traditional role that women have to play, even though they do not want to, and which can lead to internal conflict, psychological issues, and performance issues.

D- Hedda Gabler

It would seem that Hedda Gabler gives us a specific example of "liberal tragedy," that genre in which the claims of an unconcerned individual are adamantly asserted against those of a conventional society (Williams, 1966 and 1971). Because it is extremely difficult for us to picture Hedda and Tesman as parents throughout the entire play. Hedda's inward conviction that they share nothing matches Tesman's naive assumption that they share everything (Hand, 2000).

E- August Stringberg

The Swedish poet, playwright, author, and visual artist August Strindberg was born in Stockholm in 1849. He portrayed madness as the pinnacle of tragic conflict, similar to Shakespeare. As a playwright, Strindberg blazed new paths by infusing his incisive personal experiences into his naturalistic and later expressionist plays, as well as his novel *Inferno*. He not only does not confine himself to a nineteenth-century ideal of an artist, but his portrayal of human existence makes his work timeless.

F- Miss Julie

A play called *Miss Julie* takes place in nineteenth-century Sweden. The play tackles controversial issues like class politics and sexual identity politics. Despite the advancements made in eliminating gender-based barriers, patriarchal inequalities still exist in contemporary society. These imbalances are highlighted by *Miss Julie* (Jain, 2015).

G- Henrik Ibsen

Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906) is one of the three great playwrights who are typically credited with creating what is now known as "modern drama." He is one of the founders of modernism in theater and frequently referred to as the "father of realism." According to Mirahmadi and Baradaran Jamili (2014), his realistic drama is well-suited to produce a representation and analysis of daily life.

THESIS STATEMENT AND RESEARCH MAIN QUESTIONS:**Research Problem**

In reality, psychoanalysis is the first instance of what has been repeating itself in the patient without ever having happened; it is the original scene that is sought after. Psychoanalysis is not the clarification of repetition; it is the repetition of a trauma of interpretation, such as "castration," "parental coitus," "the Oedipus complex," or even "sexuality," which is the traumatizing delayed interpretation of an event not as it actually happened but as one that never did. Psychoanalysis is the restoration of that interpretive infelicity, not as its interpretation but rather as its first and last act. The "primal scene" is not a scene but rather an interpretive infelicity that placed the interpreter in an impossible position. Only insofar as it perpetuates the discontent of things that never happened does psychoanalysis have any value. (Singh, 2014).

Entities can change their preferences by denying themselves and internalizing external morals and laws. Individuals will likely differ in their capacity to adapt their preferences, or to put it another way, in the costs of self-denial and internalization. 2008's (Klick and Parisi).

Along with Russian Anton Chekhov (1860–1904) and Swedish August Strindberg (1849–1912), Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906) is one of the three great playwrights who are typically credited with creating what is now known as "modern drama." He is one of the founders of modernism in theater and frequently referred to as the "father of realism." According to Mirahmadi and Baradaran Jamili (2014), his realistic drama is well-suited to produce a representation and analysis of daily life.

Even though Hedda Gabler lacks the true feminist characteristics and has a number of unfavorable aspects highlighted in her, Ibsen is a well-known feminist playwright. We should be warned against the temptation to turn the play into a "woman's play" by considering Julian and Hedda similarly. However, as the women who attended the 1890s matinees knew all too well, it would be foolish to deny that Hedda Gabler powerfully illuminates the plight of women. Hedda Gabler is not a "problem play [dealing with] essentially secular or political dilemmas," as Errol Durbach correctly claims (Moi, 2013).

It would seem that Hedda Gabler gives us a specific example of "liberal tragedy," that genre in which the claims of an unconcerned individual are adamantly asserted against those of a conventional society (Williams, 1966 and 1971). Because it is extremely difficult for us to picture Hedda and Tesman as parents throughout the entire play. Hedda's inward conviction that they share nothing matches Tesman's naive assumption that they share everything (Hand, 2000).

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We want to concentrate on the critical theories of psychoanalysis and feminism in these works (*Hedda Gabler* and *Miss Julie*) in accordance with the study's main objective. The focus of the paper is on self-denial and aggressive social engagement in the two plays mentioned.

These are the research questions:

How much of the elements of self-denial and forceful social engagement are discussed in Hedda Gabler's play?

How much of the self-denial and forceful social engagement components are discussed in the *Miss Julie* play?

From the perspective of critical theories, how do the themes of Hedda Gabler and *Miss Julie* relate to feminist and psychoanalytic concepts?

Main hypothesis:

- 1- There are observable elements of self-denial in plays.
- 2- Forceful social engagement elements are regarded as poor plays.
- 3- From the perspective of critical theories, the positions of feminism and psychoanalysis are more pronounced in the plays Hedda Gabler and *Miss Julie*.

Optional hypothesis

- 1- Satisfaction of social norms as a sub-variable of self-denial can be clearly seen in plays
- 2- Plays make clear the sub-variable of family satisfaction as self-denial.
- 3- Existential alienation can be seen in plays as a sub-variable of self-denial.
- 4- Suicide can be seen in plays as a sub-variable of self-denial.
- 5- Plays evince activity as a sub-variable of forceful social engagement.
- 6- Plays evince interaction as a sub-variable of forceful social engagement.
- 7- Social exchange can be seen in plays as a sub-variable of forceful social engagement.
- 8- Plays make clear the lack of compulsion as a sub-variable of forceful social engagement.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND NECESSITY OF RESEARCH

In 2010, Zahedi carried out a study titled "Typology of Henrik Ibsen's Doll House Play from Feminist Perspective." For the first time, the play was taken into account when writing this article. With the help of feministic critical theory, the current paper attempts to show that its claim is true. It also demonstrates how, when feministic theory is applied to the reading of a drama text, the typology that dominates literary theory and criticism can be changed and replaced.

In a study titled "Miss Julie: a psychoanalytic study," Jain (2015) aims to examine and reaffirm the dynamics of interpersonal relationships, which are still relevant today as they were in Strindberg's time.

He suggested using a psychoanalytic perspective to analyze Strindberg's play Miss Julie, which is set in nineteenth-century Sweden. This study used Freud, Melanie Klein, Lacan, Luce Irigaray, and other modern feminists to analyze the play in terms of issues of culture and the psyche. The sadomasochistic dynamic and the slave-master discourse are used in an analysis of the text. Miss Julie challenges the relationship between slave and master using this research.

The struggle for dominance and power is intimately connected to the unconscious sexuality theme. Watching or working on Strindberg's plays is like seeing the skin, flesh, and bones of life separated from one another, according to English actor and director Alan Rickman. both challenging and enduring.

In a study titled "A Post-feminist, Evolutionist Reading of Henrik Ibsen's A Doll's House," Finch & Park-Finch (2011) attempt to put Ibsen's play in a modern context by re-reading it from a post-feminist, evolutionist perspective, while acknowledging the play's original impact and significance in terms of women's rights and social restrictions in general.

When combined, these two viewpoints give the reader or viewer the ability to understand Nora as a person who was born into a rigid, hierarchical society and who adapted to it by coming up with survival strategies like flattery, deception, and denial.

This interpretation of Nora's situation and that of the other characters sees them all as interacting with and adapting to their environments in ways that aim to achieve the fundamental evolutionary needs of survival, reproduction, parenting and kinship, and group living. While Helmer, Mrs. Linde, and Krogstad have shown to be fairly successful in achieving these goals, I disagree that Nora is a martyr for womankind or a selfish hysteric (along with her praying for a miracle) are fallback mechanisms that frustrate Nora's and those around her basic evolutionary needs and run counter to the post-feminist rehabilitation of the woman as a housewife.

METHODOLOGY

This paper employs a descriptive-analytical methodology. The variables and the framework of the subject under study are both described using the descriptive aspect. This looks at societal social and public factors. In the analytical section, it is determined whether the aforementioned variables are present in the texts of Hedda Gabler by Ibsen and Miss Julie by Strindberg. In order to study the fundamental variables in the plays mentioned above, a set of components is then required displaying the studied parameters. Here, we want to talk about two crucial factors:

The first factor is aggressive social engagement. Forced social engagement can be defined as when someone is made to adhere to social norms that are at odds with his or her preferences and innate needs and desires.

The following table lists the critical elements of persuasive social engagement that should be examined in the texts above.

Forceful social engagement Variables	Activity	Interaction	Social exchange	Lack of compulsion
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One should investigate which texts within plays contain the aforementioned social and cultural parameters.

If we ascertain this and highlight the textual variables, we can then talk about the textual variables and confirm the thesis. The extent and impact of this concept can be examined within these plays if we take into account the aforementioned variables, which are subsets of forceful social engagement. Similar to this, a relatively distinct and clear definition of each variable (such as social) can be of great assistance in having a more accurate perception of their extent and influence. (Thomas 2012)

Self-denial needs to be addressed as well. First, let's define self-denial and go over its components and subsets.

Self-denial refers to the idea that one forgoes their own interests in order to follow the norms and interests of others, typically by ignoring their own needs, desires, tastes, and dreams or by violating their own rights.

One tries to draw attention to the narrative passages that emphasize self-denial. By figuring this out, one can determine which variable or aspect this concept can be found in. The extent of this concept's presence in the aforementioned plays can then be discussed.

Feminism can be described as a movement that has existed since the beginning of human comprehension and perception, despite not having a literary name. However, the 20th century is when the term is most frequently used. This idea focuses on protesting against patriarchy and defending the rights of women, which have been abused and neglected throughout history. The goal of feminists is equality in all facets and dimensions of society, including the social, familial, economic, and political spheres.

One can examine the variables of the two main ideas in this paper—forceful social engagement and self-denial—while also looking at the feministic elements of the text by keeping in mind the two main ideas that were previously discussed. Numerous aspects of these two ideas are linked to feminism, and one can gauge the extent of this viewpoint by looking at self-restraint and aggressive social interaction.

The critical feminism factors that should be examined in the texts above are shown in the following table.

Feminism Variables	Social	Politic	Cultural	Family	Economic
Rights					

One should investigate which texts in plays contain the aforementioned (social, political, etc.) parameters.

If we ascertain this and highlight the textual variables, we can then talk about the textual variables and confirm the thesis. The extent and impact of feminism within these plays can be investigated if we take into account the aforementioned variables, which are subsets of feminism. Similar to this, a relatively distinct and clear definition of each variable (such as social) can be of great assistance in having a more accurate perception of their extent and influence.

Psychoanalysis should be addressed in the same way. We should first define psychoanalysis and explain its components.

Psychoanalysis makes an effort to comprehend a person through their hidden personality. One does not only act with their conscious mind; a significant portion of their reactions also depend on their hidden, or unconscious mind. Perhaps a person's facial expressions are not as telling. To reach a conclusion, one should delve into the deeply hidden layers of the mind. Numerous factors, such as a person's background, socioeconomic status, and demographics, have an impact on their psychoanalytic stance.

One can determine the place and degree of psychoanalysis in the plays by looking at these factors.

Self-denial	Satisfaction of social norms	Satisfaction of family	Existential alienation	Suicide
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We research the psychoanalytic components of self-restraint and aggressive social engagement. We can examine these ideas using psychoanalytical variables if we can ascertain the existence and magnitude of these variables.

Psychoanalytical variables	Human attitude	Mannerism	Fantasy
free association	Dreams		

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH:

Since the main argument of this thesis will be based on Strindberg's *Miss Julie* and Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*, we want to evaluate the various aspects of four major theories—feminism, psychoanalysis, self-denial, and forceful social engagement—in these plays. Different objectives are based on various elements of the theories gathered in methodology.

We want to assess the various facets of four major theories—feminism, psychoanalysis, self-denial, and forceful social engagement—in these plays because the main argument of this essay will be based on Strindberg's *Miss Julie* and Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*. On various components of the theories gathered in methodology, various objectives are based on:

1. Examining literary examples of self-denial.
2. Researching the elements of obtrusive social engagement in plays.

OPTIONAL GOALS

- 1- Evaluation of the sub-variable of self-denial in plays: satisfaction with social norms.
- 2- Assessing family satisfaction as a playwright's self-denial sub-variable.
- 3- Assessing existential alienation in plays as a component of self-denial.
- 4- Analyzing suicide as a playwright's self-denial sub-variable.
- 5- Evaluation of activity as a component of coercive social engagement in plays.
- 6- Evaluation of interaction as a component of coercive social engagement in plays number six.
- 7- Evaluation of social exchange as a component of forceful social engagement in plays, item number seven.
- 8- Assessing the absence of compulsion as a component of coercive social engagement in plays.

CONCLUSION:

After conducting a sizable amount of research and reviewing prior studies, one attempts to evaluate the hypothesis put forth in the paper in this section. The primary elements of self-denial and forceful and social engagement in Ibsen's plays are discussed in the first hypotheses of this study. In the works mentioned above, social inequality and deficiencies that prevent women from participating fully in society are discussed. Similar issues are investigated in Strindberg's work's second hypothesis. One would assume that after conducting extensive research within the given scripts, the key elements in women's coercive social engagement would be quite distinct and obvious within these plays.

Following our study of the aforementioned plays and our review of the opinions of experts, we were able to determine their emphasis on the presence of some feminism and psychoanalytic layers. Similar to how we can expect these elements to appear in these plays in a bright and delicate way even though they are not particularly prominent within the text.

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