Realism In Drama Essay, Research Paper

Realism in Drama

Realism in drama is a kind of writing in which fictional events and people are presented in language that resembles everyday external reality and human experience. Realistic plays such as the drama, Trifles by Susan Glaspell reflect reality and are faithful to lived experiences. The experiences addresses are issues of values and morals held by the two different genders of males and females. The theme of the drama not only illustrates the differences between gender opinions but also describes the plight of a woman who is bound to break the chains of an abusive husband to become a better person. Glaspell attempts to achieve the maximum effect of emotions from the audience by addressing issues that the viewer or reader can identify with thus giving the drama a realistic quality. The literary techniques of characters and conflict utilized by Glaspell in the drama Trifles possesses a large amount of realism.

The characters portrayed by Glaspell can be considered realistic in many ways. The men in this play are portrayed with the usual stereotype of uncompassionate and cold hearted. The women in this play are depicted with the usual stereotype of weak and in need of constant care and attention. This aspect of the play not only adds to the realism of gender conflict it also adds to the plot development. For example, Mrs. Hale, one of the wives portrayed in the play, comes to the defense of Mrs. Wright when she states, No, [Mr.] Wright wouldn t like a bird a thing that sang. She used to sing. He killed that too (844). This example from the play illustrates to the reader the kinship that

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women feel towards each other as well as the lack of compassion that men feel towards women. The bird in this part of the play is utilized as a symbol of Mrs. Wright because it symbolizes to the reader the fragileness and sweetness of Mrs. Wright and how far Mr. Wright would go to kill the beauty of both the bird and Mrs. Wright. Another example from the play that illustrates realism through character interaction and stereotypes is the scene in which the women find the bird. The men in this scene view the women as somewhat naive to the situation therefore, they believe that the women in the play could never be able to add any crucial information to the investigation of the murder. This aspect proved to be greatly ironic because it illustrates to the reader that the men underestimate the women because they are the one s who found the evidence that is crucial to the investigation.

The conflict can be viewed by the reader as a realistic quality of the play. The conflict in this play is true to life because it portrays the plight of a woman trying to break free from an abusive husband. The fact that the play is about a murder is also a realistic quality because it is a subject that concerns everyday life. An example from the play that illustrates the realistic or true to life quality is the excerpt in which Mrs. Hale, one of the wives portrayed in the play, states, No, [Mr.] Wright wouldn t like a bird a thing that sang. She used to sing. He killed that too (844). This statement expresses the true feelings that Mr. Wright has toward his wife. It becomes evident throughout the play that Mrs. Wright is in desperate need to break away from her abusive husband. This example is realistic because the reader can identify it with a life experience that he/she has either witnessed or heard about. Another example from Trifles that illustrates the

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plight of Mrs. Wright is when Mrs. Hale states that Wright was close. I think maybe that s why she kept so much to herself and then you don t enjoy things when you fell shabby. She used to wear pretty cloths and be lively when she was Minnie Foster, one of the town girls singing in the choir (841). This example explains to the reader the changes that Mrs. Wright went through because of her abusive, restrictive husband.

The realistic aspects of the play Trifles by Susan Glaspell is evident through the utilization of the literary techniques of character development and conflict. The true to life realism that Glaspell used in this play allows for the reader to better understand the circumstances that surround the events prior to and after the murder of Mr. Wright. Through use of vivid details the reader was able to visualize the setting and the characters better. This play is superior to a non realistic play, such as Six Characters in Search of An Author, because the actions and the development of the conflict were easily visible to the reader or viewer. The issues illustrated in this play add to the realistic qualities because they are issues that are addressed in almost everyone s daily lives. All of these aspects give Trifles a realistic quality that make the play superior.