

## 19th Century Fiction: A Comparative Analysis of Women's Oppression in the Stories of William Faulkner and Kate Chopin

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### Abstract

The subjugation of women, especially in the nineteenth century, has been attributed to many factors, but culture in particular. Regarding cultural norms and customs, there is much to venerate, protect, and value. Some gender norms and attitudes, however, can be exceedingly destructive. People are undermined, dehumanized, repressed, and destroyed. This study focuses on harmful gender practices that marginalize women, such as widow cleansing and young female initiation. This study examines how Kate Chopin and William Faulkner depict the oppression of women in their works. The notion that men are superior to women can be traced back to profoundly ingrained patriarchal customs, beliefs, and behaviours, and it continues to influence contemporary women. Some individuals who believe they are essential and superior continue to uphold discriminatory gender norms. Various women's organizations in Victoria are demanding and seizing the right to speak out against these practices. Some have written or spoken publicly about them, shattering the oppressive silence. The progress toward equality in civil societies, led by women's movements and solidarity organizations, demonstrates the networking of women in the more institutionalized

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political and social fields. In this context, the study investigates the various forms of oppression women face, how cultural practices have facilitated or exacerbated this oppression, etc. These accounts demonstrate the courage of the women who ventured to articulate their suffering.

**Keywords:** Gender issues, women's oppression, feminism, inequality of women, female literature

## Background of the study

Both authors hail from the South, therefore their works highlight the challenges women faced in shifting political and social conventions during that region's history. Women who are "seen but not heard" are the focus of research in *An Hour*. It doesn't matter if the woman is a public merchant, a non-communicant, or legally separated in property; "the wife cannot plead in her own name without her husband's consent." Kreis I Another example of the Code Napoleon's many cases demonstrating women's lack of legal protections. After World War II, when most men were serving in the armed forces, women did not require men's approval to undertake the tasks they needed to do to survive. Chopin's short stories, written nearly 200 years ago, have a refreshingly contemporary feel. According to Chopin, "it is not always the case that a wife has to be submissive to her husband." He makes this point to demonstrate that women do not need men to be happy. The treatment of women in some relationships and in general culture is criticized. The declining prices of the 1930s South are also shown in *A Rose for Emily*. Emily Grierson was at her father's mercy for a whole three decades.

There has never been a viable solution to the issue of women's oppression. Women were always the property of men in ancient Rome and Greece. Women submit to the wishes of their husbands. Slavery of women is today's most pressing problem. Women are still subjected to poor treatment.

As defined by Merriam-Webster, oppression is "the power of authority that is unjust or cruel." Oppression, then, is cruel and unjust treatment of others.

According to Deutsch (2006, p. 10), "oppression is repeated, pervasive, and systemic injustice, such as slavery, apartheid, and the denial of the right to vote." The researcher concludes from this definition that oppression of women occurs when a person, in this example a woman, is treated unfairly with the intention of coercing her into doing something. Women are not afforded the same legal protections as men. A woman's psyche could be damaged by treatment like this. Oppression can happen anywhere, even in our own neighbourhoods. In the public sphere, women face disrespect. The husband's hitting, fronting, or slapping the wife is domestic violence. Abuse within a household is what we call it. Women face discrimination in many fields, including the legal system, academia, politics, society, and the natural and social sciences, as well as technology. Another kind of public violence against women is rape.

Injustice can take many forms, including those listed by Young (1990): violence, exploitation, exclusion, helplessness, and cultural imperialism.

Feminism fights for equality when women are victimized by men. Feminism advocates for gender-blind education that improves the lives of women. Feminism advocates for the investigation of and the development of remedies for the problems of sexism and oppression experienced by women. Science and literature have advanced in their understanding of women as a result of the feminist movement.

## **Introduction**

Feminism is a theory that promotes women's rights and argues that men and women should have equal access to the same opportunities and resources in the fields of economics, politics, and society. The movement for women's equality, which began in the latter half of the 18th century, was bolstered by the advancement of women's rights. These suggestions support the notion that women and men should enjoy equal legal rights. Feminists argue that throughout history, all women have been oppressed, regardless of factors such as ethnicity, gender, religion, caste, or sexual orientation. In other words, all women have experienced discrimination in some form. An important premise of this

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argument is that women have a natural sense of self-worth and confidence. Feminism supports a woman's right to know who she is apart from men and in her own right. The term "feminism" refers to an ideology that supports gender, ethnic, economic, cultural, and sexual equality. This ideology encompasses a vast array of other causes, including the struggle for civil rights. This protects women from patriarchal oppression and advances their economic, political, and sexual liberties.

A culture that cannot function without the audacity of black women muzzles their voices and limits their freedom of expression. Only those in positions of authority are able to construct conventional works of fiction, and white men have always held these positions of authority throughout history. The depiction of brutality that was shown to the women was perceived by the men as a justifiable source of amusement. Worse still, females were depicted as the inferior sex, an inanimate object that relied on males for everything. This perception of women reinforced the notion that males are superior. In most cases, males held the belief that women were unable to provide for themselves financially. Because of the pressure from their peers, they feigned to be of the "second sex" or the "weaker sex." They are depicted in an erroneous manner by the media. It is a central tenet of feminism to contend that the patriarchal system is not always to fault for unethical behaviour. The female authors have tried, through the perspectives of their female heroines, to address the challenges that women confront in today's society.

### **Problem of the statement**

Historically, women have been dehumanized. The Napoleonic Code states that men have authority over their spouses and that women have no authority. This paper examines "A Rose for Emily" by William Faulkner and "Story of an Hour" by Kate Chopin to demonstrate. The author's use of foreshadowing, symbolism, and the concealed meanings of character names renders both stories unexpected and hilariously satisfying. Both storylines emphasize the independence of women. Attempting to fit in, the primary characters struggle with their identities. Men's disregard for the protagonists exacerbates the problem. Stories are both similar

and unique. They disclose the theme of the story. This thesis compares two literary works.

### Research Questions

In order to depict how women's oppression is reflected in these stories, the problem statement is further dissected into the following research questions.

1. How is women's oppression depicted in *The Story of an Hour* and *A Rose for Emily*?
2. What are the indicators of women's oppression are depicted in the stories?
3. How the oppression of women varies in the stories of the same period?

### Objectives

- This research will contribute to the education of students in the English Department, particularly in regards to the study of feminism.
- The results of this study will increase the researcher's knowledge and the students' and general public's experience in literary studies.

### Significance of the study

This study is important both from a theoretical and a practical point of view. The goal of this research is to make a theoretical addition to the study of feminism in literature, especially when it comes to how women are oppressed and how they fight back. Its other goal is to give people new ways to look at the works of both writers. This study is meant to be a useful tool for people who want to do more literature research under the Feminist Umbrella.

### Scope and Limitation

This research is limited to the two short stories by the aforementioned writer: "Story of an Hour" and "A Rose for Emily." The focus of this analysis is on

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how the characters themselves and the authors describe the oppression to which they are subjected and how they respond to that oppression.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

**Women oppression:** It's just one form of patriarchal ideology or behaviour that's still widely practiced today. In an effort to deter other men from acting violently toward men who are unequal to them, men are using their authority to make and carry out acts of violence against women at this same time. They hope that by doing so, it will discourage other guys from engaging in similar behaviour. (Napikoski, 2020).

**Patriarchy:** According to Millett (1970), a sexual relationship is possible within a social order in which men dominate women. Any way of thinking that advances feminist ideals and tenets. It is a form of organization that is complex and sophisticated. Patriarchy, which is an organizational structure that emphasizes the power disparity between men and women, is a form of violence that was developed to maintain men in a position of power or dominance over women. (Facio, 2017).

### **Data Sources**

The data sources of this study are *Story of an Hour* by Kate Chopin and *A Rose for Emily* by William Faulkner.

### **Data Collection**

The researcher has a variety of tasks to complete throughout the data collection process. Reading the data sources to familiarize oneself with the stories and the information they include is the first step. The second step is to single out the evidence that shows how the characters were oppressed and how they fought back. The data can be communicated using words, phrases, or even full sentences. Data are then categorized as pertinent discussion depending on the topics identified in the study.

### **Data Analysis**

There are multiple methods that must be used to analyse the data. The first step is to sort through and organize all the evidence showing how women are oppressed. Events from the protagonists' perspectives were chosen for this analysis. In this way, the researcher might draw conclusions about the challenges the marginalized minority faces in its struggle against oppression. The next stage is to examine the information and create explanations based on the textual materials. Finally, the researcher will draw a conclusion based on the generated result.

### **Literature Review**

Women all around the world, in particular, have benefited from the renewed focus on gender equality that has emerged since the turn of the twenty-first century. Women are making inroads into traditionally male-dominated fields like security, delivery, driving, and architecture. This is an example of the way in which modern women are breaking down stereotypes. Unfortunately, a comprehensive assessment finds that patriarchy is still widespread, especially among the rural populace. Ningsih (2014) argues that women are socially viewed as subpar to men and hence are placed at the bottom of the social hierarchy. A remarkable amount of people, especially in rural regions, still hold to this sort of mentality as if it were a fundamental law, as will become clear when this topic is studied in depth.

Patriarchal ideology holds that only men can be really autonomous and powerful. Beyond that, it seems that women are seen as fragile beings that need men to shield them from the perils and uncertainty of this extremely dynamic life (Mandrastuty, 2010). This could lead to women's subjugation in the long run.

The most common effects of women's oppression, according to Yudi and Haryadi (2017), are sexual violence and the victim's loss of identity. Rape causes the victim undeniable suffering and, at times, melancholy. Moreover, rape has both mental and physical repercussions, as stated by Martin, Taft, and Resick (2007). The effects of a rape committed within a marriage are felt immediately and over time. Psychological repercussions of sexual assault include social anxiety,

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depression, sexual dysfunction, self-blame, low self-esteem, negative views about men and sex, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Several scholars have studied Kate Millet's radical feminist writings. Dina, Nuryatin, and Suseno's 2013 article "Representasi Ideologi Patriarki dalam Novel Tanah Tabu: Kajian Feminisme Radikal" is one such example. Both positive and negative connotations of authoritarianism are the focus of this research. These three scholars used a descriptive analytic methodology in their research. They concluded that violence, women's enslavement, and prejudice are all depictions of patriarchal ideology based on their research. Leaving home and giving up on the idea of marriage are two more forms of rejection.

### **Feminism as Literary Criticism**

"Feminism" comes from the Latin word for "woman," "femina," and the Greek suffix "-ism," which implies "a way of doing things or thinking" (Potter, 2017). Offen (1988) claims that the term "feminism" was first used by the French philosopher Charles Fourier and that it was taken from the French word "feminism." Feminism is a phrase that emerged in the 1980s. Something interesting and noteworthy happened this year. Women of varying economic and social statuses worked together during the time to better the lives of all women. At first, political leaders ignored this demonstration, but it gained traction and eventually became a movement (Knellwolf, 2001). The fundamental goal of this movement is to secure equal opportunities for women and men. Each of feminism's three major upsurges served its own unique goals and aims. Between the 1890s and the early 1900s, feminism saw its first major upsurge. In the early 1960s, the United States witnessed the rise of second-wave feminism. The third wave of feminism occurred in the 1990s and 2000s (Flouli, 2017).

The French Revolution sparked the first wave of feminism, which was led by women from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds and classes (Pranowo, 2013). Mary Wollstonecraft's "Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (1792) is an essential part of the earliest period of feminism. Wollstonecraft's "Vindication" paints a picture of the perfect lady. This is a shrewd, sensible, and financially free woman who also contributes to society in positive ways. She



thought that education gave women the power to change their own lives and provide their children a brighter future. She thought that women should have the same access to legal protections as men (Sanders, 2006).

## Oppression

Oppression is defined as "the power of authority that is unjust or cruel" by Merriam-Webster. To put it another way, oppression is the act of treating people unfairly and unjustly. Another meaning of "oppression" offered by Deutsch (2006) is "the repeated experience of widespread and systemic injustice, such as examples such as slavery, apartheid, and the lack of right to vote nor violent." The word "oppression of women" refers to the systematic use of violence and other forms of coercion to force a woman to comply with an authority figure's demands. Freedom, rights, and equality for women are not guaranteed under any conditions. This unfair treatment may cause the lady emotions of helplessness, sadness, or mental pressure. Violence, exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, and cultural imperialism are the five forms of oppression that Young (1990:45-56) defines and describes.

Oppression is defined as the abuse of power or authority for one's own or another's benefit (Louis & Dickson, 2018). One person or a whole group could be oppressed at the same time. Oppression is a harmful condition, as described by Cudd (2005). This is because an unjust burden has been placed on one person or a group of people. Any mental or bodily state can represent the actual harm. That is to say, physical and mental types of tyranny are the two most common. These two things are equally dangerous. When someone is oppressed materially, those in power take away from them physically, financially, or otherwise. In addition, when someone is subjected to psychological oppression, their oppressor intentionally harms or distresses their mental state. The term "oppression" is used here to describe any situation in which women are either the oppressors or the victimized. The term "oppression of women" is used to describe any sort of pressure or control exerted over women for reasons largely related to their gender. Individual acts of oppression are typically committed by men. Women's vulnerability to this type of violence increases when they are immigrants, are

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economically disadvantaged, or are members of a minority race or religion (Incite, 2005).

As in the public sphere, so in the domestic sphere, women can be oppressed. Harassment, assault, and family violence are all forms of the oppression that women face. Remarks, jokes, gestures, solicitations for sexual dates, and threats to women's mental or physical health are all examples of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is strictly forbidden. Sexual abuse is defined as any form of unwanted physical or sexual interaction between two people. This includes groping, assaulting, or otherwise inappropriately handling a woman's privates. Domestic violence is an oppressive behaviour committed by an intimate partner against their partner. There are five types of oppression, as identified by Young (1990). The terms "exploitation," "violence," "cultural imperialism," "marginalization," and "powerlessness" all refer to the same problems.

### *Research Methodology*

*This paper utilizes qualitative research in this work. Numerous academic fields, especially those concerned with social issues, make use of qualitative research. Both formal and material objects are used in the research. This inquiry concerns two stories mentioned above. The article on the subordination of women serves as the formal object of the investigation.*

### **Research Design**

This inquiry is an in-depth analysis of the piece of literature under scrutiny. A literary analysis, according to Dickinson (2020), is "an evaluation, comparison, or the attempt to elucidate literary works." The researcher tries to locate the topic of women's oppression in the text in order to complete the study. The specifics of Nuraeni's persecution, if any, will be underlined or expounded upon later. Because Kate Millet argues that patriarchy is the root cause of prejudice, her radical feminism theory was used in the process of data analysis. This means that

Millet's theory is relevant to the research being done. The researcher also delves into the uprisings that occurred in reaction to Nuraeni's rule. The combined findings from all of these analyses should make for a solid outcome.

### **Underlying Theory**

Here, the author explains how she used feminist philosophy to her assessments of those stories. Literary criticism informed by feminist theory or, more generally, feminist politics is called "feminist literary criticism." It achieves it by critiquing literary language using feminist ideas and values. The goal of this school of thought is to evaluate and define the ways in which literature conveys the story of masculine supremacy by focusing on the economic, social, political, and psychological forces contained within it. The goal here is to examine and detail how stories of male superiority are presented in literature. This manner of thinking and criticising has altered the canon of literature that is studied and taught.

### **Discussion and Analysis**

#### **Women in Chopin's Childhood**

Kate Chopin's formative years were influenced by a number of strong women in her life. When Chopin's father died in 1855, she was raised by her mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, who took turns providing for the family. Eliza O'Flaherty, her mother, just widowed, took over as executor of her late husband's large inheritance. She took on this challenge with gusto, and her results proved that she is more than up to the task. Chopin's mother inspired Louise's character in "The Story of an Hour" because she, too, wanted her own life after the death of her husband in a train accident. Writing "The Story of an Hour" in 1849, Chopin was just 21 years old. Because it would have been too painful for contemporary readers for Louise to live out the rest of her life as a happy single lady, Chopin may have premeditated her death at the conclusion of the work. Whatever the case may be, Chopin had a strong role model in his mother.

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Eliza, on the other hand, might use some work on her letter-writing skills. For instance, she often misspelled words. To make up for the failings of Chopin's mother Eliza, Chopin's great-grandmother Victoria Charleville ensured that her grandson received an excellent education. During their two years together, she taught Chopin the French language and made sure the young lady could read and write it fluently. Chopin received a full musical education from her, which included daily piano lessons. Chopin had a lifelong love of music early on in her development. Chopin's education gave her a sense of independence and autonomy that many women of her time did not have. She learned that most women, like herself, needed this freedom to fully establish their identities. This viewpoint is emphasized repeatedly throughout "The Story of an Hour." Louise has known for a long time that she has desired for freedom, but she has never allowed herself to feel it.

Chopin's fascination in storytelling can be traced back to Madame Charleville, who regaled her great-granddaughter with colourful tales of the family's past. Chopin's love of storytelling can be traced back to Madame Charleville's efforts. Chopin devoted her entire life to her love of storytelling, and as a result, she left behind a body of work that is both extensive and wonderfully created. This includes the novella "The Story of an Hour."

The nuns at Sacred Heart Academy provided much more than just practical skills training for Chopin's daughter. Chopin learned to think for herself and be a good wife from her sisters. Chopin and her fellow classmates received an education identical to hers, continuing the trend of smart French ladies. In addition to acquiring the crafts of weaving and embroidery, Chopin schooled himself in the fine arts, history, and the natural sciences. Chopin had a healthy respect for women as a result of the nuns' ardent devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The treatment of women is treated with respect in all of "The Story of an Hour." Louise's self-affirmation as a woman and the expression of her own identity are the most important components of her life, not her marriage or personal connections. Chopin argues that men and women are equally entitled to respect for, and celebration of, their unique identities.

## The Deep South

The protagonist of "A Rose for Emily," Miss Emily Grierson, was born in the midst of the American Civil War in 1861. Events in the narrative take place between the mid-1890s (when her father passes away) and the mid-1930s (when Emily passes away). The decline in her family's status is symbolic of the broader social and cultural turmoil that the Deep South experienced at the time. Because of the growth of Northern industry, more jobs and more money became available. However, despite a drop in income, the South has stuck to its agricultural roots. Since it was against the law for African Americans to possess property in the South, many of them were compelled to work as tenant farmers or sharecroppers and gave a portion of their harvests to white landowners. An increasing population planted cotton, which led to an overstock compared to demand and a subsequent price decrease, perpetuating poverty in the South. Jim Crow laws required racial segregation, and vigilante organizations in some areas utilized violence and intimidation to ensure compliance. As a result, tensions between different groups of people reached an all-time high.

Women's resistance to the 19th-century worship of domesticity contributed to rising hostility between the sexes. Many women nowadays are rejecting the traditional role of women in society, where they would be expected to stay at home and take care of their families, in favour of higher education. Others started campaigning for social issues including ending poverty, protecting children from abuse, and making workplaces safer. The push for women's suffrage gained steam. Many people worry that the loss of traditional American values is reflected in the growing number of working women. This was especially prevalent in the South, where ladies were expected to uphold the stereotype of the modest, morally upstanding southern belle.

### Characterization of protagonists

Mrs. Louise Mallard's marriage was very successful. Both she and her spouse gave off the appearance that they adored one another. As a good wife should, she performed what was expected of her and respected her husband's

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wishes. Louise, on the other hand, was unable to fully express herself after being married. However, the sudden loss of her husband gives her the chance to come out of her shell and show the world who she really is. She can't contain her excitement at the possibility of finally living her life the way she wants to instead of the way her husband does. However, her enthusiasm for her newfound freedom makes her susceptible to the harsh realities of life. After learning that her husband or wife is still alive, she suffers a heart attack and dies.

During the Civil War era, Miss Emily Grierson was born. She was brought up by a strict father and as a result, she is opposed to the cultural and social progress of the New South and prefers to hold on to the norms and traditions of the South's pre-Civil War era. Her father was convinced that she would never find a decent husband, thus she is still single and in her forties. She says it's because her dad thought she'd never find a good match. Miss Emily strongly believes that women should marry and have children as was expected of them during the Victorian era. Because of this, she gives in to Homer Barron's advances despite the fact that he is neither of her social class nor from the north. Since Homer is clearly not a "marrying man," Miss Emily has no choice but to kill him and bury him in the wedding suite she built for Marge. After Homer's kidnapping, she withdraws within herself, and the town doesn't learn her secret until forty years after she's gone.

## **Emergence of True Self**

The protagonist of Kate Chopin's short novel "The Story of an Hour," Mrs. Louise Mallard, goes on an astonishing voyage of self-discovery. Louise has realized that her spouse has kept her from being herself, despite his best intentions. Since his death, she has accepted the liberation that prepares the door for the full expression of her authentic self. According to the writer, finding one's true identity is the pinnacle of the human experience. She draws parallels between this development and the real world. Chopin describes how Louise's "pulses beat fast, and the circulating blood warmed and relaxed every inch of her body" as she comes into her own.

On the other hand, stifling someone else's genuine self-expression is seen by some as akin to spiritual homicide. Chopin sees parallels between this and the actions of a criminal because of this. Chopin's condemnation of the treatment of women in the Victorian era is reflected in the fact that the victim of this crime is a woman. However, it is important to note that Chopin underlines that both men and women can perpetrate this crime, and either gender can be the victim. Chopin uses this to support her claim that Victorian attitudes toward women were deplorable. Chopin discusses in one of his works the "blind persistence with which men and women believe they have the right to impose a private will upon a fellow creature." Chopin uses the phrase "creature" to refer to the victim, leaving up the idea that the victim could be a man or a woman, an adult, or a kid. Anyone of either sex could be the culprit.

Chopin's modernity is shown in his concern with the emergence of one's true self. People in the modern society frequently want to better themselves or reconnect with their true selves. However, such a view was far rarer during Chopin's time. Each member of society had responsibilities and duties that they were expected to play. It was clearly inappropriate behaviour to challenge such a position. Chopin did more than just raise doubts about that view. Her essays, including "The Story of an Hour," show why she thinks it's a bad idea.

## **Patriarchy**

Like many Victorian era women, Emily Grierson suffers at the hands of a male-dominated society. Her father is the first and most influential male figure in her life, and he has a profoundly detrimental impact on her. Mr. Grierson uses the fact that his family has an aristocratic pedigree as an excuse to reject suitors for his only daughter on the grounds that they are not proper material. The outcome is that his daughter is practically imprisoned in her own house. It is him, not Emily, who draws this conclusion. After his death, she remained behind bars. She is stuck staying in her family's rundown house because she has no options for

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marriage and no means of supporting herself. Mr. Grierson continues to exercise a big effect over Emily's life even after he has passed away.

In addition to Emily's father, there are a number of other powerful men in Jefferson. To show his disapproval of black men's clothing, enforces a rule that states "no black woman may appear on the street without an apron," but he remains silent on the subject of how he feels about women's clothing.

This is not out of the ordinary, given the time period in which "A Rose for Emily" is situated and the time period in which it was written. Miss Emily's strange behaviours after Homer Barron went missing is out of the ordinary. Since Homer Barron's death, Miss Emily has emerged as a threat to the oligarchy that has governed her life. Previously, she had been intimidated by her father and subsequently forced by society to choose a suitable spouse. She has reached the point where she will not take orders from anyone, including the Board of Aldermen or the post office. Faulkner depicts how patriarchal culture melded female into a form that may be easily exploited through the character of Miss Emily.

Mrs. Mallard allowed us to see the oppression of women in that era of society. It's because of this that Chopin writes, "They were locked into marriages," despite the fact that their love for each other is undeniable. It is Mrs. Mallard's contention that her husband "never looked at her other than with love" (Chopin 34). Chopin's heroine in "The Story of an Hour" was originally referred to as "Mrs. Mallard," implying that she was an appendage of Brently Mallard;" however, after she was liberated, Chopin referred to her by her first name, "Louise." Chopin's main point was that marriage "bends the will" of women, making them submissive (35). I think Brently Mallard was still a good guy even though marriage can break a person's will because he never looked at his wife with anything but love in his eyes. Even though she knows that her husband loves her, she feels that she will never truly feel that love because "and yet she loved him, sometimes" (34). Chopin seems to doubt that the husband's plan to keep the marriage strong is to "bend" her will. Mrs. Mallard's accomplishment in breaking the lens shows that she was able to break the bindings that held her to



her husband. She seems to have only been alive (mentally and spiritually) for the hour after she found out her spouse had died. She went to her room and looked out the "open window" (Chopin, 33) to take in her surroundings.

### **Oppression of Women**

The second aspect that plays a role in shaping the status of women in the South is religion, as shown by Faulkner. Since religion plays such a significant role in Southerners' daily lives, the South has long been known as the "Bible Belt" of the United States. A hallmark of the Southern Gothic genre, religious fanaticism is portrayed heavily in the novel because it is something most of us naturally fear, something most of us feel strongly against, and something that repulses the vast majority of us. Men in the story are portrayed as seeing women as the root of all evil, which forces them to isolate themselves. Just like Emily, whose dead relative has been in her house for 40 years, she has been confined there. The puritan culture that dominated the South at the time had a significant impact on Emily's decision to live a secluded life. Women could not be themselves or exercise independence in this culture.

### **Perception of Females in the Society**

Despite the fact that women were not permitted to have romantic relationships before marriage, Emily falls in love with Homer Barron, a young Yankee. Nonetheless, Emily does not let societal norms deter her from following her heart. In her pursuit of Homer Barron, she opposes authority people and the status quo in an attempt to follow her heart. When he leaves, Emily takes the first step down a dangerous and mentally twisted path. She kills her ex-boyfriend Barron and then keeps his body in the house she plans to live in for the rest of her life. Many essayists point to this section as evidence that Faulkner is critical of feminist ideology. It's also likely that the author was pointing out the problems that arise when women are made to follow ridiculous rules and their freedoms are severely curtailed.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is an analysis of feminism and the oppression of women. Patriarchal society hurt the author's female protagonists. This research wraps up both narratives by examining the monetary and emotional costs of male control and betrayal for women. Infidelity is a topic of discussion amongst families and the general public. As an activist and writer, she writes to update the group's members. Chopin is sensitive to women's concerns. By preserving the past, she believes people will be able to learn from their mistakes and advance equality. Women in the middle class have more responsibilities than males do.

The women in these stories all suffer because of patriarchy. The female leads show this. Faulkner's protagonist is a helpless victim of violence and social exclusion. In Chopin's story, the major way she is harmed is through violent acts committed against her.

Louise Mallard's sexism and misogyny will be the first subject discussed. Second, the resistance to women's oppression that Emily Grierson embodies can be seen in a variety of contexts. Louise Mallard suffers from physical abuse, social exclusion, and a lack of agency. The protagonist, Emily Grierson, is a victim in three different ways. Abuse in all its forms—physical, mental, and sexual—exists. Abuse of all kinds is prevalent, but sexual violence is by far the most common.

The resistance of Emily Grierson to the oppression of women is discussed next. Discrimination, helplessness, and physical abuse are all things that Emily Grierson has faced in her life. As a kind of resistance, Emily Grierson runs away and hides from her abuser, does her best to prevent further incidents of violence, goes to work, dates other men, and openly expresses her opinions. In "A Rose for Emily," Emily's sanity is irreparably damaged by her ordeal at the hands of the patriarchy. Not so. The story has been therapeutic for Emily's mind. Every American woman who served during that time is embodied in Emily. It hasn't always been easy for women to do things like exercise their rights and love whoever they like. This tragic tale of an elderly woman suffering from dementia and sharing her home with a corpse is the story of every woman who has ever been oppressed by men.

## Suggestion

Analysing literature is quite intriguing. Short stories by Chopin and Faulkner provided the impetus for my research. Feminist literary criticism is employed by the researcher, with a focus on the oppression of women as a central theme. The study focuses on the female protagonist Louise Mallard and the most disadvantaged female character, Emily Grierson.

There are numerous angles from which to view these narratives. Therefore, the author encourages readers and potential future researchers to investigate unexplored territories. Results will be more comprehensive and more useful to readers and researchers if they are based on data from many analyses. Next time someone wishes to use the same theory to evaluate these stories, they can expand the study and make it stronger. The next researcher may use the same theory to examine these narratives.

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