

Junior Research Paper Convention: Abstract Form
CCIII/Spring 2025

Chen, Gavin. Section D. "Dancing to Freedom: Nora and the Critique of Traditional Gender Roles and Marriage in *A Doll's House*."

Abstract

This paper explores how Henrik Ibsen critiques traditional gender roles and patriarchal social norms in 19th-century society through his renowned play *A Doll's House*. Focusing on the transformation of the protagonist, Nora Helmer, the study examines her journey from a submissive "doll" within her marriage to an independent individual who asserts her autonomy. Through the lens of feminist theory, this paper analyzes how Ibsen uses Nora's development to highlight the limitations placed on women and to challenge the expectations society imposed on them. Evidence from the text reveals that Nora evolves from being a decorative figure who exists to please others into a woman who acts based on her own thoughts and convictions. Ibsen's portrayal of Nora ultimately serves as a powerful critique of the rigid gender roles by his time.

Notes:

1. My RP belongs to the category of: ☒ Literary Studies or ☐ Social Studies
2. Related websites: (one or two URLs).

Elettra, Carbone. "Nora: The Life and Afterlife of Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*"

Introduction to Nordic Cultures, 2020, pp. 102-16.

Langås, U. (2005) "What did Nora do? Thinking Gender with *A Doll's House*", *Ibsen Studies*, 5(2), pp. 148-71. doi:10.1080/15021860500424254.