Metin & Analiz
Kültürel Çalışmalar ve Strateji Dergisi
Cilt 1 Sayı 1 Şubat 2025

Text & Analysis
Journal of Cultural Studies and Strategy
Volume 1 Issue 1 February 2025

Slam the Door Softly: Feminist Rewriting of *A Doll's House*

Slam the Door Softly: A Doll's House'un Feminist Yeniden Yazımı

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ABSTRACT

Slam the Door Softly (1970), written 91 years after Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879), is a re-writing in which Luce creates a modernized Nora in her play compared to the traditional Nora in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. In both plays, women are entrapped in the burdens of their marriage, trying to free themselves from the male authority, and gender boundaries. The traditional Nora in *A Doll's House* is a submissive wife listening to her husband and obeying him in every condition, but the modernized Nora in *Slam the Door Softly* is an educated women who wants to be an individual listened and understood by her husband. Thus, this study aims to analyze how traditional Nora and modernized Nora struggle to change and challenge their position in their marriages, in a male dominated society, and socially constructed gender roles. Thus, Luce's *Slam the Door Softly* and Ibsen's *A Doll's House* will be compared from a feminist perspective.

Keywords

Clare Boothe Luce, *Slam the Door Softly*, Henry Ibsen, *A Doll's House*, gender roles, feminism.

ÖZ

Slam the Door Softly (1970), Ibsen'in A Doll's House (1879) oyununun yeniden yazımdır. 91 yıl sonra yazılan, bu oyunda, Luce, Ibsen'in A Doll's House oyunundaki geleneksel Nora'ya kıyasla, modernize edilmiş bir Nora yaratmaktadır. Her iki oyunda da evliliğin getirdiği yüklere hapsolmuş kadınlar, kendilerini erkek otoritesinden ve cinsiyet sınırlarından kurtarmaya çalışmaktadır. A Doll's House'daki geleneksel Nora, kocasını dinleyen ve ona her koşulda itaat eden sadık bir eş iken, Slam the Door Softly'deki modernize edilmiş Nora, kocası tarafından sözü dinlenen ve anlaşılan bir birey olmak isteyen eğitimli bir kadındır. Bu nedenle, geleneksel Nora ile modern Nora'nın evliliklerindeki, erkek egemen toplumdaki ve toplumsal olarak inşa edilen cinsiyet rollerindeki konumlarını değiştirme ve bunlara meydan okuma mücadelesini analiz etmeyi amaçlayan bu çalışmada, Luce'un Slam the Door Softly ve Ibsen'in A Doll's House adlı oyunları feminist bakış açısı ile karşılaştırılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Clare Boothe Luce, Slam the Door Sofly, Henry Ibsen, A Doll's House, toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri, feminizm.

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Araştırma Makalesi *Research Article*
Başvuru Kabul *Submitted Accepted*
05.01.2025 25.01.2025

Atıf / *Citation* Ayan. M. (2025), Slam the Door Softly: Feminist rewriting of A Doll's House. *Metin & Analiz*, *1*(1), 135-146.

INTRODUCTION

Clare Booth Luce's *Slam the Door Softly* (1970) is a re-writing of Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879). Luce creates a modernized Nora in her feminist play written 91 years later from Ibsen's *A Doll's House.* Luce's modern Nora, compared to the traditional Nora, is less submissive and obedient. In both plays, women try to free themselves from the male dominance, social norms, and gender boundaries but while the traditional Nora listens to her husband and obeys him all the time, the modernized Nora wants to be an individual listened and understood by her husband. Thus, aiming to analyze how traditional Nora and modernized Nora try to change and challenge their position in their marriages, male-dominated society, and socially constructed gender roles, Luce's *Slam the Door Softly* and *A Doll's House* will be compared from a feminist standpoint.

The history of feminism has paved a long way and branched into new subtitles with different approaches. Feminism is a debatable term that "has never been unified and has become a movement of which development is full of controversy, reversal and change" (Bryson, 1999, p. 5). Feminism, from its first emergence, has changed and diversified into various branches of different feminisms; therefore, as Kavka expressed, "Feminism ain't what it used to be" (2001, p. 1). Feminism is a social, academic, political, and cultural movement aimed "to analyze and interrogate gender relations" (Flax, 1990, p. 40) and change the economic, civil, and ideological disparities between men and women from the early days by focusing on gender relations and social rights in a male-dominated world. Namely, there is an ongoing argument from an internal perspective that focuses on "a discourse, a search for universals on the one hand, and activism, feminist practice and experience on the other" (Page, 2006, p. 6). From a disciplinary perspective, many feminist writings show that the rights and interests of women in a patriarchal society are not taken into consideration because history and 'his story' are always based on the great political events started by male rulers, the patriarchal system, and male novelists. However, feminist historians and authors tried to change this view by concealing the evidence of women in major events and realizing the significance of "the images of women promulgated by literature and has been concerned with female books and literature" (Barry, 2002, p. 121). Feminism, focusing on texts by women writers from the past centuries, has seen a feminist narration and writing different from the male narration, which proposes alternative narrative patterns. Thus, feminism with feminist narrative or storytelling intended to present women's sphere, feelings, experiences, and writings in a male-dominated literary world. Feminism, which appeared as a reaction against male-dominated narrative strategies, has branched into various feminisms with distinctive features, and it has been studied from different standpoints in various fields.

In the 1960s and 1970s feminism focused on issues of equality and discrimination. From the late 1970s to the 1980s, feminism is more of a continuation. Significant changes in feminism began to be seen in the mid-1980s because women's subordination began to change with "capitalism, patriarchy, biology, or even language focusing on the discursive, material and cultural differences that make up the being or becoming of women" (Kavka, 2001, p. xiii). Feminism is divided into four waves: first, second, third, and fourth. The first wave, the pre-feminism period, focuses on the 19th-century women's suffrage movement. The second wave "began in the mid-1960s and was catalyzed primarily by the Civil Rights Movement" (Tong, 2009, p. 271). The third wave refers "to a younger generation of women in the 1990s who were certainly influenced by their feminist foremothers but who would define feminism differently, and in some ways reject what they perceived to be the doctrinaire aspects of an ideology, mainstream feminism, that they both respect and find limiting" (qtd. in Tong, 2009, p. 271). Feminism at the beginning of the twenty-first century differs from feminism in the 1970s, but "feminism is still seeking women's best interest diligently" (Tong, 2009, p. 271). In the second decade of the 21st century, with the involvement of technology and internet tools, the Fourth wave flourished as the brand-new movement of feminism, which focused on marginalized women as well as other marginal groups like homosexuals and transgender people. Although the Fourth Wave is composed of sub-movements, what connects them is the number of women who share and criticize sexual abuse, rape, violence against women, unequal pay, and the pressure on women via online organizations. Thus, the waves of feminism in different periods diversified into feminism. Diversifications in feminism have brought the notion of female texts, writings, and narratives that led the way to new feminisms in literary studies.

Feminism is a continuously changing and challenging concept that will continue to diversify, with deconstructed and reconstructed modes of female lives, feminine discourse, and feminine writing that is an open, multiple, varied, and unlimited field where many social, sexual, and psychological limitations are unbound because texts enable broad fields to express all the oppressed desires, psychological problems, moral changes, and gender challenges. Graham Allen argues that "works of literature are built from systems, codes, and traditions established by previous works of literature" (2000, p. 1). In this respect, literary texts have independent meanings, and as long as they are read and interpreted, they will consist of new meanings. Thus, moving between texts becomes important, enabling intertextual reading and analysis and "meaning becomes something which exists between a text and all other texts to which it relates" (Allen, 2000, p. 1). Jorge Luis Borges states, "A book is not an isolated being. It is a relationship, an axis of innumerable relationships" (2000, p. 248). In this regard, texts become intertextual enabling relationship and interpretable travels in a literary world recently re-constructed with new texts that are re-adaptations, re-writings, re-readings, and re-

publications of traditional editions of old texts. Deconstruction and rewriting of old texts become the reconstruction of new hybrid texts.

Ibsen's *A Doll's House*: Traditional Feminist Drama

Henrik Ibsen's three-act-masterpiece, *A Doll's House,* is one of the most influential plays of the 19th century because it is a controversial and complex work that can be interpreted as both a humanist and feminist play focusing on women's position and struggle. *A Doll's House,* accepted as one of the best feminist plays of the 19th- century, presents the problems of women in marriage and the lack of independence and respect in a male-dominated society. The editor of the Modern Language Association's approaches to teaching *A Doll's House,* views the play "as a feminist drama" (Shafer, 1985, p. 32). Additionally, Halvdan Koht summarizes the play's connection with feminism: "Little by little the topical controversy died away; what remained was the work of art, with its demand for truth in every human relation" (1971, p. 323). Additionally, Allardyce Nicoll states: "His drama is a domestic drama, and he aims to dramatize the life of his day. He realized that perfect emotions of the spectacular plays had nothing in common with ordinary men and women" (1925, p. 340). Ibsen indicates that "[a] woman cannot be herself in the society of the present day, which is an exclusively masculine society, with laws framed by men and with a judicial system that judges feminine, from a masculine point of view" (qtd. in Meyer, 1971, p. 9). Yet, with developments in every field and feminist studies, women began to question and become decisive individuals within the male-dominated society. Women are more powerful and less oppressed than in the past; therefore, they are eager to discover their authentic selves through feminist standpoints. Additionally, feminist literary texts that were deconstructed, re-constructed, and rewritten from a feminist perspective enabled women to narrate their stories and create new hybrid texts, presenting women's change and challenge in gender power relationships.

A Doll's House is about a relationship between a protective, dominant, and authoritative husband, Torvald Helmer, who establishes rules for his wife, Nora, a childlike, sensitive, sensible, and devoted woman. The play starts with Nora's return from shopping for Christmas, and Torvald Helmer, seeing this, accuses Nora of "spending money recklessly" and "takes her playfully by the ear" for "wasting money" (Ibsen, 1910, p. 6). Torvald controls and treats Nora like a doll in their marriage. Nora is a good mother who devotes herself to her children and an ideal wife obeying her husband, saying: "I will do everything I can think of to please you" (Ibsen, 1910, p. 37). Early in their marriage, Torvald fell ill and lost his job because of his condition. Nora copied her father's signature to secure a loan to save her husband. She lied to him and said her father had given them the money. In fact, in that period, women could not get

loans from the bank without the permission of their husbands, fathers, and even brothers, and they were not even allowed to buy property for themselves. In the end, when the truth comes to light, Torvald accuses Nora and mocks her instead of recognizing the sacrifice she made for him. Specifically, Torvald fails to understand and appreciate Nora, overlooking the suffering and sacrifices she endured. Consequently, Nora realizes that she sacrificed herself for a husband who did not grasp her true intentions and that he held oppressive authority over her. Awakening to the realities, Nora realized that her husband was self-centered, selfish, and a hypocrite.

At the end of the play, Nora realizes that she cannot live as a doll under the dominance of a husband who does not listen and understand her. She wants to be a free individual and "educate herself" (Ibsen, 1910, p. 81). Therefore, she decides to leave the house. Torvald Helmer attempts to stop Nora by reminding her of her responsibilities as a wife and mother: "Before all else, you are a wife and a mother" (Ibsen, 1910, p. 82). Regardless of what Helmer says, "the sound of a door shutting is heard from below" (Ibsen, 1910, p. 86), suggesting Nora's departure from the house, while Helmer "sinks down on a chair at the door and buries his face in his hands" (Ibsen, 1910, p. 86). Nora's shutting the door is a radical action for her time and demonstrates how decisive she is in ending her life as a wife and mother.

Nora, the conventional female archetype and a caring mother, seeks to assert her individuality and identity by closing the door. In other words, Nora is a suffering woman who has dedicated her entire life to others and her children. Thus, she desires to take a radical step and leave the house where she feels unhappy and is treated like a doll. Her husband exploits Nora's motherhood to prevent her from leaving. From a feminist perspective, Torvald Helmer's male pressure and suffocating restrictions do not hold Nora back; instead, his treatment prompts her to leave the house and shut the door behind her for good without saying a word.

In the 19th century, the institution of marriage limited women's freedom because "marriage was considered as an institution that kept women under strict social codes and maintained their conformity with the code of moral behavior especially relating to sexuality" (Öteyaka & Ayan, 2019, p. 125). In the early 19th century, married women were legally subordinate to their husbands and were not permitted to own property or keep their wages. Namely, society had the strong assumption that "women's position was clear, she was always physically and intellectually inferior to the man" (Rubenstein, 1987, p. 7). In other words, marriage was an entrapment for women who had no legal rights, income, and freedom in the 19th century, just as Nora in Ibsen's play, *A Doll's House.* However, in the end, Nora awakens to break free from the boundaries of entrapment and oppression in her marriage as she resolves to leave her husband, home,

and children. Ibsen's Nora had no choice but to shut the door behind her to end her submissive life and reclaim her individuality.

Ibsen, recognized as the father of modern drama, illustrated how women were positioned and treated in marital life in the late nineteenth century. Women were viewed as subservient, with their main roles being to serve their husbands, manage household tasks, and care for their children, according to the gender roles imposed and identities assigned to them by a patriarchal society. Similarly, Luce addressed social issues, particularly the status of women in marriage and gender roles in her play. In the 20th century, compared to the 19th century, women gained greater access to workplaces, professional jobs, and enjoyed freedom, education, and financial independence. Yet, the male-dominated society still constrained women in their marriages. Many men preferred their wives to stay home, manage housework, and care for children, as they perceived few jobs appropriate for women. They desired their wives to be submissive and dependent rather than to be individuals expressing their own thoughts. Luce highlights these concerns in her play from a modern feminist standpoint.

Luce's *Slam The Door Softly*: Feminist Re-Written Drama

A feminist reimagining of Henrik Ibsen's renowned play, *A Doll's House*, Clare Booth Luce's *Slam the Door Softly* offers a contemporary retelling of Nora's journey. Luce's play first appeared in Life magazine under "A Doll's House in 1970" but was later revised to its original name, *Slam the Door Softly*. In her adaptation, Luce aimed to explore what might have happened if Ibsen's traditional and submissive Nora transformed into a modern, intellectual woman. The rewritten version contains numerous references to Ibsen's play, and even the names of the female protagonists remain unchanged.

Slam the Door Softly is a play about a woman struggling to be free without being bound to her husband. In this one-act play, Thaw watches television in a suburban living room when his wife, Nora, enters holding a suitcase, determined to leave him. Meanwhile, Thaw is watching a program about the sex-typing of jobs. The conversation features a male moderator, women from the Women's Liberation Movement, an older woman, a young woman, and a Black woman. Luce highlights the status of women in the twentieth century through this TV discussion and the various feminist perspectives.

The older woman says, "In the Soviet Union, 83% of the dentists, 75% of the doctors, and 37% of the lawyers are women…" and the young woman says, "there are very few professional jobs men are doing that women couldn't do" (Luce, 1995, p. 1118). Then Thaw comments: "Well, for God's sake then, shuddup, and go do 'em" (Luce, 1995, p. 1118), as a foreshadowing that he is opposed to working women out and thinks that

they cannot do every job that men can do. Then the Black woman says, "you men just don't want to hear us, is-things are the same for women as they are for us Black people. We try to get up, you just sit down on us, like a big elephant sits down on a bunch of poor little mice" (Luce, 1995, p. 1118) and the male moderator replies "Well, sometimes moderators have to play the elephant, and sit down on one subject in order to develop another" and changes the subject to the one thing a woman can do that man cannot is to produce a baby, and stresses on the number one job of women as occupation housewife (Luce, 1995, p. 1118). The young woman defines this occupation of the housewife as selling a woman's sexual and domestic services for a permanent bed and bread. Additionally, the Black woman states that "there's no human being a man can buy anymore-except a woman" (Luce, 199, p. 1118).

When Nora tries to say something, he does not listen as usual, and she says, "Women are only to look at. Men are to listen to Got it" (Luce, 1995, p. 1118). Yet, Thaw neither looks at her nor listens to her. He reads the magazine. Before leaving, she slips two letters under the covers of two books on the top shelf. He does not pay attention to her; he only hears what seems important to him. When she mentions he has been talking to himself for a long time, he dismisses it and shifts the subject to the advertisement. Thaw claims that "It's the kind of ad that grabs you. This sad-faced, nice-looking woman of 50, sitting on a bench with a lot of discouraged old biddies, in an employment agency," and they both say the caption of the ad at the same time "Could this happen to your wife" (Luce, 1995, p. 1119). Nora does not want to be like that sad-faced woman when she comes to 50; she wants to get a job to guarantee her life and feel confident.

Thaw is uninterested in the ad and does not notice Nora leaving. Nora puts on her coat, slips on her gloves, and leaves the third envelope on the spindle that contains all the numbers he will need as well as the menus for the children. She arranges for a girl to watch over the kids until his mother arrives. She says, "Well, goodbye little doll house. Goodbye dear husband. You've had the best ten years of my life" (Luce, 1995, p. 1120) and slams the door softly. Thaw glances up briefly at Nora before automatically returning to his magazine. However, he suddenly realizes the situation, jumps up, and pulls her into the house. Thaw urges her to explain why she is leaving, but she insists that he cannot understand her. She wrote all in a letter that she had put among the pages of Simone de Beauvoir's book *The Second Sex.* Simone de Beauvoir's significant formulation, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (p. 301) distinguishes sex from gender and suggests that gender is an aspect of identity gradually acquired and shaped by upbringing. For instance, a woman is not inherently passive; rather, the circumstances, dominance, and influences surrounding her contribute to this perception. Every woman is born with a unique self, irrespective of gender, yet external forces and cultural norms often render women passive. In Luce's play, Nora rejects

becoming a passive woman and wants independence. Therefore, it can be argued that Luce's play outlines de Beauvoir`s *The Second Sex*, which has become one of the key texts of the second feminist movement. Most of Nora`s sentences address this book.

The more Nora insists she does not want to miss her train; the more Thaw attempts to stop her from leaving. He pushes her onto the sofa and slams the door. Nora argues that men have not changed since primitive times; men are still Tarzan, and women are still Jane: "In primitive times, of course, the heavier musculature of the male was necessary to protect the pregnant female and the immobile young…But what's just happened now shows that nothing has changed" (Luce, 1995, p. 1119).

Thaw cannot understand the reason for her behavior and then asks, "Nora, isn't it about time for your period?" She replies, "But if God had wanted us to think just with our wombs, why did He give us a brain?" (Luce, 1995, p. 1120). She criticizes men who attribute women's unusual behaviors to their periods by saying, "Men don't like women who talk logically. They find them unfeminine-aggressive" (Luce, 1995, p. 1120).

Then Thaw thinks she will get an abortion. Nora makes her first observation about men: "When a man can't explain a woman's actions, the first thing he thinks about is the condition of her uterus." She then asks him, "if you were leaving me and I didn't know why, would I ask, first thing, if you were having prostate trouble?" (Luce, 1995, p. 1119). Thaw gets confused and tries to call the doctor, but she attempts to escape. Then Thaw grabs her ponytail and throws her into the chair. He tries to find a reason for her leaving him. He suspects that one of her female friends, who has seen him with another woman, is trying to break up their marriage. However, she asserts that this is not the reason for her departure. She says, "Monogamy is not natural to the male" and claims that "many lonely suburban housewives, unable to identify their real problem, think more sex is the answer. So, they sleep with the milkman or the delivery boy" (Luce, 1995, p. 1120). Thaw becomes happy that she is not interested in his adultery but then thinks that she is leaving him for another man. Nora shares her second observation regarding men's reasoning about a woman's departure: "She's not having her period, she's not pregnant, she's not jealous: it's got to be another man" (Luce, 1995, p. 1120).

Thaw pressures her to explain the reason by threatening to punch her, and when that fails, he kisses her and asks her to make love. Nora refuses. "The classical male one-two. Sock 'em and screw 'em…Well, it's been known to work on a lot of occasions" (Luce, 1995, p. 1121). Then Nora warns him: "Thaw, you do have a problem with me. But you can't solve it with force" (Luce, 1995, p. 1121). Here, Luce criticizes men who try to resolve issues through brute force or sexual means, believing they can suppress their wives this way. Nora asserts that he oppressed her and treated her as inferior by yanking her hair and threatening to shock her. He claims that he did it to stop her at that

moment; then Nora makes her third observation: "Domination of the insubordinate female is an almost instinctive male reflex. In extremis, Thaw it is rape" (Luce, 1995, p. 1121).

Nora's subsequent observation about males is that they do not listen to females: "The trouble is, you would have to listen to me. And that's hard for you. I *understand why*. Not listening to women is a habit that's been passed on from to son for generations. You could almost say, tuning out on women is another secondary sexual male characteristic" (Luce, 1995, p. 1121). Next, the attention turns to what a woman desires. Thaw asks: "what more can a woman want than a nice home, fine children, and a husband who adores her?" and reminds her of the law that states if a wife leaves her husband, he does not have to pay her alimony. Nora highlights her severance payment as a housekeeper: "I figured it at the going agency rates for full-time cook, cleaning woman, handy-man, laundress, seamstress, and part-time gardener and chauffeur. I've worked an average ten-hour day.... It comes to over 53.000 dollars. It's like to be paid in 10 installments…I haven't charged anything for sleeping with you…for being a nurse" (Luce, 1995, pp. 1121-23).

Shocked by Nora's response, Thaw comments that she cannot survive alone because she would be lonely. Her concern is that she does not want to depend entirely on her husband for all her needs. She holds a master's degree in English and plans to apply for a position in *Time Research* designated for women. Additionally, she is exploring computer programming opportunities available to women. Nora expresses that she is leaving him to pursue her desire to find a job and establish her own identity, stating: "The salary you receive is what makes you respect yourself, and other men respect you? Women have begun to want to respect themselves a little, too" (Luce, 1995, p. 1123). Thaw invites her to share the housework: "Listen, Nora, what say, you work, I work. And we split the housework? How's that for a deal" (Luce, 1995, p. 1123). But she reminds him that he isn't free enough to do the housework; he travels a lot and gets home late, so she must choose between the two jobs before she turns 50. Thaw says, "It's a man's world out there." It's a man's world where there are a lot of women working…Marriage is still the best deal that the world has to offer women. And most women know it. It's always been like that. And it's going to be like that, for a long time" (Luce, 1995, p. 1124). She does not want herself to become like Thaw's family. She fears he might become like his father, who has a mistress. When Nora says he can remarry to his lover, Thaw says "a man needs a woman of his own" (Luce, 1995, p. 1124). Then Nora makes her final observation that men want to sleep with "body servant of his very own" (Luce, 1995, p. 1124) a woman who is in his hand so he can flirt with other woman just for fun.

At the end of the play, Nora leaves her husband to forge an identity for herself that is distinct from her roles as a wife and mother. Törnqvist asserts that Nora is "liberated by the pill from inevitable motherhood, liberated intellectually by her education, and liberated from culturally conditioned self-deprecation by feminist writers from de Beauvoir to Mary Ellman and Kate Millet—and then she closes the door, very gently, on a much-loved husband from whom the 'miracle' has not yet happened" (1995, p. 156). Nora leaves Thaw by saying, "I do love you. And I also need…a man. So, I'm not slamming the door. I'm closing it…very…softly" (Luce, 1995, p. 1125). By gently closing the door, Nora keeps her options open to visit her children and enter the house whenever she wishes, not just when she is permitted.

CONCLUSION

Consequently, moving between the works of Ibsen and Luce, it becomes clear that a text cannot exist without referencing another text. In this context, Luce's reinterpretation of Ibsen`s *A Doll`s House* illustrates that neither Nora in the nineteenth century nor Nora in the twentieth century can attain true freedom, as the male-dominated world continually restricts women through marriage. In marriage, women often become their husbands' possessions and caretakers of their children. As a conventional woman, Ibsen`s Nora no longer wants to live like 'a doll' and refuses to be humiliated or controlled by her husband. She plans to leave her home by shutting the door to gain her independence at any cost. Shutting the door represents an unexpected reaction from an obedient and submissive wife with no alternatives in nineteenth-century society. From a feminist perspective, Nora's slamming the door behind her is a radical act because, in the twentieth century, the diversifying feminist movements and international women's movement led to legal voting and other rights, prompting women to challenge their roles within the home and society. Women leaving their homes experienced a shift from harsh criticism in the nineteenth century to a more compassionate understanding by society in the twentieth century. Thus, in Luce's play, Nora's gentle closing of the door can be seen as acceptable to society and interpreted as a transition from married to individual life. By softly slamming the door, the modernized Nora indicates that she has the power to choose between staying or leaving her home. In contrast, the traditional Nora does not have such options. Furthermore, as a modern and educated woman, Luce's Nora does not view her husband's adultery as an issue. However, she is tired of being in an inferior position as a housewife and feels ignored by her husband, who does not listen to her as an equal. To hold herself in esteem and gain respect from others, she desires to work and earn her own money without depending on him. To become an independent woman, she leaves her husband and children behind but softly slams the door, which can be interpreted as both an option and a change in her

life. Namely, she is not shutting the door like the traditional Nora because she wants alternatives and options for her children.

Society critiques Luce's Nora less than Ibsen`s Nora because she is educated and has options. Developments in feminism aimed at unsettling the complacent certainties of a patriarchal culture and male suppression helped women assert their beliefs in equality, freedom, and education, giving them the courage to resist patriarchal authority. Women learned to adapt and challenge as feminism diversified into various subcategories. This evolution is seen in the representation and roles of women in marriage. While traditional Nora, lacking alternatives, shuts the door to change and resigns herself to a submissive and selfless existence, modernized Nora, who has new choices, gently slams the door to gain the attention of male society as she challenges imposed gender roles and societal norms that confine women behind doors meant to open to new expectations, independence, and identities—not just for traditional and modern Nora, but for all women throughout history.

Ethical Statement and Conflict of Interest: The author declares that the study complies with ethical principles and has no conflict of interest.

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