

Resisting the Clichés: A Feminist Reading of James Joyce's 'Eveline'

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Abstract:

From Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* onward, female characters appeared in all genres of literature but the role they are traditionally assigned, rarely presented them without any prejudices. As Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar (1979) assert, there exist two principal stereotypical images of women, "the angel in the house" and "the mad woman in the attic". In one of the stories of *Dubliners*, a collection of short stories written by James Joyce in 1914, readers read about, a girl named Eveline, who is indecisive about whether according to the clichés of her patriarchal society or resisting them all. This study by using Feminism literary theory as its approach, attempts to show that when Eveline was standing hesitantly on the quay, she succeeds (although for some short moments) at finding her rightful place while not succumbing to the rules of a patriarchal society.

Keywords: James Joyce, *Dubliners*, feminism in Western literature

Article:

From Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* onward, female characters appeared in all genres of literature but the role they are traditionally assigned, rarely presented them without any prejudices. In Western literary canon, women were seldom presented as protagonists. Instead, females' role was to support their male counterpart and satisfy all his desires at any cost even by their own death. As Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar (1979) assert, there exist two principal stereotypical images of women, "the angel in the house" and "the mad woman in the attic". Most readers are familiar with these unfair images due to their abundance in the literary canon. However, we should confess that this attitude has undergone changes through history and has become more moderate. Nowadays women are playing more important roles in every aspect of modernized societies in comparison with the past. But still we feel the need for Feminism in contemporary modern societies and females are fighting even harder than before to gain their voice and right in their societies. In one of the stories of *Dubliners*, a collection of short stories written by James Joyce in 1914, readers read about, a girl named Eveline, who is indecisive about whether, according to the clichés of femininity and playing the role of an angel to her siblings, especially her typical Irish father or spurning all those preestablished ideologies dictated to her by a patriarchal society, resist being portrayed as a mad woman in the attic and elope with her beloved, Frank, or, still find