Realism In Hedda Gabler

In the 19th century, common people were considered inferior in society and they were not wealth to be part of literature except for Kings. In “Hedda Gabler” by Henrik Ibsen paint a realistic picture of gender, power, battle between rich and poor, where the Hedda’s action represent the social determinism in society. Although Hedda Gabler was written in the 19th century, nevertheless it portrays the reality of an average person in 21st century fight for freedom.

Ibsen’s usage of social determinism in the story as one of the reasons why Hedda committed suicide. Hedda is a daughter of a general form the upper class family which make her superior over others. “Tesman My old morning-shoes! ... Tesman Yes, I missed them terribly. [Goes up to her.] Now you shall see them, Hedda! Hedda. [Going towards the stove.] Thanks, I really don’t care about it” (Ibsen 859). Hedda shows her upper class personality by being disgusting her husband’s favorite embroidered slippers us useless and not wealth glance with her see. She even called Miss Tesman the aunty of George her husband new hat old. “Hedda. [Pointing.] Look there! She has left her old bonnet lying about on a chair. … Hedda Just fancy, if any one should come in and see it! ... Miss Tesman [Taking up the bonnet.] Yes, indeed it’s mine. And, what’s more, it’s not old, Madam Hedda” (Ibsen 860). Hedda was embrace about Miss Tesman hat being seen by other because in her opinion the new hat looks like a rack not suited for her living room. Hedda sees Miss Tesman and even her own husband as inferior because of their rank in wealth.

Ibsen's Hedda Gabler portrays the role of gender and power as a female during the 19th century. Hedda is an example a few female characters who refutes the unconventional ways a woman should live. Since George isn’t able to a political figure for Hedda to gain power, she found pleasure in controlling other people's lives. “Hedda Yes, I have. I want for once in my life to have power to shape a human destiny. Mrs. Elevsted Have you not the power? Hedda I have not—and have never had it” (Ibsen 888). Hedda desire to control every individual and take part in the role of men. She enjoys the manipulating other people live like Lovborg and even her husband. Lovborg lost his life due to Hedda’s advice yet she would not stand Judge Brack exercising power over her she could not stand it. Hedda said “I am in your power nonetheless. Subject to your will and your demands. A slave, a slave then! [Rises impetuously.] No, I cannot endure the thought of that! Never” (Ibsen 909)! Since Hedda’s father taught her how to ride and shoot although she was a woman.

During the 1890’s, women were not allowed to hold pistols because it was muscular. Hedda rebel against famine stereotypes that women can be more than getting married, caring for the children and doing domestic chores at home. Although Hedda was married, the title of the play is Hedda Gabler which in my understanding refers to unmarried women since she still carries her maiden name and is not willing to submit to her husband as the head of the family but as equals. And like Hedda, some women today refuse to change their maiden names to their husbands because they don’t want to lose their individualism or identity as their own person.

There story “Hedda Gabler” can be study as realism because Hedda represented upper class people and women in general for power to prove that they can exercise power like men do. In

terms of upper class people Hedda portray the idea of middle class not being able to please his wife financial although I believe if she wanted an upper class for marriage she would have gotten one. Just as lower class people pay more taxes than the upper class even though they make the most money and still feed off the poor. Although we are not in the 19th century when this piece was written, nevertheless it touches on all the issues are happening now in the 21st century; where lower class are looked down upon, women fighting for equality which is impossible, and man wanting more power to rule over each other. That’s why this story has been the reality of that and it’s still a reality even today.