

Emotional Abuse in Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour"

العنف العاطفي في " قصة ساعة من الزمن " لكيت شوبان

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Abstract

Violence against women is a social illness and violent behavior directed at females, and it takes many forms, namely: emotional. To increase interest and raise awareness of this social issue as depicted in creative literary genres e.g., short stories, this research provides an analysis of the issue of the emotional abuse against women in the American context through textual analysis of Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour". This recognized short story illustrates the ugly reality of the pain and grief normally suffered by many American women living in a patriarchal society. By appropriating feminist, patriarchal, and analytical approaches of "The Story of an Hour", this paper provides evidence that Chopin's depiction of emotional abuse against women as a social deficiency is due to gender inequality and irrational social beliefs in the American context.

Keywords: American Fiction, Kate Chopin, Masculinity, Mrs. Mallard, Violence against women.

المخلص

العنف ضد المرأة مرض اجتماعي، وسلوك عنيف يستهدف الإناث، ويتخذ أشكالاً عديدة؛ العنف العاطفي بخاصة. ولزيادة الاهتمام بهذه القضية الاجتماعية، وزيادة الوعي بها كما هو موضح في الأنواع الأدبية الإبداعية - مثل القصص القصيرة - يقدم هذا البحث تحليلاً لقضية العنف العاطفي ضد النساء في السياق الأمريكي؛ من خلال تحليل نصي للكاتبة الأمريكية كيت شوبان " قصة ساعة من الزمن ". توضح هذه القصة القصيرة المعروفة أدبيا الواقع النبع للألم والحزن الذي تعاني منه -عادة- العديد من النساء الأمريكيات اللاتي يعشن في مجتمع ذكوري.

من خلال تبني مناهج نسوية وذكورية وتحليلية لـ " قصة ساعة من الزمن "، تقدم هذه الورقة دليلاً على أن تصوير شوبان للعنف العاطفي ضد المرأة؛ نقص اجتماعي يرجع إلى عدم المساواة بين الجنسين، وإلى المعتقدات الاجتماعية غير العقلانية في السياق الأمريكي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الرواية الأمريكية ، كيت شوبان ، الذكورية ، السيدة مالارد ، العنف ضد المرأة.

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1. Introduction

In the first half of the 19th century, American Literature has been regarded as a remarkable shift in women's pieces of literature, and the contemporary literary work is, nowadays, filled with lots of American female novelists, poets, and writers. Several American female writers including Kelley Reid, Brittney Black Rose, Carol Ann Duffy, Muriel Spark, and Stella Duffy have penned on issues related to women's affairs and social status. The social situation of women in the West in general, and in America in particular, is not different from what it is in other regions of the world. Throughout history, this situation has gone through stages of gender discrimination, which has led to the subjection of women to restrictions on their rights and freedoms. Some of these restrictions are based on religious beliefs, but many of these restrictions are cultural as well as familial customs and traditions rather than religious beliefs. This paper, however, focuses on Kate Chopin, a renowned American woman author who valiantly spoke about American women's realities, specifically issues that dealt with violence against women.

Human Rights Watch Organization defines emotional violence or abuse as the intentional infliction of distress, anguish, threat, coercion, or intimidation through verbal or non-verbal acts or the denial acts of women's civil rights (HRW, 2020). Women should be respected, given great attention, and viewed with a look of honor and pride, as women in all cultures are wives, mothers, sisters, daughters, aunts, and grandmothers. They also complement each other, as men and women establish a stable and successful home and form a social structure to achieve the noble goals of the family, such as living in an atmosphere of respect and affection, raising children, and so we make the woman in one level with the man in honor and reverence.

The issue of advancement and development of women to their rightful place is always on the increase as one of the main international and national current issues. Since the inception of the 19th century, several successive international conferences, namely, the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing have put this issue at the negotiating table so that a happy end is attainable for physically and emotionally battered women in the whole world. However, some governments back away from having some important protections for women's rights at home and pledge not to support other protections by introducing new laws with unreasonable restrictions on women's rights. In this regard and at the American level, the United States of America participated in these conferences and ratified the main provisions of the agreements that helped in strengthening the status of American women; however, reservations to many of the articles and clauses of these agreements remain.

Within the American context, violence against women in general and emotional abuse, in particular, is not a novel concern and issue because the statistics and figures show that it is a broadly prevalent phenomenon. Susan (2019) points out that the rates of violence against women, both emotional and physical, in America are alarmingly high, as there are three women killed every day in America. Based on previously proven statistics in the USA, emotional violence and cruelty are the prevalent forms of violence, and wives are the most exposed victim to this violence. In light of this grim picture of the prevalence of violence against women, namely: emotional abuse in the USA in general and Louisiana State in particular, it is well-timed to explore how it is represented in the American literature, i.e. short stories related to Kate Chopin's literary epoch. Such a literary analysis provides theoretical and conceptual gains necessary for the general literary study of how emotional violence or abuse are related and even deeply embodied in the husbands' patriarchal mentality. This is mainly maintained by the feminist standpoint that husbands inherently view wives as submissive, marginalized, and helpless partners. The current paper is a continuation of several efforts, investigating violence

against women in the American context, namely emotional violence or abuse. Along with providing a detailed analysis of how emotional violence/abuse has always been a logical outcome of beliefs that show men as superior partners and women as inferior partners, this paper presents findings and recommendations which can be useful for readings and analyses related to the phenomenon of emotional violence or abuse among victimized wives. Recent related pieces of the literature suggest that among the applicable methods to fathom a social ill such as violence against women, namely: emotional violence or abuse in a literary context is to analyze its structure and definition in a genre such as novels and short stories (Mike, 2019). Hence, what would be fresh and innovative is that this article provides evidence that Chopin's depiction of violence against women as a social deficiency is due to gender inequality and irrational social beliefs in the American context. This paper is, however, divided into four main sections apart from the introductory section and structured as follows. Section Two explores the Literature Review. Section Three examines the Conceptual Framework. Section Four presents the Textual Analysis, and in Section Five, the Conclusion is presented.

2. Literature Review

Chopin is an American author born and educated in St. Louis Missouri State in the USA. She has gained a strong reputation as a literary feminist figure in Modern American Literature since the early 1890s. She is a creative writer and a contemporary prolific who has produced two anthologies of short stories, short stories, namely: "The Story of an Hour", "The Storm", and "A Pair of Silk Stockings", novels, i.e. "At Fault" and "The Awakening", translations, and articles published in periodicals. In her works, Chopin explores numerous areas of autobiography, human and feminist literature, human rights issues, criticisms, childhood, women, and social justice. Adams (2013) asserts that Chopin has always revolted against the intolerable and painful restraints and traditions practiced against American women in her community in the eighties of the 19th century. Chopin's novels, articles, and short stories furnish the readers with genuine images and reflections on the U.S reality of the problems and complexities surrounding women. The style in Chopin addresses the issue of emotional abuse and violence with all its damaging repercussions reflects the non-stop cycle of emotional abuse and violence and the extent to which women face gender-based violence and issues in their urban and rural communities in Chopin's time.

As a social flaw and disorder, emotional abuse is not an offshoot of Chopin's imaginative skills in writing novels and short stories, but rather a reality honestly represented in "The Story of an Hour". Omar (2016) asserts that "In the eighties of the previous century, women in the USA are positioned in a social construct ruled by severe religious norms and rigid family habits fueling personal discrimination and emotional abuse and violence against them at home". In the same vein, "The emotional abuse endangering a huge percentage of American married females' lives is profoundly rooted, embedded, and inherited in the U.S family norms, attitudes, and acts" (Hussein, 2010, p.2).

With an eye to eliminating the scope of emotional abuse and violence and being supportive of forming an equal society away from patriarchal control, Chopin through her second short story "The Story of an Hour" has fruitfully shown the actual everyday lives of ordinary U.S have married women. "The Story of an Hour", one of Chopin's most renowned works, has been regarded as provocative, moving, tragic, and controversial upon its release. "The Story of an Hour" is hence - set in St. Louis in Missouri State in the USA in the late nineteenth century - significant to tracing the occurrences of married women's emotional abuse and their social status. The title of the short story is an actual representation of the time passing between the

moments when Mrs. Mallard, the protagonist, knows that her husband Mr. Brently has died in a train accident and the moment she is retold that Mr. Brently is still alive; introducing the female heroine, Mrs. Mallard with her story of suffering and pain. The short story revolves around Mrs. Mallard who is an ordinary housewife living a very unchanging and routine life and suffering from heart troubles as well. Once upon a day, her sister, Josephine, tells her the bad news attained from Richards her husband's friend that her husband has died in a railroad accident and Mr. Brently is on the list of the dead people.

Due to the current health condition of Mrs. Mallard, Josephine needs to be very careful while telling her sister about the death of her husband. Having known that her husband is dead now, Louise goes up to her room crying and locks herself for some time. In her room, Mrs. Mallard sits in her room alone, crying and looking at the sights around her, thinking about how she has lived the previous days with Mr. Brently, whom she has respect and loves for him. In her heart, however, she has carried a lot of pain and sorrow for her life and her days passing without feeling her strength, uniqueness, and independence as a female far from the male authority of the husband. She looks around with happiness, hope, audacity, and independence, and she is one hundred percent convinced that the coming days will bring her much happiness, individuality, superiority, and abundant goodness. Mrs. Mallard, who still remembers her husband and will cry over him again when she sees his corpse shortly, is now living in a state of endless happiness.

In the meantime, Josephine decides to get Louise out of her room, warning her that she may get sick and collapse because of this traumatic situation if she pays no attention to her health condition. At first, Louise refuses but she finally opens the door, and they both go down to the first floor, where Richard waits for what will happen. And then, the unexpected happens, the front door opens without prior notice, and Mr. Brently shows up. It is apparent that he has not been in the train accident or even has known about it. Josephine screams, and Richards tries in vain to stop Louise from seeing him. Doctors arrive and announce that Louise has died of a heart attack caused by happiness.

With that being said, through the portrayal of Mrs. Mallard, Chopin presents a strong critique of gender inequality, women's marginalization, and the ongoing cycle of female emotional abuse and prevailing oppression in the American masculine society. Quite a lot of past papers are written on Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour", but none has dealt with the issue of emotional abuse against women expressly. The short story has been investigated and examined from different viewpoints including biographical criticism, technological reading, social justice, romantic criticism, sexual reading, and issues of human and social rights.

On the subject of Chopin's first novel *At Fault*, it tells the story of a young widow dying to reunite her needs with those of the people she shall manage and be responsible for in their daily life. Several scholars and readers speak of *At Fault* as a divorce-based novel, chiefly focusing on divorce's ethics. Others think of the novel's emphasis on economic reforms and other subjects of violence and alcoholism in the American South. Some readers, however, have spoken of the novel's elements of the celebration of married love and hopefulness in family life.

On the topic of the second novel *The Awakening* by Chopin, it is set in Louisiana State in 1899. The plot revolves around Edna Pontellier and her struggle between her snowballing unorthodox views on motherhood and femininity with the dominant social beliefs and attitudes of the American South. It is regarded among the first American novels that address the issues of

women without condescension. Importantly, it is also seen as a milestone of early feminism, producing a mixed reaction from modern critics, scholars, and readers. *The Awakening's* mixture of emotional complexity, definite social commentary, and realistic narrative makes it a pioneer of American modernist literature, prefiguring literary pieces of work by William Faulkner and Ernest Hemingway.

In his biographical reading of *The Teeth of Desire: The Awakening and The Descent of Man*, Bender (1991), an English professor at Arizona State University, argues that the 1890s' writing is influenced by Charles Darwin's theory of sexual selection. Particularly, Chopin's views of courtship and love are modified to be gloomy. This, however, finds its expression in "The Story of an Hour" when Mrs. Mallard questions the meaning of love and ultimately rejects it as being meaningless.

Foote (2013), a researcher at Purdue University, argues in his article *Speed That Kills: The Role of Technology in Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour"*, that "The Story of an Hour" can be understood as a warning and commentary about technology, mainly the telegraph and the railroad. He claims that the railroad is perhaps the cause of distance between Mrs. Mallards and many other couples of the time. Thus, distancing home and work from each other, and eliminating the opportunity for spouses to be together. Foote also argues that the cause of Mrs. Mallard's desire for sovereignty is that she and her husband did not spend time together and that the privacy Mrs. Mallard enjoys made her less close to her husband, thus seeking her independence.

By examining Chopin from the cognitive poetics/stylistic perspectives, Bareem (2006) claims that Chopin's literary works, throughout her life, should be considered from the perspective of literary/stylistic perception of the text. The study emphasizes the importance of linguistic analysis of the text in addition to literary analysis, using theories in the field of literary/stylistic perception.

Based on a brief literature review of Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour", it can be said that they lend themselves to numerous interpretations to acknowledge that Chopin has made all the required efforts to ensure that famous themes and characters incorporated into "The Story of an Hour" provide evidence that Kate Chopin's depiction of violence against women as a social deficiency is due to gender inequality and irrational social beliefs in the American context. This article as a discourse analysis is a continuing effort to extend the analysis related to the fact that the said Chopin's work's well-known themes and characters furnish a piece of evidence that the American women are mainly victims of exploitation and abuse in the 19th century.

3. Conceptual Framework

Feminism is defined as a set of movements and ideologies fully aimed to achieve women's personal, gender, social, political, and economic rights along with ensuring the elimination of gender bias. Feminism also aims at creating a positive social stance and equal opportunities for women in society and families to eliminate all forms of violence against them owing to the prevalent gender inequality. Feminism, therefore, offers a substantial examination and analysis of violence against women in general and emotional abuse in particular by addressing the reasons, the basis, and the global increasing number of cases concerning such phenomena (Haddad, 2009). On the other hand, according to Nsour (2008) the importance of feminism, as a literary theory, lies in examining women's ongoing marginalization and victimization in a male-dominated culture as well as a social construction organized in support of men.

From a feminist viewpoint, emotional abuse and gender inequality are significant concepts concerning the issue of violence against women, thus advocating all approved gender stereotyping roles hence justifying the prevalent concept of patriarchy. Undoubtedly, feminism aspires for equal political and social opportunities for women in society as well as aspiring for the abolition of all forms of emotional abuse against them, predominantly those that are naturally occurring. Of the forms of engendered violence are emotional abuse and violation of human rights, alongside other forms of abuse including harassment, emotional abuse, and domestic violence. Nonetheless, according to Harne and Radford (2008), it is the most pervasive least-documented abuse of human rights in the world. As a major form of human rights deprivation and gender-based discrimination, addressing the emotional abuse phenomenon creates a platform to clarify the issue along with the wherefores and whys behind its occurrence and pervasiveness in the world in general, and in the USA in particular regardless of religion, race, and culture.

From a feminist perspective, Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2020) defined emotional violence or abuse against women as "the intentional infliction of distress, anguish, threat, coercion, or intimidation through verbal or non-verbal acts or the denial acts of women's civil rights". In this article, in the late nineteenth-century American women, victims are regarded as marginalized, oppressed, powerless, and inferior at the domestic and social levels. In the USA, women struggle with oppression due to the masculine social construction where males are always in the lead.

Another key subject matter is that the article shows a real contribution to the topic of the abuse of women as represented in Kate Chopin's work as it engages with contemporary scholarship by tackling patriarchy in Chopin's works. With that being said, patriarchy refers to "A social organization marked by the supremacy of the father in the family, the legal dependence of wife and children and the reckoning of descent and inheritance in the male line" (Qasim et al., 2015). The first reason for the oppression of women rests in the ideological belief of social and physical differences between men and women. In patriarchal societies, males dominate from their stand of power as religious, economic, financial, political, and social spheres are by tradition governed by males. In the same mood, Kate Chopin, close to other authors living at the end of the 1850s, is deemed one of the pioneering witnesses of the role of women in society in general and marriage life in particular.

Chopin and other short story writers have perceived dissatisfaction and emotional oppression of women, and, in their works, they have spilled much ink on examining how males' suppression has impacted the mental and emotional health of women. At that time, due to the patriarchal nature of the males, family, and society, a significant number of women committed suicide, got a stroke, or chose to kill themselves to escape from patriarchal society and masculine dominance (Hassan, 2017).

In their work, there has been a main focus on the theme of oppression of married and unmarried women as an extra means of their liberation. As put by several scholars, in a society with a patriarchal mentality with the use of male superiority and dominance, a husband on purpose humiliates his wife by destroying her psychological and emotional health. At the religious level, individuals are shaped by numerous differences, although they are distinguished by the faith's intensity. However, during history, societies regard these peculiarities and differences as reasons to disrespect other people of other creeds, colors, and genders, and women largely have lower positions and rights compared to men.

Accordingly, emotional violence or abuse against women is regarded as a global social issue requiring it to be eliminated for its awful consequences on the victims. On the other hand, the scope of emotional violence or abuse against women is focused on patriarchal and conservative societies including the USA in the late nineteenth century in which Chopin's short story is set. According to Khawaja, (2012), emotional abuse is referred to all acts of condescending including but not limited to offensive insulting, demeaning women's success and physical appearances, scorning her feeling to destroy her personality and have full control over her, thus at the long-term damaging her physical health. Issa (2018) continues to say that:

Emotional violence involves intimidating a woman from the consequences of disobedience, destroying their personal property, not allowing her to pass or freely move, and harassing her by not allowing her to eat or drink in a quiet environment. Furthermore, a man forces his wife to cherish him at all times even if it does not fit her, or to persuade her to wear clothes that evoke instinctive instincts (p. 3).

According to Brassard, Hart, and Hardy (1993) emotional abuse (maltreatment) is described as "a repeated pattern of behavior that conveys to women that they are worthless, unloved, unwanted, or only of value in meeting another's needs" (p. 715).

Manipulating and humiliating victims' emotions are amongst the most frequently used patterns of emotional violence. According to Captain (2018), emotional violence against women comes in various forms, and its consequences are severe touching victims' personalities in particular and their future in general: through demeaning or humiliating her privately or in public, threatening her for publicizing her private details, attacking her personality or other behaviors, and downplaying her value and achievements by telling "You got this work because of my efforts, or you are nothing without me". Moreover, Captain (2018), states that assistance and intervention are needed when females show any sign of emotional abuse including but not limited to constant grief, anxiety, fear, insecurity, and a strong feeling of escaping everything, avoiding talking about certain subjects, sense of distrusting family or friends, along with blaming herself for all marital issues she is going through. Therefore, Suleiman (2017, p. 2) indicates that emotional abuse causes direct or indirect harm to one's sense of stability and security, leading to depression, inferiority, and lack of self-esteem. Although Thompson (1993) clarifies that emotional abuse may not involve physical harm, it wounds the victim and may even have ongoing consequences such as "the wounds of emotionally abusive relationships are not repaired, and their damage accumulates over time" (p. 1). Consequently, Christine (2015) states that the issue of women's emotional abuse:

lies in the lack of understanding of the significant role of women in society, which inevitably leads to the reduction and marginalization of their role in contributing to the building of family and society as a wife, a mother, and a sister, stressing that it is the door leading to other types of violence such as verbal violence and moral violence, physical violence, and sometimes sexual violence (p. 7).

Hence, the Louisiana-born American philosopher, alongside the concept of feminist and analytical research approaches is outlined because their details are reflected in one way or another in Kate Chopin's various literary works in general and "The Story of an Hour" in particular. With that being said that this manuscript is critical enough as it contributes much in terms of literary theory, literary criticism, and original knowledge.

4. Textual Analysis

Numerous women suffer from and fall victims to the emotional abuse and its damage. Regrettably, emotional abuse is still completely disregarded by most community members, specifically its victims. Referring to Issa's (2018) brief account of emotional abuse previously stated, images of emotional abuse can be easily found in Chopin's short story.

In the story, Mrs. Mallard is being denied her emotional needs by her husband and even by society. Even though emotional abuse is not tangibly shown in black and white, Mrs. Mallard's thoughts and emotions are what mainly matter. Chopin's story is shown in ink in an epoch whose female generation is vastly influenced and dominated by the Alpha macho man as it is called nowadays. Kate Chopin openly shows the emotional oppression experienced by her and other women saying "Free! Body and soul free!" (p.2). Nowadays, several women speak of the struggles and hardships to escape from tough, unhealthy, and unproductive relationships. Like other emotionally victimized women, Mrs. Mallard shows her feelings as she goes through an experience filled with emotional isolation, aspiring to be free once again. Women in Mrs. Mallard's days are not as privileged as the women of the current generation. The sentence "Free! Body and soul free!" (p.2) reflects the happy feelings of Mrs. Mallard, as it is possibly the first time she gets rid of the entire personal and spousal constraints and restrictions. Women now are more empowered than the women in Mrs. Mallard's time as they can have more to say and do in their life. Unlike the women in Mrs. Mallard's time who are only helpless stay-home mothers, women now go to schools and institutes. Being stay-home mothers is an outcome of the concept of the alpha macho man produced by the patriarchal mentality of that generation. As a result, Mrs. Mallard has limitations on what she can say, feel, and even do.

Physical abuse has been always considered to be a huge problem for many families by many families in general and victimized wives in particular. However, emotional abuse is still the most damaging form of domestic abuse. As put by Williams (2018), emotional abuse badly pushes women to explode with irrational manners and behavior and rebel against their nature of leniency, goodness, and sanity. This is easily seen in the unexpected reaction of Mrs. Mallard to the death of her husband brought about by the emotional lapse and psychological gap between Louise and her husband. Chopin says "She wept at once, with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister's arms" (p.1).

Importantly, although Mr. Brently does not show intentions of abuse, there is a considerable level of emotional abandonment and neglect as Louise views the dependent role as a characteristic of wives during Chopin's period. This is gleaned from Mrs. Mallard's reaction when she is aware of Mr. Mallard's death, as Chopin says "She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability to accept its significance" (p.1). Unlike other ordinary wives, Louise has never thought about the sadness and sorrow because she has lost her husband; instead, she irrepressibly whispers, "Free! Body and soul free!" (p.2). This reaction reflects that Mrs. Mallard is emotionally oppressed and lives under the strict patriarchal rule of her deceased husband. As a result, she is now happy because the mental freedom from Brently is attainable. This is explicitly stated in the following excerpt "Her fancy was running riot along those days ahead of her. Spring days, and summer days, and all sorts of days that would be her own" (p.3).

In the same vein, the emotional abuse is represented in the lack of feelings of independence by Louise throughout her life. When Josephine and Richards tell Louise that her husband was killed in a train crash, she reacts with obvious sorrow and grief. Though her reaction is possibly

more violent than other sad wives', it is still a proper one. Away from others, however, Louise now realizes that she becomes an independent woman no longer suffering from emotional abuse; she is now completely independent to embark on a new life full of hope, audacity, enlivenment, and excitement. Yet, Louise at first attempts to get rid of the new joy she feels, to "beat it back with her will" (p.1). Louise's resistance is an obvious confirmation that she has been forbidden from living the pleasure of independence due to the emotional abuse experienced by her.

"The Story of an Hour" mainly rests on the literary devices of imagery and symbolism used to show the state of her emotional abuse and hunger for freedom. Chopin shows that the emotional state of Mrs. Mallard is classified into three stages: falling into grief, getting a sense of newborn freedom, and finally reaching the misery of the newborn freedom's loss. Chopin says "There was something coming to her and she was waiting for it, fearfully. What was it? She did not know; it was too subtle and elusive to name. But she felt it, creeping out of the sky, reaching toward her through the sounds, the scents, and the color that filled the air. Now her bosom rose and fell tumultuously" (p.2).

Another significant issue is the setting employed by Chopin which also functions as a sign of comfort and relaxation for Mrs. Mallard from her ongoing emotional abuse practiced by Mr. Mallard. When Louise comes up to her room, she uncovers her real emotions, as this room alongside its elements shows that she is safer than the days spent with Mr. Mallard. The "open window" cited in "There stood, facing the open window" (p.1) is a symbol of a new start for Louise's life filled with fantasies of freedom away from her husband's patriarchal mentality and oppression. Likewise, her room represents a haven and a place of strength and empowerment to start a new free lifestyle as Chopin says "She would have no one follow her" (p.1). Importantly, the following metaphors "delicious breath of rain", the "peddler", "a distant song" and the sparrows cited in "The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves" (p.1) are all symbols of the spring semester demonstrating a new hope for a healthier, freer, and stronger life for Louise.

More importantly, although Louise no longer feels restricted and surrounded by the husband's constraints in her spousal relationship, she still shows her loyalty, respect, and attachment to Mr. Brently. With the bad news spreading about her husband's death, Mrs. Mallard, like other women losing their lovers, weeps knowing that she will weep once more when she sees her deceased husband as Chopin says "She knew that she would weep again when she saw him" (p.1).

Miller (2006) stated that there are several Ideological State Apparatuses namely the "embodied in the prison, the house, the school, and discipline became, quite precisely a topic of Chopinian representation" (123), thus transforming individuals into docile and submissive subjects. In regards to this, the heroines being depicted in Chopin's novels, like Mrs. Mallard, should be submissive to the patriarchal mentality's demands. In her short story, Chopin's famous character Mrs. Mallard is promised to have temporary access to cultural freedom and be free from a husband with a patriarchal mentality. As gleaned from the short story, the story gives an insight into the disturbing unhealthy situation where a woman like Mrs. Mallard suffers from a lack of intimate and healthy relationships caused by a husband with a patriarchal mentality leading her into a continuous cycle of violence until she dies. Chopin obviously clarifies the fact that ordinary U.S women struggle from a masculine context that personally

and socially exploits them. Chopin's short story precisely depicts the emotional abuse's devastating consequences on U.S women in the eighties of the 19th century.

5. Conclusion

In a nutshell, contemporary discussions, research, and seminars have addressed the prevalence of emotional abuse against women and procedures to prevent it. This social and familial problem is highlighted in conjunction with relevant national and international institutions to raise awareness about women's personal and marital rights of women to eliminate it from society and attain a new generation of young people to resist all trends and tendencies of emotional abuse against women. Disappointingly, all these efforts lead to zero improvements as the number of cases of emotional abuse is on the rise against wives in the world in general and the USA in particular. Hence, pivotal roles are played by authors, namely: Kate Chopin to address the issue of emotional abuse against U.S women and show their miseries and forbidden rights through the works of short stories as a platform for further writing and discussions. In the meantime, Mikkonen (2009) clarifies that "some fictions, and even sub-genres of fiction, have an aim to make truth-claims" (p. 146), where Chopin's "The Story of an Hour" can be viewed as a worthy representation of the distressing social conditions inflicting U.S women since eighties of the 19th century.

The depiction of the short story's heroine, Mrs. Mallard, draws the message that emotional abuse against women remains a prevailing social illness and familial disorder throughout the USA. Wan (2003) clearly states that "The Story of an Hour" illustrates the magnitude of emotional abuse against women in American society as a logical consequence of the patriarchal mentality that "connotes a denial of autonomy, individuality, and freedom for its victims" (p. 12). Significantly, Chopin's shreds of literature pinpoint the harmful consequences of emotional abuse against women, particularly amongst the American female victims. As confirmed by Abd-Rabbo (2019), the social distinction and freedom can only be attainable under the prevailing social standards that may lead to the excellence and achievement of the women, and thus the characters respond differently to the prevalent social norms and traditions. What makes Chopin among the greatest short story writers and novelists and considered by some critics a voice of her age is her understanding of the American society' tradition and norms in one hand. On the other hand, being concerned about women's social status is the prevailing feature in her literary shreds of work. Indeed, what Chopin attempted to achieve, throughout her literary kinds of work, is to teach her male readers to be relatively highly civilized people. Therefore, among the main themes of Chopin's short stories are namely: Male-female relationships, family, ethical standards, and honesty in a way to lead people in general and males in particular to their social obligations.

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