Traian Margan

American Literature

Dr. Williams

Abstract

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My paper will mainly focus on Edna’s awakening and what feminism was originally intended to be. I will examine why exactly Edna had to die and how she found herself, along with how feminism started and what feminism entailed for women of that time period. I will show the importance of independence for women. It is important for women to be their own person and not have to be married or live life under a man’s rule in order to survive. I will also incorporate Chesnutt’s ‘The House Behind the Cedars’ because it too shows the awakening a main female character has and what she must do in order to feel normal. I will compare Rena and Edna in a way that will show how two very different women come to almost the same realization, which they are not who they want to be. They want to break society’s hold on them. I will also explore how both Chestnutt’s ‘The House Behind the Cedars’ and Chopin’s ‘Awakening” destroyed the writers’ careers.