



## WOMAN'S CONDITION IN ANNIE BAKER'S PLAYS

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### ABSTRACT :

Generally, all dramatists present both male and female characters in their plays. But some playwright's plays finds only male characters or only female characters. Without woman, characters cannot reach the play on culmination and an end. Woman characters are very important role play in the play. Annie Baker (b.1981) and many other American playwrights gave importance to mingling both male and female. No, any play, Annie Baker has written without woman characters.



**KEYWORDS :** female characters , Woman characters , playwright's plays.

### INTRODUCTION:

Annie Baker's woman characters focus on the social and psychological points of view. Some major social issues are related to Annie Baker's woman characters in her plays. The condition of woman characters in modern contemporary American society has faced with social victims, psychological depression, social problems, alienated condition, and the struggle for existence, conflict between tradition and modernity and cultural clashes.

The research paper has focused on the condition of woman characters in Annie Baker's plays. The focus area is pointed out select the woman characters condition in contemporary American society through Annie Baker's plays. *Body Awareness* (2008), *Circle Mirror Transformation* (2009), *Nocturama* (2010), *The Aliens* (2010), *The Flick* (2014), *John* (2015) and *The Antipodes* (2017).

Annie Baker's first play *Body Awareness* (2008) is focused on two women characters and two men's characters. Woman characters are Phyllis, Joyce and men characters Jared and Frank Bonitatibus. My focus area is the condition of woman characters in Annie Baker's plays points out only woman characters' conditions in contemporary American society to study Annie Baker's plays as mentioned in this paragraph.

In the play, *Circle Mirror Transformation* Lauren is presented as social victim. She lives in alienation, depression and as an orphan girl without her mistake, though her parents are alive. Lauren is a sixteen years girl joined Yoga ball studio class with her friends. She is very beautiful and candid girl. All the yoga ball studio class members have gone, scattered due the class closed. But these yoga class participants don't forget the memory which they spent together.

Ten years later, Lauren and James meet each other and friendly enquired one another. In discussion, Lauren says she is living in alienation because her parents had divorced from each other after thirty years their marriage. Lauren is an innocent girl but she suffered and punished lot due to her parent's separation. Lauren becomes an orphan girl without dying her parents. Annie Baker shows drawback of family free society. They have the freedom to be separated from each other any time. Lauren thinks that her parents'

decision is right because they were adjusting each other unnecessarily. Her parent's separation is good decision. It means marriage is a compromise, adjustment and compelled bondage between male and female. Her parents were not happy with each other. Mutual understanding is the major problem of the contemporary society in America. Thus, Annie Baker presents through the character Lauren that separation is better than the clashes.

In the play, *Circle Mirror Transformation* points out some autobiographical elements of the playwright. Annie Baker might be showing comparison and similarity with the character Lauren. Annie Baker also gets the experience of divorce and lives in depression in her life.

In the play, *Nocturama*, Amanda, Skaggs, Judy and Gary are an important character presented. Amanda has been temporarily accepted by the white culture but not for a permanent relationship. Skaggs loves Amanda for physical pleasure. Later, Skaggs rejected her relationship and had broken up. Skaggs shows love for Amanda but not actually loves. Amanda feels insecure with the Skaggs because of unfaithfulness. Amanda had felt insecure in the male dominated society. She has faced the social problem because she is black. Blackness is the natural. It is not Amanda's mistake to bear in black culture but she punished the culture of discrimination. She belongs to black culture. These white people and male domination society never forget their traditional attitude. They have never forgotten bad to treat the black and woman in the contemporary modern period too. Annie Baker blamed to male dominated society and white culture in the play, *Nocturama*. Entire play a black girl Amanda was searching her place in the society. But finally she had crashed down. She cannot get love, security and faith.

Annie Baker presents various types of women in her different plays. Her women's have belonged to upper class, middle class family. Phyllis, Joyce, Marty, Genevieve, Theresa, Judy or Mertis these women are facing social-psychological problems. All these women are independent and some of them are highly reputed in the society. But as a woman every woman trapped in social problems like lesbian, alienation, feminism, loves and breaks up and so on.

Sex and psychology of the woman are also focused by the playwright in the plays. Sex and psychology have very closely related to human life. Women are more thinking about sex and sexual practices. Woman's psychological impacts fall on their sexual behavior. For example, Rose in the play, *The Flick* and Theresa in *Circle Mirror Transformation*, Amanda in *Nocturama* etc.

### **BODY AWARENESS (2008)**

Phyllis and Joyce are reputed women in the play. Phyllis is a professor in the academic department and Joyce is a high school teacher. Both these women do not have husbands. They both are living with each other in a lesbian relationship. These women are feminist and practical. Phyllis uses to read a novel about feminism and Joyce supports her. Phyllis has no children, but Joyce has, a boy. Joyce has no husband, but she has ex-boyfriend. She is in living relationship with Gary. In the play, Annie Baker tries to show professional women. Though, they are independent, economical stand, but live in problematic life. Phyllis faces in the society as a lesbian and Joyce faces to the society as a mother of insane son Jared.

### **CIRCLE MIRROR TRANSFORMATION (2009)**

Marty, Theresa and Lauren are the women characters in the play. Marty is an old woman happily lives with her husband. She is satisfied woman in the play. But Theresa and Lauren are facing many social problems. Theresa shows in the play as a friend, beloved, and finally break up with Schultz. Her natural attraction towards a male made her disappointed. And another character Lauren is a teenage girl. She is suffering from alienation. She has regretted by the loss of her parents shelter because her parents are divorced after thirty years of their marriage.

**THE ALIENS (2010)**

Andrea is an imaginary female character. She does not appear in the play. Jasper complains Andrea was his beloved but unfaithful. Jasper spreads gossips that Andrea has many lovers. But Jasper is going to write a novel about her. He appreciates Andrea's beauty, nature and love qualities in his novel.

**NOCTURAMA (2010)**

Amanda and Judy are two different kinds of women in the play. Amanda is a black girl but lives among the white people. And Judy has a boyfriend. Judy is a woman of middle age. She has a young boy as Skaggs. The black girl initially lives with a white boyfriend as a beloved but soon she dis- hearted from him. She understands these white people never accepted her. She feels an unsecure love relationship with the white boy Skaggs. She complained against the nature and blamed to the society. The other female character Judy is adjusting her life with Gary after the loss of her husband. Gary is a second husband for Judy. Judy is quite a settled woman in good position. She has her own home and enough property. But without her own husband she becomes helpless. She meets to the socio-psychological problem as mental disturbance.

**THE FLICK(2013)**

In the play, Rose is a young and beautiful female character. She is nymphomania. She is always playing with a plastic penis. It is a toy for her. Rose behaves like a lesbian but actually she is not a lesbian but hypersexual. She always sinks deep into the sexual feeling. Sexual impacts have so much dominated on her mind. She was working as a projectionist in the theatre. She has promoted soon than the other senior workers. Here owner took the partial decision and gave a chance to girl first to promote. Rose uses to sexual tricks to attract the people. The same trick she uses for promoting herself. Rose belongs to a middle class family. But she is an economical exploited woman in the play.

**JOHN (2015)**

In this play Genevieve, Mertis and Jenny socially victimized women. Genevieve and Mertis have no husband because both have lost their husband in an accident. These both the women are widows without children. And Jenny is a young woman married to Elias. But soon Elias leaves her and Jenny suffered to live in isolation. She is suffering a lot of pain from the male dominated society. Genevieve and Mertis are traditional women in the play because they believe in god, soul, ghost, superstition but Jenny was a practical woman one day she also caught by the terror of soul or ghost. John is a symbol of soul, ghost or god for them. Genevieve says John is my husband's soul that he is her god. But Jenny thinks John may be a ghost. Thus, these women characters trapped under the fear of superstition.

Thus, the research paper is focusing on the place of women in contemporary modern American society with special reference to Annie Baker's play. From Annie Baker's plays are consciously selected the condition of woman characters and their social status either good or bad.

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