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THE THEMES OF TO ROOM NINETEEN STORY BY DORRIS LESSING

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Abstract: Doris Lessing is a well-known novelist and writer from the United Kingdom today. Her famous short story, To Room Nineteen, describes Susan, an intellectual lady who becomes lost in the chaos of housework and strives to find her real personality, which sends her into a spiral of insanity and ultimately leads to suicide. This article focuses on the themes of the story: To Room Nineteen.

Key words: marriage, family, explorations, identity, suicide, restriction, cultur,Conformity, freedom

Introduction

Since she is a gifted writer who is committed to the lofty goal of changing people's consciousness, Dorris Lessing is a standout author. The narrative voice that permeates her enormous body of fiction is that of an intense thinker who explores, observes, and describes contemporary society but whose fundamental understanding of human life is that the individual, and by extension the human race, is meant to go beyond simple recognition of perceived reality and to struggle with visions of the possible. She makes the case in her writings again and time again that if life on this planet is to survive, then individuals must alter their perspectives of themselves, the outside world, and interpersonal connections. She has received numerous prestigious awards over the past 50 years, including the Somerset Maugham Award in 1954, the French Prix Medicis Prize in 1976, the W. H. Smith Literary Award in 1986, the Internazionale Mondello Award in 1987, and the Companion of Honor from the Royal Society of Literature (2001). The Nobel Prize in Literature was given to her in 2007. Her literary accomplishments were greatly affirmed by it. Lessing was hailed as "that epicist of the feminine experience, who with skepticism, fire, and imaginative strength has submitted a divided civilization to scrutiny," according to the Swedish Academy. One of the leading figures in English contemporary literature, Lessing has garnered widespread acclaim for her brilliant works. Critics have become generally interested in her work.

Methods and materials

A Man and Two Women, a collection of Lessing's short stories that paved the way for her to establish herself as a renowned short story author, featured To Room Nineteen for the first time. A middle-aged English woman named Susan is the subject of the book To Room Nineteen. Susan's life in a suburb of London during the mid-20th century focused around her husband, her four children, and her home. Late-twenties bride and groom Susan and Matthew Rawlings had four kids. Everyone believed they were a perfect fit who had chosen wisely throughout their lives. When the youngest child started school, Susan, who abandoned her work to be a mother, did not feel as free as she had hoped. She felt as though she had nothing to do and was never alone. Her time was spent waiting for the kids to get home, talking to the maid, or getting dinner ready. She started to withdraw from Matthew and get concerned, and her husband started having an affair. Finally, she leased a hotel room every afternoon so that she could spend some time by herself just sitting and going on a self-discovery journey. Her husband found her after assuming she was having an affair. For her husband's sake, she even made up a fake boyfriend named Michael Plant. She informed him that she was not having an affair since she understood that his reasoned world would not understand her "irrational" emotions. She returned to room 19 the following day and killed herself there.

Results

From my perspective the main theme of the story is marriage and family: explorations in identity:Lessing depicts Martin and Susan, a couple who meet and wed sensibly, we are

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informed, a little later than their group of friends, and this does feel like a contemporary union and coming together of thoughts. They are portrayed as equals and both have respectable occupations. Blamires, Harry. (1982) claimed that they have a large suburban house that is the definition of middle-class solidity and four healthy children. Lessing has thus far created the impression of a sort of "golden pair," but the reader can see that this ideal will soon crumble. She seems to exaggerate the perfection she speaks about in an effort to emphasize the point that many people might like to make—namely, that this woman has nothing to be unhappy about.

It was typical of this couple that they had a son first, then a daughter, then twins, son and daughter. Everything right, appropriate, and what everyone would wish for, if they could choose. (p151)

I think that next theme of the story is Conformity and Restriction: Susan feels pressure from both her social circle and herself to follow particular cultural norms. Social limitations are imposed on her because of her class, location, and gender. Certain cultural constraints have imposed restrictions on her class and location. She must purchase a pricey, sizable suburban home and keep it well because she belongs to the middle class, which takes a lot of time and money. Bloom, Harold (1986) mentioned that her interactions in the neighborhood are confined to those with other middle-class households and their personal assistants. On the other hand Booth, Wayne (1961) argued that Susan is forced to acknowledge that she and Matthew "had everything they had hoped and had prepared for," yet she quickly experiences a sense of flatness and constraint. She fights to regain a sense of self after realizing she has sacrificed her identity for her family as the youngest two of her four children start school. Susan needs to stop playing the traditional roles that she previously did in order to achieve this. As a result, if she stops accepting her responsibilities as a wife and mother, she will no longer be acting reasonably and logically, according to the accepted definition.

Discussions

Without freedom, Susan cannot exist, and freedom is a basic human need. It is a type of insanity to refuse that basic need, as Susan has done for years. Hence, she is acting sanely when she demands her right to feel and satiate this urge. The ironic interaction between crazy and insanity is most pronounced in the story's concluding pages. Fishburn, Katherine(1985) said that Susan creates a "logical" explanation for her stay there in order to protect the degree of independence she has attained in Room Nineteen. Susan is aware of Matthew's desire for a plausible justification for her absences—a behavior that mirrors and, in turn, excuses his own infidelity Susan says, "Oh, how absurd! I see the irony in this situation in the room. How ludicrous! How embarrassing!" By describing her suicide as a "fructifying dream that seemed to caress her within, like the circulation of her blood," the irony is furthered. Susan's misfortune is that she wanders "off into the dark river" of death because she thinks suicide is the only way for her to achieve full self-awareness and freedom.

Conclusion

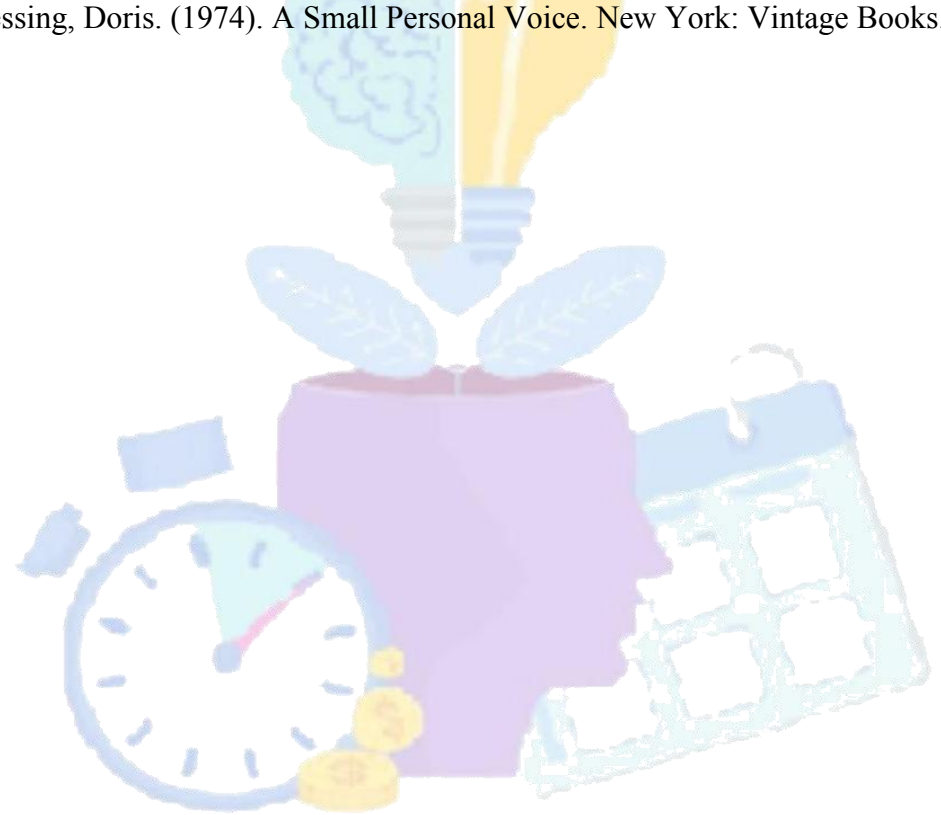
When women were mired in the social conservatism of the early 1960s and unable to see the promise of a future that would encourage choice, fulfillment, and personal freedom, To Room Nineteen explored the conflicting impulses of intellect and instinct, mind and heart, against the backdrop of early 1960s London. Lessing shed light on the constraints imposed on women at the time and their tragic results in this novel. Using the images examined in this study, Lessing explained how Susan's quest for an authentic self drove her insane and ultimately led to her suicide. With its distinctive creative attractiveness, To Room Nineteen eloquently depicts the real and typical living situation of modern women. Susan, like other women, suffers much from the male-centered society that denies them the freedom to engage in independent research and intellectual growth. Because of their constrained perspective and financial resources, they lack actual influence and authority in society. The wonders of the outside world are cut off from them. They are bored, restless, perplexed, and depressed because of the invisible chains. Is it better to

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be the devil in the house or the angel? Susan's story demonstrates once more how gradual the movement for women against the patriarchal culture has been.

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