

ABSTRACT

The main aim of the thesis is to explore female characters in Eugene O'Neill's (1888-1953) plays in a well defined light. Female representation has always been an important issue but every intellectual has a different way of approaching and interpreting the matter under consideration forming a wide range of divergent perspectives. If we are to classify O'Neill as a writer then Feminism or feminist theory would not appear to be a very obvious route to characterize his plays. Tagging O'Neill's work as 'Feminist' would be like reducing its versatility and depth to a very basic level; but his feminine world has multiple under-layers which need the upper-layer to be ripped and the under-world to be explored at much deeper level.

So, by using the methodology of textual analysis of some plays by O'Neill (i.e. *Mourning Becomes Electra*, *Long Days' Journey into Night*, *Desire under the Elms*, and *Strange Interlude*) along with theoretical framework informed by Feminism, Psychoanalysis, Existentialism, Greek Mythology, Abjection and Objectivity as explained above, this research attempts to explore the feminine streak in O'Neill plays-- not in the substratal sense of the word but in the much deeper dimensions. It aims to get a wider, comprehensive picture of the female characters in Eugene

O'Neill's plays—a picture that would lead to a better insight into the various aspects of their personalities as well as have practical application for the society of the day.