
Gender Roles In The Film And Book Lamb To The Slaughter

After watching the short film twice, the first thing I did was research the purposes of each character and who portrayed each character. Of course, I decided to research the character I found most interest in first, Mary Maloney, the story's protagonist; she was the wife of Patrick Maloney. A happy and devoted housewife who was six months pregnant with her very first child. It was clear that Mary spent most of her time caring for and thinking about her husband while attending to domestic tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and sewing. According to the movie and text, "She loved to luxuriate in the presence of this man, and to feel--almost as a sunbather feels the sun—that warm male glow that came out of him to her when they were alone together. Mary Maloney was in love Patrick Maloney, but Patrick was so monotonous that it didn't matter much to him. Which would be considered as normal for most films produced in the late 40s and early 50s. During this time period women were expected to maintain at home, women often didn't work, and men were seen as superior. This time period was completely sexist in every aspect possible. Not only was it sexist, but it was degrading towards women.

Mary Maloney was portrayed by the late, American Actress, Barbara Bel Geddes. Ms. Geddes was an American stage and screen actress, artist, and children's author whose career spanned almost five decades. She was best known for her starring role as Miss Ellie Ewing in the television series "Dallas".

Patrick Maloney was a secondary character in this short film. His presence was cut short due to his wife killing him with a frozen leg of a lamb. I found it interesting how Patrick's profession was important to how the investigation occurred. The cops gave special attention to the crime because it happened to "one of their own". Another reason that Patrick's profession was important to the story is that his wife Mary has learned a lot about police procedure from being married to a cop. She established an alibi before she calls to report the murder. Which was psychotic but smart at the same time in my opinion. Patrick Maloney was a police detective who cared more about his work than his marriage in my opinion. Even after Mary's desperate attempts to make him comfortable and satisfy his needs, he did not reciprocate her feelings or efforts. WHILE SHE'S THE ONE WHOSE SIX MONTHS PREGNANT.

After analyzing both the text and the short film I concluded that, the portrayal of the characters was similar. The movie added more emotion to what was occurring. Since, while reading the story I was forced to envision facial expressions, body language, and tone. But in the short film, all those characteristics were easy to identify. Viewing the short film helped me to understand the storyline better. Body Language played a huge role in the short film in comparison to the text. According to the text couple began to become more tense when this Patrick started this conversation, "'What is it, darling? What's the matter?' He became absolutely motionless, and he kept his head down. 'This is going to be a big shock to you, I'm afraid,' he said. 'But I've thought about it a good deal and I've decided that the only thing to do is to tell you immediately.' And he told her. It didn't take long, four or five minutes at most, and she sat still through it all, watching him with puzzled horror. 'So, there it is,' he added. 'And I know it's a tough time to be telling you this, but there simply wasn't any other way. Of course, I'll give you money and see that you're taken care of. But there really shouldn't be any problem. I hope not, in any case. It

wouldn't be very good for my job.”

Firstly, in the text the author didn't provide the audience with what happened. We were left to imagine the worst possible situations. While in the movie Patrick stated, “I want to leave you”, multiple times. Also, in the text the author stated that Mary sat still watching him in ‘puzzled horror’. Which led us to envision her facial expression and the vibe she was giving off. While in the movie you could see that Mary looked as if her heart was ripped out of her chest. She looked heartbroken, defeated, and weak. Which would be understandable taking into consideration of the situation.

My first reaction to the story after only reading it was that Mrs. Maloney was a psychotic woman who doesn't take situations such as rejection, being neglected, or being told no very well. But that was only because I hadn't looked deeper into the text, and deeper into the reasoning as to why Mrs. Maloney did what she did. In my opinion, Mrs. Maloney was the best housewife anyone could ask for. She cooked, she cleaned, and she sat awake waiting for her husband to get home late at night to comfort him after a long day at work. And it was slightly upsetting to see that Mr. Maloney didn't care much for her loving actions. Because let's be real here, if I was six months pregnant and I'm sitting up late at night waiting for my husband to get home from work so I can comfort HIM. Only to find out that he wants a divorce, I'd kill him with a lamb leg too. But everyone's view is different when it comes to if she was doing too much. I looked at other reviews over this movie and I saw comments such as “If he said he was going to give her money and make sure her, and the child were taken care of I don't see the problem. Why couldn't she just let him go”. But you have to take into consideration that this woman loved this man with all of her heart, and she was not about to sit here and let him try to wave money in her face for her to let him go.

In conclusion, I'd like to say that I enjoyed reading and analyzing the story, “The Lamb to The Slaughter”. It taught me that even though each gender was supposed to act a certain way back then. Any major incident could change it all. I liked how Dahl played on the traditional gender roles, how there were many different themes that could be used in this story such as deception, betrayal, justice versus injustice, and that first impressions can be misleading.