

APPENDIX

SYNOPSIS

A Doll's House

Nora Helmer is spoiled by her husband, Trovald, who treats her as an adorable but scatterbrained child. Seven years previously, she committed forgery of her father's name to obtain a secret loan to finance a trip which is necessary for Trovald's health. Now, Nora is pressured by her creditor, Krogstad, an employee in the bank where her husband has become a manager. Krogstad wants to open her secret since he will be fired from the bank and asked Nora to tell her husband to give him back his position. Then Krogstad sends Trovald a letter revealing Nora's forgery. Trovald was very angry and called Nora immoral, hypocritical, and unfit to be the mother of his children. His blind reaction opens Nora's eyes to her own intolerable position as his wife. Although he later forgives her, Nora decides to walk out on him, their children, and the artificial doll house and determine to seek a life in which her value as human being can be realized.

Hedda Gabler

Hedda has married George Tesman, a devoted but rather dull scholar whom she does not love. She is bored

by trivial social amusement. She often amuses herself by playing with her father's pistols and flirting with Judge Brack, a professional bachelor with a flair for domestic triangle. Hedda does not want to do with sex, pregnancy, birth, and death. All are hateful to her. The Elvsted, Hedda's childhood rival comes to ask George's assistance for a serious problem: she has deserted her husband and his children for her lover, Eilert Lovborg, who was one Hedda's suitor. Thea has inspired Eilert to write a brilliant book. Envious of Thea, Hedda reasserts her power over Eilert by sending him off to a drunken party where Eilert loses his manuscript. George finds it and gives it to Hedda, who vindictively burns it. Eilert is desperate and when Hedda gives him one of her pistols, he shoots himself. Guessing the truth about the pistol, Brack intends to blackmail Hedda into becoming his mistress. Realizing her defeat and because of her frustrated love and life, she shoots herself.

BIOGRAPHY

Henrik Ibsen was born on March 20th, 1828 in Skien, Norway. He was the second child of six children of Knut and Marichen Ibsen. When he was eight years old, his father as a merchant went bankrupt. At sixteen, he entered apprenticeship to an apothecary. Two years later, his servant girl gave birth to his illegitimate child. These early events may have conditioned his later reti-

cence and excessive outer propriety. Both financial ruin and bastardy are recurrent motifs in his plays. His first play, Catiline in 1850 was printed. In the 1850's and early 1860's he held position as salaried playwright and director at theaters in Bergen and Christiania. In 1864, he left Norway and settled in Rome.

Ibsen's iconoclasm, naturalistic, symbolism, and influential dramaturgy labelled him as the "father of modern drama." His first popular success was the philosophical dramatic poem "Brand" (1866), followed by the complementary, antithetical Peer Gynt (1867). He also published his poems in 1871. In 1873, his drama Emperor and Galilean appeared. Then in 1875, he settled in Munich. In 1877, he got his Honorary Doctor's degree from University of Uppsala, Sweden while his The Pillar of Society also appeared. His third period comprises the so-called social thesis plays on which his world fame largely rests. The main ones are: A Doll's House (1879), Ghost (1881), An Enemy of the People (1882), The Wild Duck (1884), Rosmersholm, The Lady from the Sea (1888), and Hedda Gabler (1890). His last plays are heavily symbolic and interiorized and partly of autobiographical import, such as The Master Builder (1892) and When We Dead Awaken (1889). In 1901, he was partially incapacitated by stroke and died in Christiania in May 23th, 1906. (Reinert, 878-879).