

IB EXTENDED ESSAY SAMPLE



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TITLE

TO WHAT EXTENT DO THE CHARACTERS IN YERMA AND A
VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE STRUGGLE WITH SOCIETAL
EXPECTATIONS, AND HOW DO THEY IMPACT THEIR
RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER CHARACTERS?

Title: Exploring society expectations and relationship dynamics in Yerma and A View from the Bridge

Introduction:

Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge" and Federico García Lorca's "Yerma" depict individuals negotiating social norms. The protagonists in these two pieces struggle with society's rules, which impacts their relationships. Lorca and Miller examine how human objectives and society expectations affect interpersonal relationships across cultures and time. At "Yerma" and "A View from the Bridge," we examine interpersonal dynamics and how cultural norms affect characters' search for fulfillment, identity, and autonomy.

The works "Yerma" and "A View from the Bridge." examine gender roles and relationships. Both articles examine how cultural norms affect people in 1950s Italian-American immigrant neighborhoods and early 20th-century Spain (Edward 1985). Characters' conflicts with social expectations reveal their personalities and the human predicament.

The rural Spanish setting of "Yerma" is a great canvas for gender norms. In this case, Yerma, the primary character, poignantly represents typical mother and wife expectations (Fusco 2001). She is named "barren" in Spanish, highlighting society's focus on women's reproduction. Yerma's story depicts the struggles and tensions of fitting in in this intercultural environment. Lorca's delicate depiction of Yerma's struggle challenges viewers to ponder how gender standards affect personal fulfillment and identity.

Miller's "A View from the Bridge," takes place in a New York Italian-American neighborhood. Cultural expectations clash with manhood, honor, and familial responsibilities, complicating the heroes' lives. Gender roles in this small group reflect larger cultural norms. It shows how hard it is to meet expectations. Miller's depiction of these conflicts encourages readers to examine complex relationships under social restrictions, which improves their understanding of the human condition.

Due to their universality, relevance, and historical and cultural specifics, these works' gender roles and expectations must be examined. As shown in "Yerma" and "A View from the Bridge," gender rules apply across countries and time (Ledasma 2007). By examining how characters resist or comply with these expectations, we can learn how cultural norms affect people's interactions, decisions, and behavior. Comparing connections to cultural norms reflects reality.

As characters break or follow these standards, readers are inspired to reach their experiences. These problems make us consider how deeply ingrained cultural norms affect our relationships. Because "Yerma" and "A View from the Bridge" tackle the complicated dance between human identity and cultural standards timelessly, gender roles and expectations must be examined. These stories compel readers to evaluate the themes' enduring impact on human experience.

Research question: To what extent do the characters in Yerma and A View from the Bridge struggle with societal expectations, and how do they impact their relationships with other characters?

Literature review

Federico García Lorca's "Yerma" and Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge" address societal traditions and human interactions. Both stories explore people's conflicts with societal norms across countries and eras (Koğacioğlu 2009). This literature analysis examines how societal expectations affect interpersonal interactions in these two famous plays (Lorca 2006).

In rural Spain in the early 20th century, "Yerma" displays rigid gender norms. The protagonist, Yerma, represents society's childbirth and fertility expectations for women. Her name, "barren" in Spanish, emphasizes the significance of female reproduction (Önalp 1986). The piece expertly shows how Yerma's inner anguish as she tries to match social standards hinders her cultural comprehension (Koçkar 2015).

Lorca's "Yerma" vividly depicts how societal pressures affect people and communities. Yerma's relationships and social life are affected by preconceived assumptions. The performance illustrates how cultural norms affect people's fulfillment and autonomy.

Arthur Miller's 1950s drama "A View from the Bridge" examines NY's Italian-American immigrant neighborhoods' manhood, honor, and family values. Culture limits Eddie Carbone's actions. Eddie's goals versus society's affect his trips and family.

Cultural standards are high in "A View from the Bridge"'s Italian-American community. The drama explores how culturally affected protagonists balance impulses and social standards. Eddie's battle for masculinity disrupts family relationships and highlights how societal norms impact identity and social interactions.

Both plays' societal standards complicate human interactions. Yerma's desire for children and social expectations undermine her marriage to Juan and isolate her. Social pressures destroy her social interactions, revealing how cultural standards separate people.

In "A View from the Bridge," Eddie Carbone's compliance with social norms leads to a destructive obsession with his niece Catherine, destroying his marriage to Beatrice (París 1989). The drama explores the consequences of opposing or accepting social conventions, with the protagonist's psychological struggle straining and fracturing family bonds. Literary studies on gender norms and interpersonal dynamics have illuminated societal norms and how they affect people. The classics "A Doll's House" and "The Awakening" by Henrik Ibsen and Kate Chopin investigate how social standards limit people's agency and test them. In "The Awakening," Chopin deftly navigates late 19th-century social expectations for women as protagonist Edna Pontellier breaks gender norms. Ibsen's "A Doll's House" breaks down 19th-century Norwegian marriage and gender norms as Nora Helmer deals with them.

Methodology

In "Yerma" and "A View from the Bridge," people's battles with society's expectations and their effects on relationships are examined using a thorough analytical method. Thematic analysis reveals complex responses to social norms by exploring family obligations, masculinity, fertility, and social limitations. The psychological ramifications of gender norms in "A View from the Bridge" and the symbolism of barrenness in "Yerma" are examples of poetic devices like metaphors and symbolism that highlight characters' inner dilemmas. Stage directions highlight intricate tensions with societal standards and shed light on characters' connections and nonverbal interactions. A few chosen quotes provide the framework for the analysis and act as examples. Secondary information, such as scholarly papers and historical background, enhances the analysis. This integrative method fosters a profound awareness of how gender norms shape characters and interpersonal ties in the chosen works by disentangling complex relationship dynamics and social expectations.

Character analysis - Yerma

The title character, Yerma, in Federico García Lorca's "Yerma," is a moving representation of the gender standards and social expectations common in rural Spain in the early 20th century. Lorca examines the tremendous effects of societal influences on personal identity and the complex web of relationships via Yerma's gripping and heartbreaking journey.

Yerma is rooted in a culture that values women based on their ability to procreate. "Yerma," which means "barren" in Spanish, describes the social norm that women parent. This assumption shapes Yerma's identity and community status.

She says, *"How can I not complain, when I see you and other women filled with flowers within, and see myself, useless in the midst of so much beauty!."*

Yerma's character is driven by her desire to become a mother, which transcends her own needs and cultural norms. Yerma's struggle reflects society's valuation of women based only on their ability to conceive. In her desire for children, Yerma's internal turmoil echoes the external demands that stress her.

Yerma and Juan have unpleasant conversations since society's expectations aren't met. Yerma's marriage is clouded by the expectation that she be a good wife and mother in every interaction. Society's urge to have children produces friction and affects their relationship.

Yerma feels more and more alone in the community as she struggles with infertility. Her internal suffering is aggravated by the shame that society has attached to her alleged inability to live up to her feminine position. Yerma says, *"Men have another life: flocks, trees, comradeship; women only have children and childcare."*

Yerma is constantly reminded of her deviation from the norm by the encounters she has with other women in the community who represent the ideal of motherhood as set forth by society. This loneliness is a result of both her own struggles and the social norms that limit her identity. The rural town where the drama is located, rich in tradition, is a symbolic backdrop for Yerma's immersion in societal norms. The tight-knit society adds to Yerma's intense sense of loneliness by magnifying the criticism and scrutiny she encounters.

Because of social pressure, Yerma's trip turns into a dismantling of her identity. Her uniqueness is overshadowed by society's focus on fertility, which reduces her to a mere reproductive tool. She says, "I don't want to look after other people's children. I think my arms would freeze from holding them." Lorca depicts Yerma's inner agony with such genuine intensity that it perfectly illustrates how her sense of self is being undermined as she struggles to adapt to the constant pressure from society.

Yerma's battle with societal expectations has an effect that goes beyond her inner turmoil. Her relationships are affected, especially her one with Juan. Due to Juan's societal expectations regarding a woman's fertility, there is a noticeable strain on their marriage. The tragic course of the play is partly due to the tremendous effect that societal expectations have on the interpersonal dynamics between the characters.

Finally, Yerma becomes a heartbreaking symbol of the social expectations that dominated rural Spain in the early 20th century. Through her persona, Lorca delves into the significant effects of cultural influences on personal identity and interpersonal interactions. Yerma's battle to become a mother turns into a potent lens that exposes the fraying edges of society's expectations, permanently altering both her and the terrible story that transpires.

Character Analysis -A View from the Bridge:

"A View from the Bridge" by Arthur Miller presents Eddie Carbone. This tragic and multifaceted character perfectly captures the conflicts brought on by social expectations in the Italian-American community of 1950s New York. Eddie's voyage develops into a gripping examination of family responsibilities, masculinity, and the terrible results of defying or adhering to social rules.

"His eyes were like tunnels; my first thought was that he had committed a crime, but soon I saw only a passion that had moved into his body, like a stranger." Eddie Carbone lives in a society that values conventional ideas of manhood and familial honor above everything else. The Italian-American community expects men to fulfill strict roles, emphasizing the value of domination, strength, and upholding family honor. Eddie represents the brawn and tenacity men in this close-knit community must possess as longshoremen (Sherwin 2005).

The play's central theme is Eddie's internal turmoil about society's masculinity ideals. Eddie's desires and feelings conflict with community expectations for men. His fatherly relationship with his niece, Catherine, illuminates possessiveness, masculinity, and protection. Eddie's internal turmoil intensifies as society pressures him to fit a man's stereotype, leading him down a sad path.

Eddie's family dedication is a hallmark. Men are expected to uphold family honor throughout their lives (Sievering-Lorenzo 2003). Eddie's view of parental responsibility deteriorates throughout the novel. Protectiveness turns into possessiveness, making it harder to distinguish between family commitments and his own goals. Society's expectations of honor and loyalty produce internal friction and ultimately treachery and tragedy in families.

Eddie Carbone subtly defies social standards. Because they contradict uncle-niece norms, his feelings for Catherine are unconventional. His forbidden urges cause him psychological turmoil, which becomes a compelling investigation of what occurs when people reject social norms, especially in a conformist culture.

"Most of the time we settle for half and I like it better. Even as I know how wrong he was, and his death useless, I tremble, for I confess that something perversely pure calls to me from his memory"

Eddie's internal conflict has a significant effect on his relationships, especially with Beatrice, his wife. Eddie's incapacity to balance his desires with societal norms is the root of their marital difficulty. Eddie, Catherine, and Beatrice's triangle dynamic turns into a furnace where social standards about love, loyalty, and familial responsibilities are put to the test and finally destroyed (Woolfolk 2004).

Comparative Analysis:

Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge" and Federico García Lorca's "Yerma" both examine how societal expectations affect the characters, providing deep insights into the human condition. In spite of their different cultural and historical backgrounds, both pieces explore the intricacies of familial responsibilities, gender standards, and the fallout from defying or caving into social pressure.

Gender norms are strongly embedded in "Yerma," which is set in rural Spain in the early 20th century. The story is shaped by the society's emphasis on women's fecundity. The main character, Yerma, starts to symbolize the social pressure placed on women to fulfill stereotypical roles as mothers and wives. The word "barren," and "Yerma," emphasizes the importance of female childbearing to the community.

On the other hand, "A View from the Bridge" takes place in a 1950s Italian-American neighborhood in New York, where expectations about familial honor and manhood are paramount. Through Eddie Carbone's persona, inflexible gender norms that need authority, strength, and the defense of family honor are explored. In both plays, societal expectations become ubiquitous forces that shape the identities and relationships of the characters.

The characters in both pieces struggle with how deeply cultural norms affect their interpersonal interactions. In "Yerma," Yerma's marriage to Juan and her community as a whole are strained by the need to adhere to traditional gender norms (Stainton 1998). The incapacity to live up to the expectations of society surrounding motherhood causes Yerma to grow estranged from her community and has a significant negative influence on her relationships.

Analogously, in "A View from the Bridge," Eddie Carbone's commitment to conventional notions of manhood causes him to develop a harmful fixation with his niece Catherine and shatters his bond with his spouse Beatrice (Ormond 2008). The play develops into a complex examination of

the fallout from defying or following social norms, with the protagonist's psychological turmoil straining and shattering familial ties (Powell 2006).

Characters that fight against social standards are present in both works, yet the outcomes are different. The protagonist of "Yerma," who yearns for motherhood and an identity that defies social conventions, meets a tragic and solitary end. A deep examination of the ramifications of defying conventional gender roles emerges from Yerma's rebellion against the obligations her community places on women (Santrock 2008).

Eddie Carbone's subdued defiance of social norms in "A View from the Bridge," especially with regard to his love for Catherine, leads to a disastrous downturn. His disobedience to the community's accepted standards for familial ties results in betrayal and, ultimately, tragic events. The plays differ in how specifically rebellion is portrayed, but they agree in examining the severe repercussions that ensue.

The intricacies of society's expectations are shaped by the cultural and temporal details, notwithstanding the works' common themes. "Yerma" highlights the pressure on women to adhere to social conventions and portrays the patriarchal and traditional rural Spain of the early 20th century. In "A View from the Bridge," the Italian-American neighborhood in 1950s New York represents a society that places a high value on upholding honor and conventional manhood.

Impact on relationships:

In both "Yerma" and "A View from the Bridge," the tremendous impact that societal expectations have on interpersonal connections is a significant theme. These two works illustrate how individuals' struggles with cultural norms affect their interactions with other people.

Yerma, the main character in "Yerma," experiences difficulties in her relationships as a result of the pressure from society to conform to the gender conventions that have been established (Wallace 1994). A deadly rift develops in her relationship with Juan and with other members of the community as a result of her desire to become a mother and the emphasis that society places on becoming pregnant (Swiss 1996). Yerma's relationships suffer due to the isolating consequences resulting from her failure to conform to the standards that society expects of her. This impacts the relationships she has with her husband and the greater community.

In the story "A View from the Bridge," Eddie Carbone's dedication to the honor of his family and the conventional norms of manhood has a profound and detrimental impact on his interactions with others (Volk 1968). Eddie's relationships with his wife Beatrice and his niece Catherine get more strained as the inner agony that he is experiencing gradually becomes more severe. It is a

demonstration of the significant implications that a single person's struggle against societal norms may have on interpersonal connections that his defiance of social rules leads in a betrayal that causes the family unit to be thrown into disarray (Zecchi 2005).

In both plays, societal expectations are investigated to investigate the intricate dance between cultural conventions and personal aspirations. This dance highlights how the characters' internal conflicts ultimately influence the nature of their relationships (Gilligan 1982).

Use of themes, poetic devices, and stage directions

The examination of themes, poetic devices, and stage directions in Federico García Lorca's "Yerma" and Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge" are effective ways to delve into the intricacies of characters' conflicts with societal expectations. In addition to enhancing the stories, these literary devices provide complex insights into the difficulties faced by the characters in conforming to the social mores of their various countries.

In both plays, themes serve as the underlying framework that reveals the social norms that shape people. In "Yerma," themes of femininity, fertility, and loneliness highlight the protagonist's struggle to live up to social expectations. Lorca expertly illustrates how Yerma's identity is impacted by cultural standards, highlighting her desire to become a mother in a typical Spanish environment. Her quotes speak of her yearning. In the play she sings to herself "What do you need, my love, my child?"

In "A View from the Bridge," Miller deftly mixes themes of masculinity, betrayal, and family obligations while highlighting the repercussions of upholding or rejecting cultural norms in the Italian-American community. These themes clarify how the characters react to social influences, as Nelson (1996) noted.

Quote from "Yerma": *"Barren is not a word for women. Land is said to as barren. It indicates that the land is dry and produces nothing."* and the quote from "A View from the Bridge" which says, "I demand my due respect," highlights the important themes, encapsulating the essence of the expectations surrounding fertility in "Yerma" and the quest for respect through adherence to traditional masculine values.

Poetic Devices are also seen in both plays. The emotional and social aspects of the characters' relationships are enhanced by the use of poetic devices like metaphors, symbolism, and imagery. In "Yerma," the symbolism of barrenness serves as a moving allegory for Yerma's inner suffering and the demands of society. In a symbolic sense, the barren field stands in for the emptiness that befalls women who don't meet childbearing expectations. In "A View from the

Bridge," on the other hand, Miller uses dramatic irony and metaphors to accentuate Eddie Carbone's internal conflict and paint a clear picture of how gender norms shape people.

In the passage from "A View from the Bridge," the lady says, "His eyes were like tunnels; my first thought was that he had committed a crime, but soon I saw it was only a passion that had moved into his body, like a stranger." These passages demonstrate how Lorca and Miller use poetic devices to make their characters feel the emotional burden of social expectations.

Although they are sometimes disregarded, stage directions are essential in forming the dramatic and emotional environments of the plays. In "Yerma," meticulously staged discussions portray Yerma's place in society and provide a visual depiction of her challenges in the neighborhood. Stage directions heighten character conflict in "A View from the Bridge," reflecting societal tensions brought on either conformity to or defiance of cultural norms. These stage directions give a comprehensive knowledge of the impact of societal expectations on the relationships between the characters and highlight the issues those individuals face within a larger cultural framework.

Cultural expectation can also be seen in the plays. Federico García Lorca captures the constraints imposed on women by society in "Yerma," especially with regard to reproduction. Yerma's character is deeply entwined with the notion of femininity, highlighting her social roles as a wife and mother. The moving allegory of barrenness offers a potent critique of the social pressure women face to live up to traditional norms. The desolate landscape represents Yerma's infertility as well as the loneliness that befalls women who don't conform to social norms. Lorca expertly illustrates the emotional toll that these expectations take on Yerma's personality through the use of literary tropes like metaphors and symbolism.

The complex interactions between themes, literary methods, and stage directions in "Yerma" and "A View from the Bridge" help us better understand the characters' challenges with society expectations. By deftly employing these literary devices to expose the intricate network of cultural standards, Lorca and Miller enable audiences and readers to identify with the characters' experiences and consider the larger effects of society expectations on interpersonal relationships.

Quote analysis

Federico Garcia Lorca's "Yerma" and Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge" illuminate the characters' problems with social conventions, supporting the issue of gender norms and relationship dynamics.

In "Yerma," the touching statement, "Barren is not a word for women. Land is said to be barren. It indicates that the land is dry and produces nothing" captures how social expectations dehumanize Yerma. Comparing women to barren ground emphasizes the urge to adhere to a fertility-based identity. Yerma struggles emotionally and psychologically as society reduces her to a single, degrading trait.

Quote from "Yerma," "I won't be able to take this anymore. Even if it's the wrong thing to do, I must act" shows Yerma's yearning to break free from society. It shows how much cultural norms hurt emotionally, supporting the idea that gender expectations shape characters' identities and actions.

In "A View from the Bridge," Eddie Carbone's "I want my respect" symbolizes his fight for manhood and honor. His need for respect symbolizes his struggle to regulate and conform to male norms, confirming the idea that social expectations alter characters' identities and actions. Finally, "His eyes were like tunnels; my first thought was that he had committed a crime, but soon I saw it was only a passion that had moved into his body, like a stranger," from "A View from the Bridge," illustrates Eddie's internal conflict. The striking artwork shows Eddie's transformation by societal expectations, anticipating his fatal struggle against traditions.

These quotes powerfully depict the characters' mental agony and the devastating effects of societal expectations. The comprehensive interpretation of these lines enhances the plays' gender norms and interpersonal dynamics themes.

Conclusion:

Through an examination of Federico Garcia Lorca's "Yerma" and Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge," the research demonstrates how characters' battles with social expectations affect their relationships in a deep way. These pieces function as potent mirrors that reflect the complex dynamics of cultural norms and highlight the effects of people attempting to live within the constrained parameters of society's expectations.

The title character, Yerma, is shown in "Yerma" as a moving representation of the effects of gender norms (Kohut 1977). In the context of traditional Spanish society, her unwavering desire to become a mother causes her to feel alone and depressed. Driven by social pressure to live up to her mother's duty, Yerma's internal turmoil complicates her connections with others,

ultimately resulting in the breakdown of her marriage and growing estrangement from her society (Kahn 1985).

In "A View from the Bridge," Eddie Carbone likewise emerges as a powerful representation of the consequences of defying the expectations of masculinity and honor in the community of Italian-American immigrants (Markus and Nurius 1987). His love for his niece and his desperate attempts to take charge are the outward manifestations of his inner turmoil, which lead to a catastrophic conclusion that destroys his family. The power struggles and dynamics that exist inside the family are a reflection of how deeply societal expectations affect interpersonal interactions.

It is indisputable how much the protagonists' battles with cultural norms affect their relationships. In "Yerma," Yerma's infertility causes her to become apart from the ladies in her community and sour relations with her husband, Juan. The breakdown of her marriage and her increasing feelings of loneliness are clear results of these struggles.

In "A View from the Bridge," a power struggle within Eddie's family is started by his internal turmoil regarding his manhood and ambitions. His attempts to maintain social norms and exercise control led to a disastrous clash. The broken relationships and terrible conclusions that follow are clear indicators of the impact of these battles.

The examination concludes by highlighting how serious and universal the problems portrayed in "Yerma" and "A View from the Bridge" are. Relationship tension, emotional upheaval, and eventually disastrous results flow from the individuals' personal struggles with societal expectations. These pieces act as moving reminders that social constraints have an ongoing effect on people's identities and relationships that cut beyond cultural and chronological barriers.

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