

THE WIFE ABUSE IN MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT'S *MARIA: THE WRONGS OF WOMAN* ACCORDING TO OFFENDING THEORY

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Abstract

Among the books written in the 18th century are *The Wrongs of Woman*, also known as *Maria*, a feminist classic. Wollstonecraft's philosophical and gothic tale tells the story of a lady locked up in an asylum after being committed by her husband. Focusing on societal rather than individual injustices against women, Wollstonecraft attacks what she sees as the patriarchal institution of marriage in eighteenth-century Britain and the legal system that defends it. This study attempts to utilize Wollstonecraft's offending theory to analyze the marital abuse of the wife in her book *The Wrongs of Woman*, or *Maria*. When Maria wakes up in the wrong marriage, she attempts to escape but ends up locked up in an institution instead. She meets Henry Darnford, a sensible man who leads a chaotic life, and Jemima, the warden, a woman molested as a child. A cliffhanger conclusion with several plot twists is built up when Maria falls in love with Henry. This paper will examine Mary Wollstonecraft's "*Maria or The Wrongs of Woman*" and its themes of domestic violence against women. In conclusion, *The Wrongs of Woman*, or *Maria*, was intended to be read and comprehended in a way that would be both personally therapeutic and historically significant because of the story it tells about women's lives in a patriarchal and more oppressive capitalist society.

Keywords: Wife Abuse, *Maria*, or *the Wrongs of Woman*, Offending Theory, Mary Wollstonecraft.

1. Introduction

The Wrongs of Woman is an unfinished novelistic sequel created by Wollstonecraft in the 18th century. Posthumously, Wollstonecraft's husband (William Godwin) published *The Wrongs of Woman* in 1798. This novel is regarded as one of the most radical feminist works (Abbotson, 91).

The tale of a lady imprisoned in an insane institution by her husband is presented in Wollstonecraft's philosophical and gothic book. It focuses on societal rather than individual "wrongs of women." It criticizes what Wollstonecraft viewed as the patriarchal institution of marriage in eighteenth-century Britain and the legal system that upheld it. On the other hand, the heroine's refusal to let go of her love ideals illustrates women's cooperation in tyranny via erroneous and damaging sentimentalism. The novel was a trailblazer in the celebration of female sexuality and female cross-class connection. These factors, together with the controversy surrounding Godwin's *Memoirs of Wollstonecraft's Life*, led to the book's initial lack of success upon its debut (Claudia, 112).

The work was lauded by feminist critics of the 20th century, who included it in discussions about the novel's place in the literary canon and broader feminist issues. Many people see it as

an autobiographical expansion of Wollstonecraft's feminist views on the Rights of Women and a fictionalization of her arguments. (Emily, 75).

The Wrongs of Woman: or, Maria has often been judged as a failure, as “didactic,” or “schematic.” On the other hand, such criticism misinterprets these characteristics, resulting from Wollstonecraft's intention to generalize and politicize the personal theoretically. These criticisms are the novel's main points of importance since they help make the novel genre acceptable for expressing feminist ideals and are part of Wollstonecraft's new feminist literary discourse.

Rereading the generic parts of *Wrongs* demonstrates that Wollstonecraft's deliberate combination of theory and fiction allowed her to transgress and subvert gendered conventions that would otherwise exclude women writers from theoretical (philosophical or political) discourses. As a result, Wollstonecraft can be considered not just the first feminist writer to offer a complete and precise feminist program but also the first to modify gendered genres and discourses for feminist aims.

2. Spousal Abuse: An Overview

According to Walter, spousal abuse is a form of abusive action which occurs in every male-female close relationship in which the men partner attempts to uphold control and power over his spouse. As a result, when underlying behaviors such as intimidation, underestimating, isolation, and compression, as well as a variety of other attitudes needed to sustain oppression, fear, and power, are present, the relationship deteriorates and may turn violent. Spousal abuse can take many forms, and in many cases, there may be more than one type in the same connection because each type has similar consequences (p. 27).

Social isolation is a near-complete lack or complete engagement with individuals in an individual's community and is one of the most severe forms of spouse abuse. The desire of men to isolate their wives from social communication with their families, friends, and other people in society is frequently motivated by selfishness and distrust. Separating the victims communally will raise the abuser's powers while protecting him legally. Because of the victim's social isolation, they become disruptive and antisocial, putting the abusers at the focus of the victim's existence and giving the abusers the exploitation power (Baker, 30).

Another sort of spousal abuse is financial abuse. The abuser maintains control and power over their victims by making them monetarily needy and preventing them from making decisions or maintaining their self-confidence. Accumulating debt, interfering with jobs or education, and controlling finances are just a few forms of economic exploitation. Financial abuse is one of the most effective ways to keep an abused victim bound. It reduces the victim's power and compels them to rely entirely on their abusive spouse to meet necessities such as food, clothes, and shelter (Walter, 66).

According to Kathryn, an emotive kind of spousal abuse is “any nonphysical conduct or attitude that is aimed to control, intimidate, subjugate, degrade, punish or isolate another person” (p46). Many studies have agreed that the victim of emotional abuse would suffer from a terrible psychological state. Hence psychological abuse is classified as a subtype of emotional abuse. It causes severe psychological trauma because of its social ramifications and negative impact on abused victims. It hurts the victim's mental health (Kathryn, 49).

Partner mistreatment is a kind of marital abuse known as “physical abuse.” This term is often utilized interchangeably to indicate "an act committed with the aim, or perceived intention, of

inflicting physical suffering or injury on another person" (Straus & Gellis, p. 40). Even though physical abuse is the worst since it can lead to death in severe circumstances, most recent studies on abused females have come as follows: Emotional abuse, as opposed to physical assault, has a far more significant impact on the victims. As a result, Physical abuse has an emotional effect, and the victim's maltreatment is exacerbated in this case (Straus & Gelles, 42).

In conclusion, sarcasm is classified as a form of spousal abuse. It is also known as "verbal abuse," considered the most visible form of abuse that can damage anyone, whether or not they are in an abusive relationship. Evans (86) defines it as a type of offensive language that falls into several groups. It is mainly used to control others' feelings and behaviors to force the victim to agree to abusers' demands. Making jokes, trivializing, withholding, judging, and condemning are all examples of verbal abuse.

3. Spousal Abuse of Women in the Early 18th Century

Wollstonecraft's *Mary and Maria* depicts the situation of women in the eighteenth century. Thus, it's crucial to understand the views held at the time. There were significant shifts between the middle of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, and the dominant ideology of the West came to replace the medieval one. Women in the Enlightenment author Dena Goodman explains why this era was given the name "Enlightenment," a phrase that signifies educated men and women's perception of the transition from the dark and barbaric Middle Ages to a new world of light and reason (Abbey, 78-95).

During the eighteenth century, "puritan reformers, decent religious fundamentalists," as Mary Wollstonecraft's editor Miriam Brody pointed out, encouraged women to be submissive, subservient, and dependent on males (xxxix).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, a French author, and philosopher, also impacted women's minds in the 18th century. According to Sue Thornham, author of *Feminist Theory and Cultural Studies*, Rousseau thought women were inherently inferior (17) and that the "emotional woman" complimented the "rational man" perfectly (Tong, 13).

Wollstonecraft disagreed with Rousseau and believed that men would become emotional creatures if they were never given a chance to develop their intellect and become moral persons with "commitments beyond selfish pleasure" (Tong, 13). According to Pam Morris, author of *Literature and Feminism: An Introduction*, and others, women have suffered for a long time due to "biological essentialism," the idea that a woman's "nature" is a result of her reproductive function. This is one of the arguments essentialists have used to push women further to the margins of society (p. 2).

Wollstonecraft fought for the notion that men and women were on an equal footing and was adamant that the opposite was true. The *Encyclopedia of Feminist Theories*' editor, Lorraine Code, claims that Wollstonecraft refuted Rousseau's assertion that women are inherently inferior to men (p. xxi). Males were superior, according to Wollstonecraft, since they had greater possibilities and access to knowledge (Code, xxi). Women were educated to think primarily with their emotions rather than intellect, depend on males for everything, and be obedient to them. Because of this, most women stayed in and avoided the spotlight.

The rights of the Enlightenment, which applied to males, were not extended to female citizens since, during that time, to be a citizen was "to be a man, to be a human" (Goodman, 235). However, many women in the eighteenth century asserted that Enlightenment principles and

political rights also extended to them (Bryson, 15). Rousseau believed that women were “biologically unsuitable for the public domain”, as Bryson puts it. (p. 13).

Because of this, Rousseau believed that women belonged in the home, where they might gain respect and dignity as housewives and mothers (Goodman, 252). On the other hand, Wollstonecraft thought that women would be more responsible at home if they were educated about politics and morals outside the home (Abbey, 81). Wollstonecraft argues for women's rights in her book *Rights of Woman*:

“Would men but generously snap our chains and be content with rational fellowship instead of slavish obedience They would find us more observant daughters, more affectionate sisters, more faithful wives, more reasonable mothers, in a word, better citizens”. (186)

Women were viewed as emotional creatures with little potential to enter the public realm in the eighteenth century, which resulted in their having restricted educational and legal rights. Women's principal responsibilities were to become brides and mothers. On the other hand, women had minimal power in the home sphere since they were referred to as "femme" and had no legal rights over their children. Furthermore, Rousseau was an influential figure, and his views on women were widely accepted. On the other hand, Wollstonecraft was not ashamed to criticize Rousseau's beliefs and publicly argue against them.

Wollstonecraft, as previously said, was not hesitant to engage in politics or the male-dominated public sphere, publishing political, educational, and instructional books that harshly criticized women's lower social standing.

4. Spousal Abuse of Women in the Early 20th Century

One of the severe domestic issues is wife abuse. Despite increased abusive episodes, it was overlooked at the beginning of the twentieth century. Legal officials usually dismissed and ignored reports of spousal violence from battered wives. If the abuse was significant bodily, the abused woman might have a tardy reaction after an indefinite delay in examining the reality of the claims. At the same time, the additional abusive forms requested are overlooked since the issues were deemed a particular matter rather than a general one in the era. According to Linda Gordon's (p. 157) research of abused women's accounts, those who sought aid have met with homilies, words of resignation, and shrugs regarding power, male aggression, and female destiny. In contrast, others were met with disapprobation or fury. As a result, it is the abused women's responsibility to resolve such issues, despite the risk to their lives. At that time, the legal aspect of resolving a problem was primarily handled by advisers asking men to cease abusing women to succumb to the abusers, deprived of taking any lawful action against the abuser. As a result, many women experienced emotional detachment, forcing them to choose between suicide or assassinating their abusers.

Abused wives are deprived of their right to search for assistance because of the unjust system of the time, which aided abusers' control. As a result, rather than submitting to man's power, the victimized women began to think practically, and they decided to assert their rights on their own, with the support of the rights of women movement assisting them in doing so by modifying old female social codes. As a result, females are urged to dissident against their husbands' infidelity, negligence, and abuse and to stop doing what previous generations of wives tolerated and expected (Walter, 58). However, in a male-dominated society, increasing independence was frowned upon because women's rights were viewed as unrealistic demands... poisoning marriage relationships and leading to family breakups.

Bell Hooks' (p. 231) domestic theories focused on the reasons behind the females' abuse. They concluded that the leading causes of violence against women are the philosophical idea of coercive authority and hierarchical rule, the violence of those who are dominant and who dominate. Hooks condemned the community for granting males sole rights, which has been abused and resulted in violence against females everywhere, in addition to its regard to the value of females' employment and education; according to Seligman, the psychological state of battered females who killed their violent husbands in his "Learned Helplessness" theory (p. 148). He concluded that abused women used new ways to live and that killing the abusers was the best option because the murdering act is not perceived as a confirmed kill but rather as a technique to stop the abuse.

The theory of Seligman examines the causes for an increase in the number of murders committed by abusive husbands in the early twentieth century, as reported in newspapers in the 1920s. Ann Jones (p. 286) wrote about the impact of abused women killing their abusers on society in her essay *Women Who Kill*. She noted that newspapers began to take care of the abused females who murdered their abusers, implying that the killings they dedicated were caused by the augmented liberty they increased due to the feminist movement.

It appeared on abused women, but the media neglected the causes that drove women to murder their abusers, which were traditional gender codes, a lack of opportunities for females, and the institute of marriages, all of which is sufficient to drive an average female to kill her abuser (Johnsson, p. 179). With the emergence of the feminist movement, there has been a shift in how people think about women. Legal theorists and feminist literary critics attempted to persuade the impartiality method that the term "spousal abuse of women" did not only refer to physical attacks but also included additional forms of abuse like animal abuse, economic, sexual, verbal, psychological, emotional, and social isolation of women. With the improvement of several voices advocating for women's rights to live properly and safely in the twentieth era, the court system began to take the psychological state of females who killed their abusive spouses incredibly. The psychological disorders of abused women were highlighted, and the victims' self-defense appeal was supported.

5. Offending Theory

Individuals' actions are influenced by different circumstances, including personality, peer group, neighborhood, socioeconomic status, etc. Discovering at least one factor for why some individuals are offended, and some people are offended frequently, is not likely to be fertile. We will review the significant ideas before delving into Andrews and Bonta's notion of a broad personality and social psychology approach that attempts to reconcile the complexity. Many other ideas, including Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic viewpoint, contribute to offending theory, which influences psychodynamic theory. Freud claimed that our 'id' drew us to quick gratification, while the superego and 'ego' engaged with the immediate environment (the thinking components). As we develop emotionally, socially, and cognitively, we may learn to delay pleasure for a later payoff, to love and be loved, and to be socially engaged. To comply with social norms and expectations, we need a strong superego, whereas a strong ego is sufficient for getting through the day.

5.1 Classification of Offending Theory

The offending theory has many classifications, such as:

Theories of Sexual Offending

Theory and Practice in Sexual Offending is one of the few books that unifies the many theoretical perspectives on sexual offending. Professionals in clinical and forensic psychology, psychiatry, probation, and social work who deal with sexual offenders may find this book a vital resource.

Psychodynamic theory

Psychodynamic theory owes much to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic outlook. According to Freud, the 'id' compels us to seek instant gratification, while the 'ego' and 'superego' interact with the external world (these are the thinking parts). As we develop emotionally, socially, and cognitively, we may learn to delay gratification for a more significant payoff in the long run, love and be loved, and engage in social activities.

Psychological immaturity and, in some contexts, a lack of self-control are the foundations around which criminal behavior is constructed. Thus, a strong superego is a crucial risk factor for various undesirable behaviors, including impulsivity, troubled interpersonal relationships, low academic or vocational achievement, lack of shame, rule-breaking, antisocial views, and early misbehavior.

6. Wollstonecraft's "Maria: or, The Wrongs of Woman."

This novel was one of the most critical plays in the early 18th century that directly addressed the issue of spousal abuse of women by presenting a story that talks about "Maria who belongs to abused upper-middle-class, the sailor Peggy's wife of the lower-middle-class, the working-class shopkeeper, the class of boarding-house owner, and the working-class domestic servant Jemima."

As the tale opens, Maria Venables is confined to a mental hospital. She keeps thinking about her kidnapped daughter. Maria wins for the heart of Jemima, a female warden at the facility. After seeing Maria sob at being held captive and fearing for her young child, Jemima decides to help her captive. Jemima sees that Maria is passionate about writing and reading, so she lends Maria several books from another patient's library.

As Maria reads the books, she notices intriguing comments written by the book's owner in the margins. With the help of Jemima, who works as a messenger, Maria, and her companion prisoner begin to exchange notes. Jemima is eventually able to arrange for Maria and the other prisoner, Henry Darnford, to meet in person. Darnford describes his biography and how he became institutionalized by the two women. Darnford and Maria begin to fall in love and become lovers.

Jemima, Maria's friend, and warden, then fill Maria and Darnford in on her background. Her mother passed very soon after she was born, and her father went on to marry someone who openly hated her. Without a mother to care for her, Jemima was often assaulted by babysitters and foster parents. A man who hires Jemima as a housekeeper inevitably molests her. When being abandoned by her husband after his wife throws her out, Jemima takes an abortion pill and begins working as a prostitute.

In the end, Jemima is hired as a housekeeper for a nice man. The suddenness of his death has left her destitute and without a place to call home once again. She finds employment as a laundress but suffers a severe leg injury and must visit the hospital. Despite her lack of improvement, she is sent home from the hospital too soon. Since she loathes her regular income, theft is necessary to support her family. She spends a short time in jail before being sent to a workhouse that provides shelter and subsistence to the poor in return for labor. Jemima

hears from the workhouse superintendent that he intends to launch a mental health facility and is now accepting applications. Jemima resolves to accompany her brother on his journey and take up the warden position. Soon after Maria finishes her tale, she tells Jemima to check on her child. Jemima concurs; nonetheless, Maria's daughter has passed away.

Maria is devastated by the death of her daughter. She declines Darnford's visits and instead offers him the book she was writing for her daughter.

Maria's autobiography describes growing up with a dictatorial father and a pampered elder brother named Robert. Maria makes friends with the Venables' daughter, whose family is financially secure. The family's heir, George, has an instant crush on Maria. When Maria sees that George treats Mary's sister, who helps take care of Maria, well, she believes that George is a decent man and decides to marry him. As a result of the problems caused by her mother's death and her father's remarriage to a woman who doesn't like her, she hopes to leave home. Maria's wealthy uncle is very close to Maria, and he approves of her marriage to George as a means of escaping her oppressive stepmother.

As soon as the wedding ends, George shows signs of being a lousy husband. He ruins his family's finances via binge drinking, affairs, and financial mismanagement. With this news, Maria finds that her brother Robert has stolen a considerable sum of their father's money. Maria's beloved sisters and extended family are in danger. She goes home to get her uncle out of a financial jam. After Maria tells George about his treachery at home, he sincerely seeks her forgiveness. The emotional impact of his arguments on Maria causes her to become pregnant. Quickly falling back into his old ways, George even offered Maria up to one of his friends for cash. Because of George's treatment, Maria becomes outraged and ultimately chooses to leave him. She goes from one area to another to escape George's control once and for all. George is eager to give her some space. The next step is for Maria to have a daughter. Maria's wealthy uncle passes away three days after the birth of her child. He leaves everything to Maria's daughter. Maria will act as the trustee of the trust. Maria leaves England and recruits a French-speaking maid as her travel companion. Maria is drugged, and her daughter is abducted by a maid who looks to be collaborating with George. After coming, Maria finds herself in a mental institution.

Darnford is certain, after hearing her backstory, that he and Maria are meant to be together. He assures her that he will look out for her. Eventually, Jemima convinces Maria to take advantage of her opportunity to escape the prison, and the two ladies set out together. A few days after his parole, Darnford visits Maria and their two daughters in London. When George discovers this, he sues Darnford for adultery and seduction. Maria writes a letter to the judge presiding over Darnford's trial, and the judge reads it out loud. The writer of the letter argues that women should have greater legal protections, such as the right to divorce because they are essentially their spouses' property. As a result of the judge's lack of conviction, Maria and her husband will not be getting a divorce. Since Maria is still legally married to George due to their inability to get a divorce, she cannot be with Darnford, the man she loves. Continuing their relationship with Darnford would lead to both social isolation and disaster.

The novel's editor offers several potential conclusions, the outlines of which he found among his late wife's belongings. You'll discover Wollstonecraft's lone piece of nonlive prose in this volume. Jemima learns that Maria's daughter isn't dead in this retelling. At the last minute, Jemima finds her and brings her to Maria, who is about to make a life-altering decision. With

the news that her daughter is still alive, Maria finally feels she has a reason to keep living, and the story ends.

7. “Wollstonecraft’s *The Wrongs of Woman, or Maria* and Offending Theory”

This theory holds that Wollstonecraft's early misdeeds were caused by her parents' financial problems, her mother's emotional isolation, and their overt favoritism of her brother. The second hurting, or the "adult" form of the same transgression, was sexual Imlay's rejection of Wollstonecraft and their infant daughter, Fanny, in favor of a dancer, which had a far more significant psychologically damaging effect on Wollstonecraft. Wollstonecraft felt impelled to repeatedly recreate this severe crime in her writing, fusing her suffering with depictions of the tormented, battered, and slain bodies. It's not a coincidence, Maria; Wollstonecraft struggled the hardest to write a book that included several images of tortured and battered women.

According to Wollstonecraft, the mind is a separate realm from which all other experiences must be sourced. However, Maria's mind has been destroyed by her husband's brutality. The face of her unborn daughter always appears in front of her eyes, yet she is utterly oblivious to the fact that she is pregnant. Wollstonecraft says of a woman who gives birth to a daughter, “Still she cried for her child, lamented she was a daughter and dreaded the intensified miseries of life that her sex rendered virtually unavoidable.”

Like Pygmalion, who carved Galatea out of ivory before seeing the real thing beneath his caresses, Maria sees Henry as the perfect lover. But we still can't ignore the fact that triangles play such a central role in this text. Henry cannot be loved or appreciated without Jemima, the maid, the lower-class surrogate who often performs the hard work for the better-educated, apparently more intellectual heroine. Just as Henry and Maria's love is declared, the reader is drawn into Jemima's story, which is more comprehensive and well-written than Henry's. Why? Like Mary's working-class women, Jemima carries a terrifying weight of symbolism.

She, like them, must stand for the grief, sorrow, and brutality that innocent women may face in a culture that considers them expendable garbage or barbaric food. Jemima's story begins with mother rejection, maternal death, paternal neglect, physical violence, and emotional wounds. Another rape-induced illegitimate pregnancy, and the cycle repeats. Jemima's tale recalls Blake's poem "The Mental Traveller" because both show a dim view of sex-based conflict and communicate sadness and cynicism derived from frustrated idealism.

Jemima decides not to have her baby and has an abortion; Wollstonecraft does not condemn Jemima's action but instead labels it as desperate. She also doesn't judge Jemima for the time she spent working as a prostitute or as a "principled thief" Both actions, which take advantage of the patriarchy's privileges and corrupt authority, are comprehensible given Jemima's limited choices. When her affluent and erudite master dies suddenly, Jemima is forced to return to life on the streets after being with him for five years.

This is a copy of the text from the 18th century "As a "displaced housewife," Jemima realizes she has been "cast aside as the muck of society". I felt hopeless and helpless due to being forced to labor like a machine for the only goal of obtaining food, and barely that. Desperate, she preys on a man responsible for another woman's pregnancy. Because of Jemima, this person breaks his promise to the pregnant woman and their unborn child, ultimately leading to the other woman's death. Therefore, Jemima has become the murderess who killed her own banished mother. Wollstonecraft illustrates what is evident to everyone. Those who have been abused are more likely to perpetrate abuse if given the opportunity.

Jemima's captors must now deal with a just as fragile and dangerous captive as she was when they initially mistreated her. The "stiff, cold body" carried out of the well can only be regarded as another low-class lady taking on the transgressions and the worries that the protagonist, Maria, has either forgotten or refused to accept, according to the logic of the pulsating dream. Here, the pregnant lady who would sooner die than have George Venable's kid is depicted as a public spectacle, a cautionary tale, distant yet strangely present and posing a threat to the main character and her stand-in.

After much playing up and feigned terror, Maria manages to get away from her husband and set in motion a series of events that would eventually take her to an insane institution." JHPiled up like a sick animal, "Maria, whose husband is after her uncle's inheritance, is the archetypal helpless woman. The landlords who take her in nevertheless give her back to her husband. In a paranoid dream, Maria discovers that Venables is harassing and following her:

“who seemed to assume terrific or hateful forms to torment me, wherever turned. Sometimes a wild cat, a roaring bull, or a hideous assassin, whom I vainly attempted to fly; at others, he was a demon, hurrying me to the brink of a precipice, plunging me into dark waves or horrid gulfs; and I woke, in violent fits of trembling anxiety, to assure myself that it was all a dream”. (P. 132)

In this scene, Maria's hysteria—based on lingering memories of long-term abuse—is transformed into a series of traditional gothic plots. She is completely alone and defenseless; the only person she can turn to is the absent and all-loving uncle (a convenient deistic God figure). On the other hand, Maria is drifting into early feminism parthenogenetic fantasy, the idea that two moms may have a child without the help of a male, which would emerge in the fiction of writers like Marge Piercy and Joanna Russ over two centuries later.

In Wollstonecraft's instance, she attempts to conceal the initial anguish of being rejected by her parents and surviving. But the fundamental issue reappears when Imlay utterly leaves her and excludes her from the family she had intended to create with him and their daughter. Her essays examine the inner workings of unhappy families, which act as microcosms of patriarchal society in metaphorical terms. Wollstonecraft said that because she had experienced the psychological and sexual abuse that was widespread in such institutions, all women were hurt by it. The discomfort of reading a wound is the same as it was before.

8. Conclusion

Maria: or, The Wrongs of Woman was written by Wollstonecraft, an English writer, who immediately incorporates society's mood toward females when their social rank is seen beneath male status. Wollstonecraft devoted her acting to discussing feminine issues at a time when women's suffrage was nearing its pinnacle. As a result, this novel is regarded as a call for women's rights by showing one of the central and taboo topics at the time, spousal abuse of women.

The central character in Wollstonecraft's *The Wrongs of Woman* is an abused wife who kills herself because she can no longer take the suffering. Before taking her own life to end the sexism and prejudice she had seen in the male-dominated world, the main character in *Maria, or, The Wrongs of Woman*, thought about the situation of oppressed women in the novel.

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