

...WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL? AN ANALYSIS OF JUSTICE IN THE
SELECTED WORKS OF KATHERINE ANNE PORTER AND SUSAN GLASPELL

A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE
TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

BY

ANNETTE RENEE COLE, B.A.

DENTON, TEXAS

AUGUST, 1999

For my husband

WILLIE

and our children

ASHLEY, AMANDA, AND WESLEY

thank you for your patience and love while I completed my dream.

For my parents

RAYMOND AND SYBIL REDDICK

for your wisdom and teaching me to believe in myself.

And

for my teacher, mentor, and friend,

DR. PHYLLIS BRIDGES

I have learned so much from you; thank you for your wisdom and understanding

ABSTRACT

...WITH LIBERTY AND LIBERTY FOR ALL? AN ANALYSIS OF JUSTICE AS
DEPICTED IN THE SELECTED WORKS OF KATHERINE ANNE PORTER AND

SUSAN GLASPELL

ANNETTE RENEE COLE

AUGUST 1999

Justice is an issue many writers have been moved to explore. Justice is elusive and as many have discovered, it has a tendency to not overlook gender and race. Katherine Anne Porter and Susan Glaspell were twentieth-century writers concerned with injustice as it pertained to women. Both Porter and Glaspell were concerned that women were not afforded the same consideration as men under the law and presented alternative solutions to injustice; community justice based upon their own experiences with injustice as well as issues of separation and isolation that oftentimes plagued rural women.

In the short stories, “Noon Wine,” and “María Concepción by Katherine Anne Porter, and “A Jury of Her Peers by Susan Glaspell,” each writer examines the issue of injustice by circumventing established law, and recognizing the influence of mitigating circumstances in determining a just outcome.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
CHAPTER	
I. THE ISSUE OF JUSTICE IN TWENTIETH CENTURY LITERATURE.....	1
II. JUSTICE AND KATHERINE ANNE PORTER’S “NOON WINE” AND “MARÍA CONCEPCIÓN.....	12
III. JUSTICE AND SUSAN GLASPELL’S “A JURY OF HER PEERS”.....	36
IV. THE IMPORTANCE OF A TRIAL.....	63
V. CONCLUSION.....	72
VI. WORKS CITED.....	75

Chapter I

The Issue of Justice in Twentieth-Century Literature

“Courage and honor and pride, and pity and love of justice and liberty. They all touch the heart, and what the heart holds to becomes truth, as far as we know truth.” These words, spoken by William Faulkner, outline humanity’s essential desire to seek justice and truth in life. According to Myra Jehlen in *Class and Character in Faulkner’s South*, “Faulkner wants to arrive at truth” (1). Truth seems to be a byproduct of justice; yet, justice sometimes eludes us. To understand the idea of justice one must conduct a close analysis of the word in its traditional meaning as well as its connotative meaning.

As set forth by the founding fathers of the American Constitution, justice was not the moralistic result of the search for truth, but a prescribed set of laws that were to ensure that each citizen of the United States would receive due process and equal protection under the law. In its infancy, our country struggled to define itself and allow for the governing of the colonists. It was essential that the citizens be guaranteed certain rights that could not be destroyed, altered, or endangered by outside forces.

“We hold these truths to be self evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with inherent and inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (Declaration of Independence). Thomas Jefferson penned these words over two hundred years

ago, yet they still have a major impact on the lives of all Americans. Mr. Jefferson essentially guaranteed that all men were given the same rights and that no one was able to take away the rights enumerated in this important document, the Declaration of Independence. By asserting the colonists' right to be free from the tyranny of what was viewed as an unjust government, the founders set out to develop a nation that would respect the rights of all men equally.

As time progressed, however, Americans realized that all men were not treated equally and that something needed to be done to grant the same rights guaranteed by the Constitution and Declaration of Independence to Negroes, women, and immigrants. Each of these is excluded from this protection because they were not viewed as citizens. These groups fought with diligence and determination for many years to also benefit from the rights guaranteed by the Constitution. From the founding of the republic, it would take many years, a civil war, and the wisdom of great humanitarians and leaders to test the constitutionality and credibility of a document that should have allowed everyone to enjoy the benefits of liberty.

In July of 1848, at the Seneca Falls Convention, ten resolutions were passed to allow women basic rights. Concerned that women were also excluded from the protection and liberties prescribed for men, the women of Seneca Falls composed the "Declaration of Sentiments" which demanded acknowledgment that "the rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence apply to women as well as men" (Frost 79). Changing the words of the original document of

declaration, the women created resolutions that demanded “women be allowed to speak in public, be accorded equal treatment under the law, and at the insistence of Mrs. Stanton, be granted the vote” (79). The only resolution not passed was the ninth, which proposed to give women the right to vote, which of course, would not be granted until the twentieth century. The women of Seneca Falls were probably motivated by feelings of disregard and isolationism as well as the inability to be respected as women in a male dominated society and expressed their frustration at this convention. While they were able to form committees to address the concern women were experiencing; not all groups were successful in their efforts. “In the Southern cities, women formed organizations too, but with a difference. White men ruled the Southern family, and plantation wives were too isolated by distance to form similar community ties” (7).

Abraham Lincoln, in 1863, with the stroke of a pen, enacted legislation that redefined the very foundation our Constitution was based upon: liberty and justice for all. Over a century later, however, we are still redefining the principles of liberty. Inequality and injustice are still present in our society and legal system. In *A Time to Kill*, a novel published by John Grisham in 1989, Jake Brigance is asked by a Northern reporter whether Carl Lee, who has not yet been indicted for the murders of the two men who allegedly raped his daughter, can receive a fair trial in the state of Mississippi. Jake responds with a question, “Why couldn’t he?” The reporter then states the obvious: Carl Lee is black, the two men were white, and a white jury will try Carl Lee. McKittrick, the reporter, does not believe the system works fairly for blacks because, according to Jake, a

white man would be indicted for the murders but would not be convicted, not in Mississippi, Texas, or Wyoming (116).

Jake, although a very intelligent and capable lawyer, appears naive in his discussion of the judicial system: So, the system does not work fairly for blacks? Have you talked to Raymond Hughes?...He ran for sheriff last time, and had the misfortune of making the runoff against Ozzie Walls. He's white. Ozzie, of course, is not. If I'm not mistaken, he got thirty-one percent of the vote. In a county that's seventy four percent white. Why don't you ask Mr. Hughes if the system treats blacks fairly. (166)

Clearly, Jake is skirting the issue; and Grisham makes it clear that "no character expresses faith in the system" (Jebb 4274). McKittrick is speaking of the judicial system, not a black person's ability to be elected to public office. He realizes that the system he is referring to and the system Jake is referring to are not the same.

McKittrick continues, "Well if a white man would not be convicted and Mr. Hailey will probably be convicted, explain to me how the system treats both fairly" (117). Jake admits it does not and makes an essential observation; the system reflects society: "It's not always fair, but is as fair as the system in New York, or Massachusetts, or California. It's as fair as biased, emotional humans can make it" (117). This statement is indicative that justice is not a set of rules and technical procedures adhered to in a court of law. But the law is just that, rules and regulations which either restrict or enable citizens to live in a reasonably responsible society.

Grisham creates Jake and Carl Lee both as flawed heroes. Although we initially want Jake to be successful in his defense of Carl Lee and for Carl Lee to be acquitted, we realize that both to an extent are morally questionable. Jake is willing to do whatever it takes to win an acquittal. He introduces an insanity plea when he and everyone in Clanton knows that Carl Lee's offense was premeditated. Before the murders are committed, Carl Lee approaches Jake at the courthouse and questions what Jake would have done if it had been his child raped by two men: "Lemme ask you this. If it was your little girl, and if it was two niggers, and you could get your hands on them, what would you do? 'Kill them'" (47). Carl Lee is fully aware of his actions and does not act in a moment of sudden passion. The murders are methodically planned, and he lies in wait at the county courthouse for the arraignment of the two alleged rapists. Jake tells Carl Lee, "Don't do it, Carl Lee. It's not worth it. What if you're convicted and get the gas chamber? What about the kids? Who'll raise them? Those punks aren't worth it." "You just told me to do it." Jake walked to the door next to Carl Lee. "It's different with me. I could probably get off" (48). Carl Lee plans to exact justice in his manner, and his intention is for Jake to represent him. Jake, realizing that Carl Lee is about to commit a serious offense, does not inform the sheriff of Carl Lee's intentions. Both men are clearly flawed and struggle with the essence of justice. Carl Lee feels that justice has been served when he pulls the trigger of his M80 and ends the lives of two "animals." Jake, after the murders have been committed, wants to take Carl Lee's case not so much to prove his innocence or even to seek justice, but possibly to further his legal career.

“The contestants in the adversarial system seldom mention justice except as a means of grandstanding. Jake and Rufus, and the other lawyers as well, essentially want to win specific outcomes, which they call justice” (Jebb 4267).

When one looks to justice, I think he not only has to make a reasonable application of the law but also include morals and values to reach a fair and equitable outcome: justice. In Carl Lee’s situation, there were mitigating circumstances, which should have precluded not only a possible conviction, but an indictment as well. However, the readers tend to ignore the very basic and evident fact that Carl Lee has committed a serious if not heinous crime. His willingness to plead insanity when he is clearly not insane in the legal sense of the word causes one to view him in an unfavorable light. While we are able to sympathize with him because of the brutality and inordinate amount of pain his daughter has suffered, as reasonable people, we must allow the legal system to work. We cannot take the law into our own hands and expect to be exonerated because of mitigating circumstances. Jake and Carl Lee play a dangerous game with the ideals of the Constitution and clearly exhibit man’s unwillingness to allow the process to take place because we inherently do not trust the outcome.

The grand jury was in favor of “no billing” Carl Lee, an act that would have resulted in all charges being dropped and his being sent home to his family. The grand jurors understood how he could have reacted in the manner in which he did; but, until the issue of race was introduced, there was no problem with the jurors’ allowing Carl Lee to walk as a free man.

Reasonableness and fair play cannot occur until we refuse to allow race and gender to determine a man's fate. This thesis will explore the mitigating circumstances that allow society to decide whether the legal proceedings result in a fair and equitable system. Women writers have been moved to explore the theme of justice because it is an ideal that has historically not been blind to the gender, social standing, or the color of one's skin.

A novel considered an accurate depiction for relations between blacks and whites in the rural South is *To Kill A Mockingbird*, a novel published by Harper Lee in 1960. It is believed to be not only an accurate account of the difficulties people faced at the time the novel is set, the 1930s, but "for the nation as a whole for much of the twentieth century" (Young 4280). Mayella Ewell, considered trash by the community in which she lives, is not believed when she alleges rape against Tom Robinson, a colored man. Because Mayella is white and because it was not only socially but also morally unacceptable to believe the word of a Negro over that of any white person, Tom is convicted. The jury and the town know he is not guilty due to evidence presented in trial and the unreliability of the Ewell family. Atticus Finch is able to cast reasonable doubt upon the story Mayella recites on the stand. His victory is not evidenced in an acquittal, but in the fact that the jury took hours, not minutes, to find Tom guilty. Each citizen in the town of Maycomb knew there was little chance of Tom's being acquitted of the alleged rape. Tom's crime occurs on the witness stand when he acknowledges that he felt sorry for Mayella (Lee 197). What is ignored is the fact that Mayella is dismissed as being credible because of her social standing. If a more socially

acceptable woman had alleged the same charge as Mayella, there may have been more of an outcry due to the allegations. Mayella is also a victim because of her social standing not her gender. She is a perfect example of the type of women depicted in Katherine Anne Porter's and Susan Glaspell's works—a woman who is isolated and removed from the decision making process because she is neither respected nor valued as a person. It is this type of injustice that would have outraged Porter and caused her to question why women are disregarded in our society and treated more as property than a person. Regardless of Mayella's status in the community, she suffers because she is isolated and experiences the type of loneliness Glaspell's farm women experience. Surrounded with conditions similar to Minnie Wright; Mr. Ewell is abusive, a drunkard, and non-providing for his family, Mayella seeks to create beauty out of ugliness:

Mayella Ewell, too, although yielding to prejudice, family pressure, and personal loneliness in her mistreatment of Tom Robinson, nevertheless struggles to rise above her circumstances: The geraniums she grows are her attempt to create something beautiful and worthwhile in ugly and abusive surroundings.

(Young 4281-82)

Although Atticus and a few other townspeople work actively to promote justice, their efforts are not immediately realized (Young 4281). Unfortunately, Mayella Ewell is also in need of someone ensuring that her rights were protected as well. This was not to be and results in the death of Tom Robinson and, in a sense, Mayella as well.

The figure of justice sometimes refuses to allow the blindfold to remain over her eyes and often views the accused based upon who he is, and not what he has or has not done. There is intense interest in issues of justice that reject equality and a refusal to accept the principle that all men are created equal. Katherine Anne Porter, because of her upbringing in Texas and her experiences in Mexico, was fully aware of the inequalities based upon gender as well as race; and she effectively created characters who had to rise above the conditions which prevented their being accepted socially based upon gender or race.

Susan Glaspell was also concerned with injustice towards women and created characters that were allowed to rise above the legal and social boundaries that were created to keep women in silent, subservient roles. Also, an area of concern for Glaspell is the separation and isolation issue that often occurred in rural areas and prevented women from participating in the decision process that was exclusively for men.

What inspires writers to explore the theme of justice in their writings? Why are rural areas and the South the setting for many short stories and novels that contain issues of class, social struggles, and racism?

Quite possibly, the answers can be found in the very nature and structure of the country. At the time Katherine Anne Porter and Susan Glaspell were writing, society was neither accommodating nor tolerant of women and those who were in appearance physically different. Racial and gender injustice is evidenced in the works of both writers. Porter and Glaspell were strongly opinionated in

regards to the treatment of women, minorities and those of a different social standing.

Katherine Anne Porter long struggled with the theme of justice because of her own experiences with injustice. An uncertain relationship with her father, Harrison Porter, and her life in Mexico, where she witnessed gender injustice on a daily basis created a desire to examine life and why it allowed inequity to occur. Debra A. Modellmog, in “Concepts of Justice in the Works of Katherine Anne Porter,” states that “Porter was concerned throughout her life with the question of and a query for justice...She was interested in justice and how to achieve it and—more frequently, with injustice and how to stop it” (38).

Katherine Anne Porter was an active participant in issues of concern for many people. Unwilling to remain silent on civil rights issues, Porter actively protested the executions of two Italian immigrants, Sacco and Vanzetti, a cause which evolved into her last publication, *The Never Ending Wrong*. When pressured by the Senator Joseph McCarthy’s committee to sign an oath of allegiance during the “witch hunts” of the 1950s, Porter refused (38).

Porter’s experiences form a basis for many of her pieces, particularly “María Concepción,” which addresses injustice based upon gender. Key in “María Concepción” is the idea that justice can be obtained, yet moral and legal issues are separated to allow the people to be the final arbitrators of the law (44). While life is no more unjust or unfair in the rural areas than anywhere else, there appears to be a different class of people based upon race and social standing that seems to preclude a sense of justice or fair play.

Also outspoken in regards to injustice, is Susan Glaspell' in "A Jury of Her Peers," explores the issue of women and injustice. The story is written along the same lines as a Katherine Anne Porter story. This similarity causes the reader to question if, even in the twentieth century, women are not afforded the same considerations as men when a rural woman suspected of killing her abusive husband is suspected of the crime before the facts of the case are clearly defined. Glaspell approaches the concept of injustice with sensitivity and an awareness of how difficult the lives of rural women were during the early part of the century.

By analyzing selected works of Katherine Anne Porter and Susan Glaspell, I will argue that the fair application of justice has often been denied women and that this reality is reflected in women's fiction, particularly in such works as "Noon Wine," and "María Concepción," by Katherine Anne Porter and "A Jury of Her Peers" by Susan Glaspell.

Chapter II

Justice and Katherine Anne Porter's "Noon Wine," and "María Concepción"

If one were to summarize briefly the main theme of "Noon Wine," one would argue that there is an accurate assessment that it is an analysis of the guilt and the injustices that sometimes occur in life. It is not necessarily important where the injustice takes place, but that in any situation, there is always the potential that injustices can occur and create immense difficulties for those involved.

Influenced by a childhood memory, Katherine Anne Porter recreates and defines a brief moment in her life that later was to become a spiritual awakening. A man and woman sought Porter's grandmother as an audience to justify a murder that had been committed by the husband. Although the couple was unnamed, Porter recounts her remembrance of their appearance and uncomfortable demeanor in *"Noon Wine": The Sources*:

Then I saw first a poor, sad pale beaten looking woman in a faded cotton print dress and a wretched little straw hat with a wreath of wilted forgetmenots. She looked as if she had never eaten a good dinner, or slept in a comfortable bed, or felt a gentle touch; the mark of life situation was all over her. Her hands were twisted tight in her lap and she was looking down at them in shame. Her eyes were covered with dark glasses. While I stared at her, I heard the man sitting near her almost shouting in a coarse, roughened voice: "I swear it, it was in self-defense! His life or

mine! If you don't believe me ask my wife here. She saw it. My wife won't lie!" Every time he repeated these words, without lifting her head or moving, she would say in a low voice, "Yes, that's right. I saw it." (476)

As we will later see, Porter's character Ellen Thompson in "Noon Wine" has an aura of defeat and has essentially given up on the truth because for her it no longer exists. It is, however, Porter's grandmother who introduces the idea of justice when she states to Harrison Porter, Katherine's father, "I was never asked to condone a murder before ...Something new" (477). Grandmother's condemnation of what she and others realize to be "cold blooded" murder allows Porter, even as a child to see:

...the face of pure shame; humiliation so nearly absolute it could not have been more frightening if she had groveled on the floor; and I knew that whatever the cause, it was mortal and beyond help. In that bawling sweating man with the loose mouth and staring eyes, I saw the fear of moral cowardice and I knew he was lying. (481)

This unnamed shameful couple are later identified as Royal and Ellie Thompson. They are two people bound by a lie that would result in a not guilty verdict by a jury of Mr. Thompson's peers in a court of law, but condemnation in the court of public opinion: the Thompson's neighbors, friends, and family who knew the truth. Although Mr. Thompson truly believes he was acting in the best interest of his hired man, Mr. Helton, he has difficulty convincing himself that he

did not commit a murderous act. Mr. Thompson's inability to see the truth as it actually occurs causes great pain for him, his family, and the community.

Katherine Anne Porter approaches the concept of justice by presenting Mr. Thompson as a man who is acquitted due to his position in the community and his gender. She is not sympathetic towards him and allows her readers to see how society evokes a double standard when Mr. Thompson is acquitted by his peers. "Noon Wine" and its characters allow Porter to "examine the potential for tragic moral struggle and deep emotions in supposedly 'simple' people" (Sulkes 2988).

The basic facts of "Noon Wine" are simple: Royal Thompson kills Homer Hatch, a bounty hunter who approaches Thompson seeking his assistance in capturing the hired man, Mr. Helton, to return him to the waiting arms of the law. Mr. Thompson kills Mr. Hatch in a moment of sudden passion and, in his mind, in defense of Mr. Helton. He mistakenly believes that Mr. Hatch has taken a knife to Mr. Helton "blade up, go into Mr. Helton's stomach and slice up like you slice a pig" (163). The complexities that surround this act of violence have little to do with the murder, but the issues of morality, and ultimately, justice that occur before and after the crime has been committed.

Porter allows the truth initially to become muddled in the lie that Thompson has attempted to convince himself of. It is his refusal to accept his actions and admit to all that he had intense feelings of dislike for Mr. Hatch and may have been all too glad to kill him:

It was not so much his words, but his looks and his way of talking: that droopy look in the eye, that tone of voice, as if he was trying

to mortify Mr. Thompson about something...He wanted to turn around and shove the fellow off the stump, but it wouldn't look reasonable. (143)

In Mr. Thompson's mind, he sees an attack on his hired man. It is not that he has love for Helton; it appears that he has little respect for him, but Mr. Thompson is afraid of losing his position as a "prosperous" farmer who, because of Helton's arrival, is no longer required to do the chores Thompson considers "womanly" due to his wife's delicate health. The more Mr. Hatch speaks about nothing in general, the uselessness of wives and chewing tobacco, the more Mr. Thompson despises him and harbors thoughts of causing harm to Mr. Hatch to get him off his property.

As he seeks to justify the murder, Mr. Thompson creates an untruth that he forces Mrs. Thompson to retell. There is no indication that she believes him—far from it. At one point after his acquittal, Mr. Thompson says: "Even Ellie never said anything to comfort him. He hoped she would finally say, 'I remember now, Mr. Thompson, I really did come round the corner in time to see everything. It's not a lie, Mr. Thompson. Don't you worry'" (164). It is, however, a lie neither she nor Mr. Thompson is convincing. They are much like the couple who appeared at Porter's grandmother's farm. People had difficulty believing the word of either Royal or Ellen Thompson.

It is interesting how people initially rallied around Mr. Thompson, particularly his lawyer, Mr. Burleigh, who assured Mr. Thompson that he had done the right thing. Mr. Burleigh then recounts a story about his father, who also

killed someone in “self-defense.” “Sure I shot the scoundrel,’ said Mr. Burleigh’s father, ‘in self-defense; I told him I’*d* shoot him if he set his foot in my yard, and he did, and I did” (161). It can be argued that Mr. Burleigh, as would any defense attorney, wants to make his client believe that he did, in fact, do what was within his rights: “That stranger hadn’t any right coming to your house on such an errand” (161). It is as if Mr. Burleigh condones Mr. Thompson’s actions initially. After the trial and Mr. Thompson’s acquittal, Mr. Burleigh:

...didn’t seem pleased to see him when he got to dropping into the office to talk it over, telling him things that had slipped his mind at first. ...Mr. Burleigh seemed to have lost his interest; he looked sour and upset when he saw Mr. Thompson at the door. (162)

The lie and justification for the murder consume Mr. Thompson as he and Mrs. Thompson drive throughout the community speaking to all that would listen, to tell his side of the story. “Thompson cannot cease seeking to justify his actions to skeptical neighbors, mangling himself into an obsessed, guilt-ridden pariah in the process (Butscher 823). His intent of explaining himself to neighbors and friends he respected and in a move that clearly illustrated that Mr. Thompson had finally reached the end of the road, the awful looks of nothing in the faces of his friends, acquaintances, and family lead Mr. Thompson to take his life:

All the houses looked alike now, and the people—old neighbors or new—had the same expression when Mr. Thompson told them why he had come and began his story. Their eyes looked as if

someone had pinched the eyeball at the back; they shriveled and the light went out of them. (164)

Thompson desperately wants the community to support him, and it is not until he and Ellen approach the house of a man they both consider to be beneath them, that Mr. Thompson realizes that he can no longer continue. The last family they talk to and attempt to justify Mr. Thompson's actions to look upon the couple with disdain:

He halted and stumbled forward, and the two listening faces took on a mean look, a greedy, despising look that said plain as day, "My, you must be a purty sorry feller to come round worrying about what we think, we know you wouldn't be here if you had anybody else to turn to—my, I wouldn't lower myself that much myself." (167)

Almost as if Mr. Thompson could see what they were thinking, he becomes angry and ashamed of himself for justifying himself to "white trash." Meeting with people the Thompsons knew were not on their social level was necessary, however, because all the decent folks stopped them before they could alight from their carriage. The community mentally if not legally condemns Mr. Thompson for what they believed to be the murder of an unarmed man. Yet throughout the entire ordeal, Ellen Thompson sat with her hands folded and agreed that she had seen it all:

"If you don't believe me, you can believe my wife. She won't lie."

Mr. Thompson saw something in all their faces that disheartened

him, made him feel empty and tired out. They didn't believe he was not a murderer." (164)

Justice does not occur until Mr. Thompson takes his life. No longer able to face the condemning looks of his family and neighbors, after a particularly difficult night, Royal Thompson decides to end his life. The completion of a totally selfish act allows the process of justice that had been denied in the court of law to take place in that field behind Royal Thompson's home.

After Ellen awakes from a nightmare, Mr. Thompson calls for his sons, Herbert and Arthur, to help. Mr. Thompson is holding her and watching the tears streaming down her face:

Arthur sat the lamp on the table and turned on Mr. Thompson.

"She's scared," he said, "she's scared to death." His face was in a knot of rage, his fists doubled up, he faced his father as if he meant to strike him. Mr. Thompson's jaw fell, he was so surprised he stepped back from the bed... "What did you do to her?" shouted Arthur, in a grown man's voice. "You touch her again and I'll blow your heart out!" (172)

Mr. Thompson is so shocked by the reaction of his sons and the harsh words Arthur speaks to him that he knows that the only way to relieve the suffering of his family is to commit suicide. "When his sons, depicted as frolicking puppies at the story's opening, are suddenly grown men judging him guilty both of murder and violence toward his wife, Mr. Thompson can stand his life no longer" (Sulkes 2989). Under the guise of wanting to get a doctor to look

at Ellen, Mr. Thompson dresses in his best pants, and admonishes, almost pleads, with his sons to take care of Mrs. Thompson. He catches himself, however, and says:

Now you just keep watch until I get back. They listened but said nothing. He said, Don't you get any notions in your head. I never did your mother any harm in my life, on purpose.... You'll know how to look after her. (173)

The harm Mr. Thompson alludes to is physical in nature, yet we realize that he has done extreme harm to her emotionally and morally. Shortly after the crime against Helton is committed, Mrs. Thompson thinks to herself about the way life has changed and how they no longer have the support of friends and neighbors: "There was a time, she said to herself, when I thought I had neighbors and friends, there was a time when we could hold up our heads, there was a time when my husband hadn't killed a man and I could tell the truth to anybody about anything" (160).

Until the very end, Mr. Thompson has convinced himself that he did not kill Mr. Hatch on purpose and that it was an act of defending Mr. Helton, for Mr. Thompson was never in any danger. As he walks through the fields, one is struck by the irony of his situation and moved to compassion for him. "So many blows had been struck at Mr. Thompson and from so many directions he couldn't stop any more to find out where he was hit" (174). I cannot think of a sadder or more pathetic character than Mr. Thompson. I truly believe that he acted in the best interest of Mr. Helton. The problem is Mr. Thompson's perception of what

happened on that summer day. His intense dislike of Mr. Hatch probably caused him to react before he thought. Repeatedly he replays the scene in his mind and thinks of what he could have done differently:

Everytime he shut his eyes, trying to sleep, Mr. Thompon's mind started up and began to run like a rabbit... He knew the fellow was there for trouble. What seemed so funny now was this: Why hadn't he just told Mr. Hatch to get out before he ever even got in?" (169-70)

He is tortured by his actions, but more so because no one believes that he never intended to cause harm to Mr. Hatch:

Sometimes the air was so thick with their blame he fought and pushed with his fists, and the sweat broke out all over him, he shouted his story in a dustchoked voice, he would fairly bellow at last: "My wife here, you know her, she was there, she saw and heard it all, if you don't believe me, ask her, she won't lie!" and Mrs. Thompson, with her hands knotted together, aching, her chin trembling, would never fail to say: "Yes that's right, that's the truth—." (167)

There is no way out of this difficult situation, and Mr. Thompson has drawn Mrs. Thompson into his web of ambiguity as well. I do not believe Mr. Thompson is able to grasp completely the severity of his actions and feels that the word of his wife, although a lie, should exonerate him in the minds of the community. This is not the case, and his suicide is merely the completion of the

action. Three lives are lost unnecessarily, and the lives of many others are destroyed because Mr. Thompson did not act in a reasonable manner. In his mind, Mr. Hatch is to blame for the events that have occurred and is either unable or unwilling to acknowledge that his rush to judgment led to the deaths of Mr. Hatch and Mr. Helton:

He tried to imagine how it might have all been, this very night even, if Mr. Helton safe and sound out in his shack playing his tune about feeling so good in the morning, drinking up all the wine so you'd feel even better; and Mr. Hatch safe in jail somewhere, mad as hops, maybe, but out of harm's way and ready to listen to reason and repent of his meanness, the dirty, yellow-livered hound coming around persecuting an innocent man and ruining a whole family that never harmed him. (171)

Even at this point, Mr. Thompson believes he did the right thing. "A great rationalizer and self-excuser, Mr. Thompson cannot at last rationalize or excuse away the fates of Hatch and Helton, not only because he knows in his heart his degree of responsibility for another man's death but because he is confronted at last with the blinding sight of his own deficiency" (Lieberman 93). Justice can now be achieved in this final act of suicide. Suicide is the only manner in which Mr. Thompson believes he can be exonerated. Through suicide, he believes, the truth can be known and he can end the pain he is suffering. Robert Penn Warren believes, however, that, "Caught in the mysteriousness of himself, caught in all the impulses which he had never been able to face, caught in all the little lies

which had really meant no harm, he can't know the truth about anything (15).

Mr. Thompson has convinced himself of what he believes to be truth but does not fully grasp the concept of truth:

He can't stand not knowing what he himself really is. His pride can't stand that kind of nothingness. Not knowing what it is he can't stand, he is under the compulsion to go, day after day, around the countryside, explaining himself, explaining how he had not meant to do it, how it was in defense of the Swede, how it was self-defense, all the while plunging deeper and deeper into the morass of his fate. (Warren 15)

In his suicide note Thompson writes, "I have told all this to the judge and the jury and they let me off but nobody believes it. This is the only way I can prove I am not a cold blooded murderer like everybody seems to think" (175). The act of pulling the trigger, however, would probably lead the community to assume that Mr. Thompson was, in fact, guilty of cold blooded murder and ended his life as only a coward would. Therefore, the truth is not be known because it remains tangled in the web of ambiguity Mr. Thompson has unintentionally created. Although one can argue that justice has been served with the death of Mr. Thompson, justice is evidenced in Mrs. Thompson's no longer having to say in shame, "Yes that's right, that's the truth" (167).

In order for justice to occur, Mr. Thompson's peers and the community convict him; and, ultimately, it is Mr. Thompson who carries out the sentence. "Mr. Thompson felt he was a dead man. He was dead to his other life, he had got

to the end of something without knowing why, and he had to make a fresh start” (168). I do not believe Mr. Thompson’s original intention was to take his life; but after community rejection, there seemed to be no other way to extricate himself from this terrible situation.

Moral people could not condone the actions of a murderer; and no matter how apologetic he seemed, what Mr. Thompson had actually done was commit murder. There were no scratches on Mr. Helton when the men examined him after his death, a fact which led them to believe that Mr. Thompson intended to kill Mr. Hatch. It does not seem fair because of Mr. Thompson’s belief that he had acted in defense of a person in danger, yet community justice occurs when we remove ourselves from the legal definition of the word and apply our own values and morals. This community justice is what occurs in “Noon Wine.” The community applies its sense of right and wrong to what is considered just and arrives at the conclusion that Mr. Thompson is guilty, a finding which leads to the “restitution” phase of the law.

Mr. Thompson’s act of suicide can be seen as restitution that allows Ellen Thompson to find a measure of justice as well. An attribute that is lacking throughout Porter’s novella is the idea of truth. No one appears to accept things as they are. Mrs. Thompson allows herself to be drawn into a lie that tests her credibility and very being. Although she appears to support Mr. Thompson, there is a sense of shame every time he recounts the facts as they appear to him and his insistence that Ellen is an upstanding, respectable person who would tell only the truth. She, however, has lost her credibility in the community. As she reflects on

her life before the murder, she realizes all she has lost—friends, neighbors, and respectability. Mr. Thompson took great care with his “dignity and reputation,” yet allowed Ellen’s reputation to suffer because of his encouraging her to justify an act that she was not present to see.

It is interesting to note that once before Ellen had lost a bit of credibility with her sons earlier in the story. After playing with one of Mr. Helton’s beloved harmonicas, the boys are harshly reprimanded by Mr. Helton. Mrs. Thompson witnesses the violent shaking Mr. Helton issues to her sons, but she does not come to their defense. Ellen mentions what she has witnessed to Thompson, who also deals with the boys harshly: “The children did not glance at her. They had no faith in her good will. She had betrayed them in the first place. There was no trusting her. Now she might save them and she might not. No use depending on her” (124). Ironically, she actually sees what happens to her sons but does nothing to protect them or intervene. She does not see what takes place on that day in August but defends her husband and even lies for him. It is the good will of Ellen’s that Mr. Thompson must rely upon, and she does not let him down. Yet there is a sense that she does not believe him and also believes that he murdered Mr. Hatch not in self defense, but in an act of rage and savagery. Ellen Thompson is not as innocent, nor is she removed from the savagery of her husband, Mr. Thompson, of Mr. Hatch, Mr. Helton, and the men who cause the death of Helton as Porter would have us believe. She is affected by her surroundings and is unable to remove herself from the violence. “More relevant might be the acute view of Ellen, Thompson’s wife, about her husband’s savage

act and the typical male violence unleashed by the men restraining the frenzied Swede, whose senseless murder of his brother (Cain-Able reprisal) over a mere harmonica injects its own moral enigma. (Butscher 823). It is the nature of man that allows them to act with little regard to the consequences of their actions, yet Ellen Thompson is drawn into that violence and does little to extricate her from the savagery.

By the act of suicide, Mr. Thompson releases Ellen Thompson from the shame of lying, but afterward she and her sons must deal with the repercussions of Mr. Thompson's death—that he was guilty and too ashamed to continue living.

In Katherine Anne Porter's treatment of Mr. Thompson, there is a sense that Porter does not sympathize with the character or his fate. She deals with him rather harshly by having him freed by a legal jury but convicted by the neighbors and acquaintances with whom he must live. Porter is gentler in her treatment of Ellen Thompson, making her a longsuffering, almost pitiable mother and wife. We are ashamed that she is forced to lie on her husband's behalf and perhaps even somewhat relieved when Royal Thompson ends his life. We know that his action does not change the facts of the story, but there is a sense of closure and completeness once the act of suicide has occurred.

As in "Noon Wine," many of Porter's stories involve, "Christian morality in a world where traditional values are threatened" (West 434). For it is in morality that we seek justice. "María Concepción" is a story about morality, justice, and a community's carrying out the sentence once the verdict has been determined. As with "Noon Wine," Porter drew upon her experiences to create

characters that were full of substance and conflict. While living in Mexico in 1920, Porter attempted to “penetrate the Indian psyche, a mystery to the average middle-class Mexican, and create an authentic Indian world of which her heroine is both typical product and exceptional member” (Walsh 73). There is some dispute by critics as to how Porter created the character of María whom Porter recounts as a woman she met while living in Mexico. The critics think María Concepción was a fictional character created in Porter’s mind, but Porter insists, according to critic Thomas Walsh:

...she encountered in the doorway of an adobe hut a beautiful, almond eyed woman who offered her tortillas. When the same woman appeared at the digs, live chickens draped around her neck, Niven told Porter the woman’s story. She was the wife of his foreman, who had run off with his mistress to join the army. When the couple returned, the wife killed the mistress and adopted their newly born baby as her own. (Walsh 71-72)

“María Concepción” is the story of a young Mexican woman who has struggled to make herself a success in the eyes of her community. A seller of chickens, María Concepción works hard to make a living for herself and her wandering husband Juan. It is Juan’s actions, his subjecting María Concepción to his infidelity and running off with his mistress, María Rosa, that creates the need for justice. Walsh states:

The story deals with realistic depictions of indigenous life in Teotihuocan, romanticized nation of the ‘primitive’: closely in

touch with the elemental forces of nature, anticlerical, and feminist notions of the victimization of women, and the mysterious ways fate controls the lives of people beyond their power to comprehend it. (73)

María Concepción is a proud, independent woman who does not depend upon her husband for her existence. While going to market one morning, María Concepción, who is with child, decides she wants honey that María Rosa sells. As she approaches María Rosa's home, she hears laughter, a young girl and a man, María Concepción's husband, Juan:

Juan lifted one end of María Rose's loosened braid and slapped her neck playfully. She smiled softly, consentingly. Together they moved back through the hives of the honeycomb. María Rosa balanced her jar on one hip and swung her long full petticoats with every step. Juan flourished his wide hat back and forth, walking proudly as a game cock. (6)

Juan's inability to remain faithful to his wife leads to the death of his child, the death of his lover, and ultimately, his own end—not in a physical but emotional sense. María Concepción reacts to Juan and María Rosa's infidelity in the only manner she knows; she takes the life of María Rosa, regains her husband, and claims his child.

After Juan and María Rosa leave for the Mexican army, María Concepción gives birth to a child who lives only four days. She is seething with hatred not towards Juan, with whom she should be angry, but with María Rosa:

Juan and María Rosa! She burned all over now, as if a layer of tiny fig-cactus bristles, as cruel as spun glass, had crawled under her skin.... Now here was a worse thing, but she knew her enemy. María Rosa, that sinful girl, shameless! She heard herself saying a harsh true word about María Rosa, saying it aloud as if she expected someone to agree with her: “Yes, she is a whore! She has no right to live.” (6)

María is unable to confront Juan with her discovery because he does not return home that day. She performs her duties as expected and awaits his arrival. She changes at this point and becomes a woman consumed with the knowledge of what others have known all along; Juan is incapable committing to his marriage or his relationship with María Rosa. While they are unconcerned about the relationship between Juan and María Rosa, the village is sympathetic towards María Concepción and wants to comfort and strengthen her after the death of her child. “Porter attempts to make María Concepción both a typical and exceptional member of the community, knowing her place and striving to rise above it (Walsh 74). María Concepción, in her attempt to rise above her tragedy, however, shuns their help and sympathy and continues to pray to her God:

If she had not gone so regularly to church, lighting candles before the saints, kneeling with her arms spread in the form of a cross for hours at a time, and receiving holy communion every month, there might have been talk of her being devil-possessed, her face was so changed and blind-looking...It must be they reasoned that she was

being punished for her pride. They decided that this was the true cause for everything: she was altogether too proud. So they pitied her. (9)

The women of her village want to embrace María Concepción, but they also want acceptance from her. They have all been in situations that warranted strength in unity and understand her feelings; she has lost a husband and a child. María Concepción's pride, however, results to "elevate her to a position superior to that of the other women of class, but her hard-gained independence isolates her from the community" (Walsh 74). She is not able to heal and be a part of the community until after she commits a crime that disrupts the lives of the village.

María Concepción is a woman who is admired by the village for her strength and refusal to give into feelings of despair, but the members of the community are troubled by her refusal to confide and seek solace in them:

María Concepción did not weep when Juan left her; and when the baby was born, and died within four days, she did not weep. "She is mere stone," said old Lupe, who went over and offered charms to preserve the baby. "May you rot in hell with your charms," said María Concepción. (9)

It is María Concepción's faith in God that sustains her through her difficult time, but it is not enough. When Juan and María Rosa return and she gives birth to their son, María Concepción seeks justice and takes the life of María Rosa. Although Porter does not describe the actual murder, it is later revealed that María Rosa was stabbed many times and probably suffered a horrible death.

The community knows María Concepción has killed María Rosa but is unwilling to betray her. Even the grandmother of María Rosa believed the young girl was the cause of her difficulties "...Lupe had no talent for bees, and the hives did not prosper. She began to blame María Rosa for running away and praising María Concepción for her behavior" (9). María Concepción is a woman betrayed by her husband, yet the community was unconcerned because an unfaithful husband was not an uncommon occurrence. "There was no scandal in the village. People shrugged, grinned. It was far better that they were gone. The neighbors went around saying that María Rosa was far safer in the army than she would be in the same village with María Concepción" (8).

After the murder of María Rosa, the village and Juan support and protect María Concepción. Shortly after killing María Rosa, María Concepción returns home, bloodied, holding the knife she has used to kill María Rosa. Juan reacts quickly and directs María Concepción to change her clothes, and he cleans the knife she used. "Oh thou poor creature! Oh, madwoman! Oh, my María Concepción, unfortunate! Listen.... Don't be afraid. Listen to me! I will hide thee away, I thy own man will protect thee!" (14). He is the cause of trouble for María Concepción, yet he knows that he must protect her because she is his wife. Juan has a legal, as well as a moral, obligation to María Concepción; and he does act on his obligations. It is the first time he has taken responsibility for someone other than himself and proves himself worthy of María Concepción. The villagers help María Concepción because they are unwilling to allow the police to have the

upper hand and lie to protect her. It is an interesting scene as the women María Concepción originally spurned now defend her as one of their own:

At the inquest, the woman whom María Concepción had spurned come to her defense. Old Soledad had said, “She is wrong to take us for enemies.” Now they prove themselves her friends. Lupe could have ruined María Concepción, “but it was even sweeter to make fools of these grandarmes,” who are not part of the close-knit community and are male beside. (Walsh 79)

The support given to María Concepción by the village is unthinkable considering the violent manner in which she has behaved. She has placed herself on a higher level than the women in her village, and she is now at their mercy. Although they know she has murdered María Rosa, they realize that the murder is just because of María Rosa’s adulterous actions. They all defend her actions and protect her from the officials at the inquest: “...She is a woman of good reputation among us and María Rosa was not” (19). While they all realize that it is wrong to take the life of another, they believe that it was the loss of her child that caused her to react in the manner she did.

Justice is perceived by the community because María Concepción’s husband and his mistress wronged her. Unable to prove that María Concepción is guilty, although they believe she is, the gendarmes leave her in peace. Justice in this case does not mean that the parties involved experience justice as we traditionally think of the term. The outcome is just in the eyes of María Concepción and the village, since María Rosa is killed because of her adultery:

“Through her murder of María Rosa, María Concepción has unwittingly mobilized other women who identify with her suffering because, as Soledad says, ‘All women have these troubles’” (Walsh 80). It is also just in the values of the community that María Concepción takes the hours-old child of María Rosa and claims him as her own:

María Concepción suddenly feeling herself guarded and surrounded, upborne by her faithful friends. They were around her, speaking for her, defending her, the forces of life were ranged invincibly with her against the beaten dead. María Rosa had thrown away her share of strength among them, she lay forfeited among them. María Concepción looked from one to the other of the circling, intent faces. Their eyes gave back reassurance, understanding, a secret and mighty sympathy. (20)

It is the reassuring looks from the women around her that give María Concepción permission to take the son of Juan and María Rosa. They all agree that she should have the child, but no one speaks. The community has decided Justice, and the sentence has been carried out. The death of María Rosa is just and the child of her illicit romance being raised by her lover’s wife is just as well in the eyes of the group.

In this instance, the legalities of the justice system are circumvented. There is a hearing, but the evidence is insufficient to proceed any further. The gendarmes are correct in their belief that María Concepción is the murderer of María Rosa, but as long as the community attests to the righteous nature of María

Concepción's conduct, there is no way they can bring her to trial to seek justice as they know it:

In the actions of María's neighbors, Porter suggests that the people must have—and must act on—the right to resist a legal system that they find unjust, especially, perhaps, when they did not establish that system themselves... They intercept the agents of the law, a law that has been imposed on them by a conquering country, and try her themselves as a jury of her peers. They do not find her innocent, for everyone knows that she killed María Rosa, but they do not believe that she should be punished for her act.

(Moddelmnog 45)

The community accepts the crime and condones it. María Concepción will have to answer to a supernatural power for her crime, and it is not for them to judge. In a practical sense, community values allow María Concepción to be accepted and take the child of Juan and María Rosa:

On a social level, María Concepción moves from loneliness to community, from isolation and struggle outside the circle of women who wish to share her trouble to communion and peace in the circle of 'reassurance, understanding, [and] a secret and mighty sympathy among women whom she now recognizes as sisters.

(DeMouy 27)

Porter illustrates the principals of justice in a violent manner in both "Noon Wine," and "María Concepción." In each, a heinous murder has occurred,

each with a cutting utensil; and the community determines the fate of each of the characters. Mr. Thompson's peers find him not guilty in the legal sense but condemn him for committing a moral offence. María Concepción's peers did not condemn her in any form. They understood her pain and were very sympathetic towards her, even approving of her claiming the child of the murdered woman as her own. Justice, in Porter's stories, occurs outside the boundaries of a courtroom. Mr. Thompson's action is totally senseless although he believes he acted in the defense of another. María Concepción's action is deliberate and inevitable. She had a year to contemplate what she would do and completely loses control of her senses possibly when Juan attempts to beat her to reestablish himself in his household. It could be that she had no intention of harming María Rosa; but when she saw her in such a familial scene, it is no longer possible for her to contain her emotions and she gives way to what she is feeling:

She sat down quietly under a sheltering thorny bush and gave herself over to her long devouring sorrow. The thing which had for so longed squeezed her whole body into a tight dumb knot of suffering suddenly broke with shocking violence. (13)

There is a reason for María Concepción to react as she does, and Porter makes us aware of this. María Concepción is a hard-working, Christian who prays to God for what she needs. We are sympathetic with the loss of her child and her husband. It is considered just by the group that she is allowed to claim María Rosa's son, but it is morally wrong that María Concepción kills María Rosa because she is not the source of her pain; it is Juan. Juan, who remains unscathed

throughout the ordeal and regrets that he has lost his mistress, also receives a measure of justice in that his life is changed by the murder and his helping María Concepción to conceal her role in the crime. Judgment occurs in many forms, but it is difficult to accept a community decision when the catalyst for justice is a human being's life:

In 'María Concepción,' we have a story of competition between the wife and mistress, set in the simple surroundings of a primitive Mexican village. Here moral choice is made, not alone by the principal characters, but by the whole community, for they condone the killing of the mistress by the wife, not because they approve of bloodshed, but because they believe that, in a contest between simple sexual pleasure and the marriage bed, marriage and family must win out. (West 8)

Chapter III

Justice and Susan Glaspell's "A Jury of Her Peers"

Susan Glaspell, author of "A Jury of Her Peers," was a writer of issues that affected woman in rural situations who were isolated from society and in desperate need of attention. "Glaspell's plays and novels combine the search for individual identity with the hope that society will advance and evolve" (Levin 448). Glaspell's work "confronted the harsh conditions of the modern world, such as war, economic inequity, alienation, and class and gender discrimination, while never quite losing its essential faith in humanity and the life force" (Makowsky 181). The source of Glaspell's fiction and drama was her Midwestern roots of Davenport, Iowa, of which she began writing after graduating from Drake University. The majority of her stories were centered around the fictional town, Freeport, which is a pseudonym for Davenport. In this setting, Glaspell tried to move beyond the realms of Davenport in that she did not write about the harshness of the country life. Instead, she wrote stories that people wanted to read and "chose themes that would appeal to this audience" (Waterman 20). Discussing the popularity and work of Glaspell, Arthur Waterman said:

Miss Glaspell adhered to the values held by her readers. Love and money are the most desirable things in the world, but the greater of these is love. Although social class exists, class boundaries may be crossed by deserving individuals. Evil is usually overcome by good; suffering builds character. (21)

Having worked as a journalist and reporter, Glaspell understood that people were sometimes interested in life outside the normal realm. She chose to center upon “the more pleasant and romantic aspects of Iowa life,” and not until she wrote “A Jury of her Peers” did she delve into the unpleasantness which sometimes occurs in life (20).

Life for rural woman was probably at its most difficult and challenging during the nineteenth century. Discrimination based upon gender was as prominent as discrimination based upon race. In an essay which was taken from *Land and Imagination: The Rural Dream in America*, Elaine Hedge argues that the lives of rural women in a male dominated prairie were full of emptiness, hard work, and isolation:

Women themselves reported that it was not unusual to spend five months in a log cabin without seeing another woman...The absence of both human contact and of any ameliorating features in the landscape exacerbated the loneliness felt by women who had often reluctantly uprooted themselves from eastern homes and families in order to follow their husbands westward. (252)

In the late nineteenth century, life may have improved somewhat for women, but diaries and journals reflect the hardships rural women faced in their daily lives and in the interactions with their husbands: “...the single most important distinction between the social and cultural worlds of men and women was the isolation and immobility of wives compared to husbands” (253). Women were tied to the farmsteads by work and were often unable to socialize with other

women or even ride to town for social contact. An example of the inequity that existed between men and women was evidenced in an excerpt by Hamlin Garland in his short story "A Day's Pleasure," in which he describes a wife who is able to leave the farm and visits town:

Mrs. Markham has been six months without leaving the family farm. Over her husband's objections and by dint of sacrificed sleep and extra work to provide for her children while she is gone, she manages to get into town, finds she is scant welcome, and little to do. After overstaying her leave at the country store, she walks the streets for hours, in the 'forlorn, aimless wandering' that, Garland has the town grocer observe, is 'a daily occurrence for the farm women he sees and one which has never possessed any special meaning for him. (254)

Women were not active in a social aspect but were the backbone of the family and farm. Although Glaspell's characters were not subjected to the same harsh isolation of many nineteenth century women, the homesteads were not as far apart and as isolated as those of that century: but they were still affected by the long hours, hard work, and never ending drudgery of rural life. Affected by the lack of equality for women, Glaspell tried to move beyond what may have been the accepted norm for women, but she retained the local color of the period. Arthur E. Waterman in *Susan Glaspell* states: "With its precise realism, exact details, accurate dialogue, and conscious awareness of certain Midwestern

ingredients, it is local color on stage” (69). Evidenced in her writing is Glaspell’s treatment of woman who were isolated due to gender and location.

One her early depictions of issues of gender and isolation is in her one act play *Trifles*. Asked by her husband George Cook to write a play for their acting company, the Provincetown Players, Glaspell was apprehensive because Cook wanted her to write with the playwright Eugene O’Neill. Glaspell once worked as a courthouse reporter and drew upon an experience she had remembered but had not yet written about:

So I went out on the wharf...and looked a long time at that bare little stage. After a time the stage became a kitchen—a kitchen there all by itself. I saw just where the stove was, the table, and the steps going upstairs. Then the door at the back opened, and the people all bundled up came in—two or three men, I wasn’t sure which, but sure enough about the two women who hung back, reluctant to enter that kitchen. (Theodore 2406)

A year after *Trifles* was performed on stage in 1916, Glaspell made a few minor changes and entitled it “A Jury of Her Peers.” At this time, she was clearly aware of the struggle women were engaged in. This was the final year of the feminist movement in their effort to “free women from at least one of the imprisonment to which they had been historically subjected—the lack of the vote” (Hedges 256). Glaspell’s changing the title of the play, “emphasized the story’s contemporaneity, by calling attention to its references to the issue of woman’s legal place in American society” (256). The word “trifle” suggests “something of

little value or significance.” By changing the title, Glaspell shows that she realizes the importance of women’s roles in society yet, that she recognizes how they were relegated to subservient positions. By giving the short story the title she did, she makes it evident that women were moving beyond what was expected of them and taking a more active role in decisions in which they have an interest or concern. She presents this awareness in her short story in the depiction of the male and female roles.

Glaspell changed very little in depicting the murder of an abusive husband by his wife who experienced isolation and loneliness in a rural farm away from friends and neighbors. She reverses the role of Mr. Peters, the sheriff, and Mr. Hale, the neighbor, by making Mr. Hale a more sympathetic character and more complementary to his wife who refuses to allow the opinions of Mr. Henderson, the county attorney, or Mr. Peters to influence her.

In “A Jury of Her Peers,” there is never any doubt that Minnie Wright has committed the crime; and the men who arrive at the farmhouse are there to find a motive for the violent act. According to the county attorney: “...It’s all perfectly clear except the reason for doing it” (Glaspell 171). In order to present a solid case against Minnie Wright, the county attorney must find evidence to prove beyond a doubt that Minnie Wright should be convicted and punished for her crime. Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale are the only allies Minnie has and they arrive at an awareness of how empty and awful a life Minnie Wright led. They conclude that such an existence could possibly lead one to act in an uncharacteristic and violent manner.

Although the main character never actually appears in the action of the drama, she is crucial to the treatment of justice. Glaspell not only presents the differences in which men and woman view and approach the concept of justice but also allows the fate of Minnie Wright to rest in the hands of two farm women who are eventually able to identify with the isolation Minnie was subjected to. Glaspell interjects the idea of isolation and the effect it can have on women, particularly in her treatment of the reason the men and women are in the house. The men are there to gather evidence that would suggest a motive for the crime, but they are not successful. The women, however, are successful in finding clues that would hint at a motive due to their awareness of the significance of what the men consider insignificant “trifles.”

After Minnie Wright’s husband, John, has been murdered, the county attorney, the sheriff, a neighbor, and two women, Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters, visit the Wright home to find a motive for the murder. The sheriff’s wife, Mrs. Peters, and Mrs. Hale, who is there because of Mrs. Peters, are to gather items requested by Mrs. Wright, who has been jailed. Throughout the hour the women spend in the kitchen of Minnie Wright, Mrs. Hale has feelings of guilt for her lack of concern towards Minnie: “Even after she had her foot on the door-step, her hand on the knob, Martha Hale had a moment of feeling she could not cross that threshold. And the reason it seemed she couldn’t cross it now was simply because she hadn’t crossed it before” (159).

Having known Minnie Wright as a girl, Mrs. Hale finds it difficult to face not having been a friend to her. Mrs. Peters sympathizes and says that a farmer’s

wife has a hard life, but Mrs. Hale refuses to accept that as an excuse for not extending herself to Minnie Wright. Hedges makes the following observation about Mrs. Hale's inability to visit Minnie Wright:

Women's confinement to the kitchen or to the private space of the home was a major source of their isolation....the lives of farm women in the second half of the 19th century were lives 'tied to house and children, lacking opportunity for outside contacts, stimulation, or variety of experience. (253)

It is not that Mrs. Hale did not want to visit Minnie Wright; it was the fact that there was so much to do on the farm that the opportunity to visit and socialize was not possible: "Mrs. Hale moves from one kitchen to another. That she hasn't visited Minnie, whom she has known since girlhood, in over a year she guilty attributes to her antipathy to the cheerlessness of the Wright farm. But there is truth in Mrs. Peters' attempt to assuage that guilt: "But of course you were awfully busy...your house—and your children" (253).

The women, Minnie Wright included, experienced the busy, never ending life of the farm which did not leave time for socializing. The chores of washing, cleaning, mending, cooking, tending a garden, churning...these were activities that did not take holidays, for there was always work to do.

After entering the kitchen of Mrs. Wright and noticing the chores that were left undone, the woman come to an understanding that binds them and enables them to offer Minnie Wright consideration she does not receive from the county attorney or the sheriff. Both of the men seemingly make light of the

condition in which Mrs. Wright lived and make sarcastic remarks and biting comments towards her housekeeping and her state of mind:

After a moment he drew his hand away sticky. ‘Here’s a nice mess,’ he said resentfully. . . . “Oh her fruit,” she said, looking to Mrs. Hale for sympathetic understanding. She turned her back to the county attorney and explained: “She worried about that when it turned so cold last night. She said the fire would go out and her jars might burst.” (337)

Mr. Peters, the sheriff, comments “Well can you beat the women! Held for murder, and worrying about her preserves” (162). The women understand that Minnie Wright spent a hot summer day working over the canning of the fruit so the family would have food for the winter. Mrs. Hale says to Mrs. Peters after the men leave the kitchen, “She’ll feel awfully bad, after all her hard work in the hot weather. I remember the afternoon I put up my cherries last summer” (164). This statement refers directly to the hardships women faced. The attorney, Mr. Henderson, continues to criticize Mrs. Wright, accusing her of being a poor housekeeper after he examines the roller towel, which is dirty. It is not until later that Mrs. Hale realizes that it was probably the deputy sheriff who dirtied the towel after he made a fire for the county attorney’s visit. “. . . but I guess that deputy sheriff that come out to make the fire might have got a little of this on.’ She gave the roller towel a pull. ‘Wish I’d thought of that sooner!’” (164). There is a clear division between the tasks of the men and those of the women. The women are sympathetic towards Mrs. Wright and defend her actions by

concluding that it is difficult being a farmwife and she should not be accused of not being a good homemaker (338).

The division between the men and women is clear as the men struggle to find signs of anger that would indicate that the murder was premeditated. The women are insignificant and there only as a courtesy: “The men went over to the stove. The women stood close together by the door. Young Henderson, the county attorney, turned around and said, ‘Come up to the fire, ladies.’ Mrs. Peters took a step forward, then stopped. ‘I’m not—cold,’ she said. And so the two women stood by the door...” (159). The women probably feel a sense of guilt at entering the kitchen of a woman who is not home. It has been left in an “unready state,” and Mrs. Hale sympathizes with the woman who did not have a chance to prepare her home for visitors or, in this case, intruders. They are there in search of clues that would suggest a motive because according to the county attorney, “... But you know juries when it comes to women. If there was some definite thing—something to show. Something to make a story about. A thing that would connect up with this clumsy way of doing it” (171). He knows his case will not hold up unless he can show that Mrs. Wright acted with malice and intended to kill her husband. Although he is flippant in his dealings with Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters, the county attorney needs them to help him make his case because, at this moment, it is weak:

“I’ll guess we’ll go upstairs first—then out to the barn and around there.” He paused and looked around the kitchen. “You’re convinced there was nothing important here?” he asked the sheriff.

“Nothing that would—point to any motive?” The sheriff looked around as if to reconvince himself. “Nothing here but kitchen things,’ he said with a little laugh for the insignificance of kitchen things.” (162)

The men’s dismissal of the kitchen is an obvious mistake because a woman’s life in this period was usually confined to the kitchen. The men should have been very concerned with that area, but their inability to understand women and their refusal to treat Minnie Wright as an equal hurts their efforts to locate a motive. “Ironically, it is the kitchen that holds the clues to the desperation and loneliness of Minnie’s life and yields the women the answers for which the men search in vain” (Dymkowski 257).

While the men continue to speculate about what may have happened and criticize Minnie Wright’s inability as a homemaker the women begin to form a united front:

Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters, who at the beginning of the story are comparative strangers to each other, here begin to establish their common bonds with each other and Minnie. Their slight physical movement towards each other visually embodies that psychological emotional separation from men that was encouraged by the nineteenth century doctrine of separate spheres, a separation underscored throughout the story by the women’s confinement to the kitchen, while the men range freely, upstairs and outside,

bedroom to barn, in search of the ‘real’ clues to the crime.

(Hedges 253)

As the women locate the items Mrs. Wright has asked for: a black skirt, an apron, and a shawl, more of Mrs. Wright’s character is revealed. Mrs. Hale, who knew Mrs. Wright as Minnie Foster, sheds light on the person Minnie was before she married John Wright:

“Wright was close!” she exclaimed, holding up a shabby black skirt that bore the marks of much making over. “I think maybe that’s why she kept so much to herself. I s’pose she felt she couldn’t do her part; and then, you don’t enjoy things when you feel shabby. She used to wear pretty clothes and be lively—when she was Minnie Foster, one of the town girls, singing in the choir.”

(165)

Minnie had been a person full of life and vigor, but that was before she married John Wright. It is unclear why her life turned as it did, but Glaspell does not seem alarmed at the lifeless existence Minnie has. Mrs. Hale scarcely finished her reply, for now they had gone up a little hill and could see the Wright place now, and seeing it did not make her feel like talking. It looked lonesome this cold March morning. It had always been a lonesome looking place. It was down in a hollow, and the poplar trees around it were lonesome looking trees” (158-59). There is an air of sadness that permeates the house and its surroundings. Happiness and joy are nonexistent at the Wright home, and the audience is not shocked that the feelings of loneliness and isolation have led to the

death of John Wright: “We expect men like John Wright to live on the prairie, women like Minnie Foster to marry him; and the sudden violence after twenty years of repression seems inevitable in that bleak Iowan homestead” (Waterman 69).

Mrs. Hale also depicts John Wright’s character, not as a man who was neighborly or one to count upon but as a man who tended to keep to himself. Knowing how lonely Minnie Wright was and her not having children and John Wright’s ignoring his wife, Mrs. Hale asked Mrs. Peters if she had known the man:

...They say he was a good man. “Yes good,” conceded John Wright’s neighbor grimly. “He didn’t drink and kept his word as well as most, I guess, and paid his debts. But he was a hard man, Mrs. Peters. Just to pass the time of day with him... Like a raw wind that gets to the bone.” (168)

It appears that John Wright was an abusive man towards his wife and not very friendly towards his neighbors. In fact, Mrs. Hale’s husband was stopping by to ask John Wright about purchasing a telephone as part of a party line. Mr. Hale had approached John Wright once before, but he put him off by saying, “... folks talked too much anyway, and all he asked was peace and quiet” (160). Hale wanted to talk to John Wright with Minnie present because he thought he could get her as an ally by saying that all the women liked to have phones. He realized though “...that I didn’t know as what his wife wanted made much difference to John” (160). He did not have the opportunity to ask him, for Minnie Wright told

him that John Wright was dead. John Wright is characterized as an unsympathetic, abusive man, who would probably not be missed because of his death.

Regardless of the conditions Minnie Wright may have lived in, Mrs. Peters, the sheriff's wife, insists, "the law is the law" (341). Until the women locate quilting Mrs. Wright was working on, they are unaware that anything was out of the ordinary.

Quilting was an important outlet for many women of the nineteenth century. "Through quilting—through their stitches as well as through pattern and color—and through the institutions such as the 'bee,' that grew up around it, women who were otherwise without expressive outlet were able to communicate their thoughts and feelings" (Hedges 255). Mentioned in *Trifles* but omitted in "A Jury of Her Peers," Mrs. Hale comments that Minnie Wright was not able to be a part of the Ladies Aid because of her husband's stinginess. The Ladies Aid would have been "a female society associated with the local church, where women would have spent their time sewing, braiding carpets, and quilting, in order to raise money for foreign missionaries, for new flooring or carpets, chairs or curtains for the church or parish house or to add to the minister's salary" (255). More importantly, these societies enabled women the opportunity to meet and offer relief from the monotony of the farm lives they lived. Minnie was not a part of such societies because of John Wright's miserliness and his wanting Minnie to remain isolated from the outside world.

Denied female companionship, Minnie Wright worked on her quilts alone. The quality of the quilt alerts the woman that there was a great deal of pent up anger that is evidenced in the irregular stitches. The quilt began with very delicate, well-placed stitches and ended with an odd mixture:

One piece of the crazy sewing remained unripped. Mrs. Peters's back turned, Martha Hale now scrutinized that piece, compared it with the dainty, accurate sewing of the other blocks. The difference was startling. Holding this block made her feel queer, as if the distracted thoughts of the woman who had perhaps turned to it try to quiet herself were communicating themselves to her.

(343)

The noticeable differences in the quilt pieces seem to speak volumes about Minnie Wright's state of mind. Something unpleasant had taken place and caused her to make changes in the quilt. "A moment Mrs. Hale sat there, her hands folded over that sewing which was so unlike all the rest of the sewing" (167). At this point, the women are still unclear as to what has happened and speculate as to why there is such disparity in the stitches of the quilt. A look passes between Mrs. Hales and Mrs. Peters as if the pieces of a puzzle were slowly beginning to come together. "Then she had pulled a knot and drawn the threads. 'Oh what are you doing, Mrs. Hale?' asked the sheriff's wife. 'Just pulling out a stitch or two that's not sewed very good,' said Mrs. Hale mildly" (167). Mrs. Peters is concerned that Mrs. Hale is tampering with the quilt which shows Minnie Wright's state of mind. "I don't think we should touch things,' Mrs. Peters said, a

little helplessly. ‘I’ll just finish up this end,’ answered Mrs. Hale, still in that mild, matter-of fact fashion. She threaded a needle and started to replace bad sewing with good” (167). By replacing the erratic sewing that is in stark contrast to most of the quilt, Martha Hale is beginning the process of protecting Minnie Wright. In order for the process to be successful, she needs Mrs. Peters to participate as well. Upon discovering the broken birdcage, Mrs. Peters, who believes the law must be upheld, is resistant . While looking for something to place the items of clothing in, Mrs. Peters finds a broken birdcage in the cupboard. The birdcage is empty and looks as if someone has been rough with it (343). Upon further discovery, the women find a dead bird wrapped in silk in a pretty box inside Mrs. Wright’s sewing box. “It’s the bird,” she whispered. “But look Mrs. Peters!” cried Mrs. Hale. “Look at it! Its neck... Somebody wrung its neck,” she said in a voice that was low and deep” (345). Mrs. Wright’s husband John had been is killed by strangulation. The women conclude, unlike the county attorney, that Minnie Wright was not a good housekeeper but that the clues they find are all indications of John Wright’s abuse. They know that the shabby clothes are the result of John Wright’s miserliness: the neglected kitchen signifies Minnie Wright’s despair, and the birdcage was broken and the bird’s neck wrung by John Wright, who had also killed the song in his young and pretty wife (Makowsky 184). The women are convinced that Minnie Wright reacted in the only manner she knew. As she knotted the quilt she was working on, she was “inspired to avenge herself by knotting their own rope around her husband’s neck” (Makowsky 184).

This similarity and Minnie Wright's creativity are not lost on the women as they develop theories as to what may have happened to the bird and why John Wright was killed by strangulation when there was a gun in the house. Mrs. Peters mentions that when she was as a girl, a boy had killed her kitten with a hatchet. "If they hadn't held me back I would have—she caught herself, looked upstairs where footsteps were heard and finished weakly—"hurt him" (346).

Being childless probably deprived Minnie Wright of any joy she may have had and left her with the denial by John Wright of any human contact besides himself. Mrs. Hale attempts to describe the emptiness that Minnie Wright probably felt: "If there had been years and years of nothing than a bird to sing to you, it would be awful—still—after the bird was still" (170). Glaspell allows the women to achieve a solidarity that seems cemented when Mrs. Peters speaks of losing her first child: "I know what stillness is," she said, in a queer, monotonous voice. "When we homesteaded in Dakota, and my first baby died—after he was two years old—and me with no other then" (170). The bird may have been the only source of joy in Minnie's life, and her husband's violence was the reason her joy was taken away. Mrs. Hale remembers Minnie as she was: "She—come to think of it, she was kind of like a bird herself. Real sweet and pretty, but kind of timid and—fluttery. How—she—did—change" (169). The women are sympathetic and understand that she is no different from them. Mrs. Hale says, "We live close together, and we live far apart. We all go through the same things—it's all just a different kind of the same thing! If it weren't—would you

and I understand? Why do we know—what we know at this minute?” (171).

Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale conspire and hide the box with the dead bird:

There was a sound of a knob turning in the inner door. Martha Hale snatched the box from the sheriff's wife, and got it in the pocket of her big coat just as the sheriff and the county attorney came back into the kitchen. (348)

Maybe because they do not want to be laughed at by the men or out of sympathy for Mrs. Wright, the ladies do not share what they have discovered—the dead canary, which is the most damning piece of evidence in an otherwise circumstantial case. Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters conspire to hide the evidence which provides one of the motives for the crime Mrs. Wright commits. They are bound together by their conspiracy because as the county attorney states, “Of course Mrs. Peters is one of us” (163). He has entrusted her with the responsibility of alerting the men if any evidence is found. Mrs. Hale has not been included into the trust of the county attorney and “distances herself from her male approved peer in word and deed” (Mustazza 264). By her not being required to act in a manner that would be distasteful to her, she is not the wife of the sheriff, Mrs. Hale is able to be accepting and understanding of her neighbor's predicament. She is able to bring Mrs. Peters to an understanding of Minnie Wright's lifeless existence as well to point out the little things that most women would take for granted:

“The law is the law – and a bad stove is a bad stove. How'd you like to cook on this?”—pointing with the poker to the broken

lining. She opened the oven door and started to express her opinion of the oven; but she was swept into her own thoughts, thinking of what it would mean, year after year, to have that stove to wrestle with. (166)

Minnie Wright was denied the basic needs that many women were fortunate to have. She did not have running water, a telephone, or even pretty clothes. These items would not necessarily have cured her isolation, but they might have given her a little hope. Mrs. Peters is sympathetic and states “a person gets discouraged—and loses heart.” (166). She and Mrs. Hale agree not with words but with knowing looks and realize that they must not allow the men to humiliate Minnie Wright any more than she has already suffered:

Throughout much of the 19th century married women were defined under the law as ‘civilly dead,’ their legal existence subsumed with their husbands, their rights to their own property, wages, and children either non-existent or severely circumscribed . Nor did they participate in the making or administering of the law.

(Hedges 256)

The manner in which Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters act is important because they step out of the traditional roles of women and serve as a jury. In 1873, Susan B. Anthony, who challenged the legal restrictions of her day, was arrested, tried, and convicted for trying to vote:

Anthony had argued that the all-male jury which judged her did not comprise, as the Constitution guaranteed to each citizen, a ‘jury

of her peers.’ So long, she argued, as women lacked the vote and other legal rights, men were not their peers but their superiors.

(256)

Glaspell realized this inequality for women and allowed Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters to take the law into their own hands and decide the fate of Minnie Wright. Their conduct is important because a “jury of her peers” judges Minnie Foster and decide she is not guilty. Both women understand the difficulties Minnie has suffered and realize that even if the one thing that has given pleasure in an otherwise dull existence is taken away, it does not give the right to take a person’s life. The women were also experiencing pangs of guilt for not helping Mrs. Wright deal with the very loneliness they, too, suffered from. Knowing the fate of rural women and the difficulty of their existence, Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale are willing to give Minnie an opportunity that she may not otherwise have because the county attorney has already convicted her in his mind. The women know that the law requires that there must be a formal trial with a judge and jury: but for justice to occur, Minnie Wright must be tried by women who face the same social and physical conditions as she. Glaspell allows Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters to hold court in that isolated, cheerless farmhouse: “Glaspell creates a courtroom in that Iowa farmstead, and the women become jurors who decide that Minnie is not guilty” (Theodore 2406). While the role of the men is to find evidence to develop a strong convictable case against Minnie Wright, the women are in search of justice. Ironically, justice is in the hands of two people who do not have privileges guaranteed under the law or even the right to vote. Mrs. Hale

and Mrs. Peters know that Minnie Wright will be tried by a jury of twelve men who will be unconcerned with the motive behind John Wright's murder. In concealing the one piece of evidence that would give Mr. Henderson and Mr. Peters what they are in search of, a motive, the women are guilty of committing a crime as well. The concealment of the dead bird stems from Mrs. Hale's concern with Minnie Wright's fruit. "If I were you I wouldn't tell her her fruit was gone! Tell her it ain't. Tell her it's all right—all of it. Here—take this in to prove to her! She—may never know whether it was broken or not" (171). The women are aware of the importance of the fruit and the significance of the work Minnie Wright put into the lifeless farmhouse and decide that they, not the men, are her peers and will determine her fate. Mrs. Peters decides not to tell the men about the dead bird and rationalizes to Mrs. Hale: "My...it's a good thing the men couldn't hear us! Getting all stirred up over a little thing like a—dead canary.' She hurried over that. 'As if that could have anything to with—with—My, wouldn't they laugh?'" (171) "In committing her 'crime,' Mrs. Peters resorts not to any constitutional justification but to a bit of sophistry, cunningly based on the trivia which are at the heart of Glaspell's story. Why reveal the dead bird to the men, she reasons, when they consider all of the women's concerns insignificant?" (Hedges 256). The women are able to "make their decision on the basis of an imaginative identification with Minnie Wright" (Makowsky 184).

As Katherine Anne Porter examined issues of justice in "Noon Wine," and "María Concepción," and allowed her characters to decide the fate of their peers, Glaspell allowed her characters, Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale, to separate issues of

legality from what they knew to be moralistically true. “The most important reason, however, that the women do not condemn Minnie is because of her sex. Although justice is an issue in “A Jury of Her Peers,” the central conflict in the story is between the masculine attitude of logic and right, and the feminine emphasis on love and forgiveness” (Waterman 30). Minnie Wright committed a crime: but because she was faced with circumstances that mitigated reasonableness and fair play, the women are convinced that she did no more than they may have if presented with the same situation. Mrs. Peters’ helping Mrs. Hale conceal evidence is important because she “is married to the law; she proceeds to divorce herself from that law by abetting Mrs. Hale in concealing the dead bird. With that act the two women radically subvert the male legal system within which they have no viable place” (Hedges 256). Glaspell also practiced a retributive system of justice that allows for the rights of others, which enables the women to “acquit” her (Moddlemog 39).

Although Deborah Moddlemog believes that justice is impossible in our present system, Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale, at least, allow Mrs. Wright an opportunity to receive an uninformed trial based upon the withholding of the evidence they have gathered from the crime scene. “The farm women allude to the desolate environment of the Wright homestead to show that Minnie strangled her husband out of the desperation people feel when they are isolated from human contact” (Noe 248).

Glaspell’s characters arrive at a conclusion of what true justice is. “John ‘Wright’ may have been legally in the right because he didn’t drink, and kept his

word, but his constant mean-spiritedness over seeming ‘trifles’ like the canary appear much more wrong to the two women than does Minnie Wright’s crime of passion, the last uprising of her free spirit” (Makowsky 184). The isolation and loneliness were expressed by Minnie Wright in the only way she knew; she exploded in a violent manner and took the life of her husband. The stitches in the quilt were evidence of Minnie’s changing mood and maybe illustrate her “plotting” revenge for her dead canary. She was able to endure for many years John Wright’s stinginess both financially and emotionally, but it was the death of an innocent creature that caused harm to no one that caused the years of abuse to finally emerge. It is ironic that John Wright is not killed by a gun which is the house, but by a rope “knotted” around his neck by his wife. Katherine Anne Porter and Susan Glaspell understood that women are not afforded the same consideration as men because of their gender, and because of prejudice in regards to women’s rights. Their husbands, because of their gender, essentially dismissed each of the characters, María Concepción and Minnie Wright. María Concepción is depicted as a strong, intelligent woman who is able to withstand her affliction at the hands of her husband Juan because of her religious strength. There are many similarities between María Concepción and Minnie Wright, for the lives of both women rested in the hands of their peers. There is an understanding among the Mexican women and the rural farm women that all were potential victims of the same circumstances and that as women, as sisters, they must stand together.

It is possible to include Ellen Thompson in Porter’s “Noon Wine” in the same analysis because her husband, Royal Thompson, too, victimized her. Her

pain was not physical but emotional because of his insistence that she confirm his version of a crime and claim to seeing her husband take the life of Mr. Hatch while defending the life of Olaf Helton. Ellen Thompson loses self respect and respect for her husband because of his selfish actions with the murder of Mr. Hatch and his subsequent suicide.

In “Noon Wine,” “María Concepción,” and “A Jury of Her Peers,” justice is considered; and the parties involved are treated in a manner appropriate for the crime. In order for justice to occur, there must be an awareness of the facts and circumstances beyond what is traditionally considered black and white. There are often no clear-cut or absolute distinctions when dealing with justice. If one does not allow for mitigating circumstances, justice cannot be achieved. It might have been unjust for María Concepción to have been tried and convicted for the murder of María Rosa without considering the mitigating circumstances of the adulterous relationship and subsequent birth of her husband’s illegitimate child. Where would the justice be? Fairness does not necessarily need to be the only determining factor for justice to take place. It is unfair to María Concepción that María Rosa and Juan had an illicit relationship. It is unfair that María Rosa and Juan left together and had a child. It is unfair that María Concepción gave birth to a child only to have it die days later. It is unfair that Minnie Wright lived a life of isolation and abuse. Fairness is not often a requisite for justice and should not be considered as the only determining factor in the outcome. Although the American Constitution provides for equal protection under the law; unless the rights of an individual are recognized, equal protection is a moot point. In “Noon Wine,” Mr.

Thompson was afforded the right of equal protection because of his gender. Minnie Wright, on the other hand, was not afforded the right of equal protection unfortunately, because of her gender; she did not have the rights guaranteed by the Constitution, i.e., a trial before a jury of her peers, from women such as herself. The fourteenth amendment to the Constitution provided for the rights of newly freed male slaves; however this protection was not extended to women:

All persons born and naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. ... nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. (Constitution of the United States)

Unfortunately, women were excluded from the protection of due process and equal protection. In 1920, the 19th Amendment was passed which stated, “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex” (Constitution of the United States). In 1873, the justices of the United States Supreme Court upheld the law in *Bradwell v. Illinois*; a case in which women challenged the law to be allowed to practice law. The justices held that:

the natural and proper timidity and delicacy which belongs to the female sex evidently unfits it for many of the occupations of civil life. The paramount destiny and mission of woman are to fulfill

the noble and benign offices of wife and mother. This is the law of the Creator. (Lockhart 1286).

As late as the early 1970s, women were still viewed as incapable of participating in trials as jurors. In *Hoyt v. Florida*, a case that challenged “a law placing women on the jury list only if they made special request.” Justice Harlan concurred in the decision of the case by stating that, “woman is still regarded as the center of the home and family life.” Justice Harlan’s statement and that of many legalists, for most of the twentieth century continued to deny women the rights that had been afforded them by the American Constitution.

Porter and Glaspell go beyond what is expected from the law and allow the true determiners of justice, the characters in the works, to perform the roles they rightfully deserve. Although our laws decree that a jury of one’s peers determines the fate of a person accused of a criminal act, it does not always happen. We know that often this is not the case because the law prescribes to there being no “gray” areas in the law. True justice must take into consideration all things.

Interestingly, Porter and Glaspell do not present favorable views of men in regards to issue of justice. Mr. Thompson, Juan, Mr. Peters, and Mr. Hatch are afforded certain considerations because they are men. Mr. Thompson, the only male guilty of a legal crime, is tried by a jury of his peers and released. Although little lies are told on the stand, the men who try Mr. Thompson dismiss them; and he is free to return to his home. He has committed his crime because he believes he was defending the life of his hired man and himself.

Minnie Wright, on the other hand, endured years of abuse at the hands of her husband and finally takes his life after he kills her canary. She is not to be tried by a jury of her peers in the legal sense, but by men who have no concept of the life Minnie Wright has had to live. She would surely be convicted if the men, Mr. Peters and Mr. Henderson, are able to prove that there was a motive and that it was anger. If not for the presence of Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters, the men may have found the evidence they needed to prove their case, yet, because of their inability to read the “trifles of women,” they would not have been successful. Customs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were harsh towards women. Through the story, we have a sense that the women were incidental in society in regards to decisions and consideration as people. It is quite evident, however, that women were necessary in rural areas because they were essential workers for the farm. The strength and oftentimes the success of a farm depended upon the hard work of the women. Minnie Wright’s murder of her husband John is not as dramatic and as unusual as one might like to believe. It is more than the idea of John Wright’s silencing the canary which may have been a voice for Minnie. Critic Elaine Hedges makes a real connection between Minnie Wright and the lives of nineteenth century farm women who were faced with isolation and loneliness: “...In the monotonous expanses of the prairie and the plains, the presence of one small spot of color or bit of music, might spell the difference between sanity and madness (256).

Juan, in “María Concepción,” is a moral miscreant, but he is admired because he is a man. He is abusive, unfaithful, and unwilling to provide for María

Concepción; yet he is not looked down upon by the villagers. María Concepción is the strength of the family and must continue to live after her husband leaves with his mistress. She must face further humiliation when Juan and María Rosa, who is carrying Juan's child, return to the village. Throughout the entire ordeal, María Concepción has drawn upon her faith to sustain her through the dark days.

Issues of gender are treated favorably by Katherine Anne Porter and Susan Glaspell because of the injustices women were subjected to. Denied the privilege of voting, unable to enter contracts, and being under subjection to the males in one's household, it seems that the two writers wanted to move their characters beyond the traditional roles of women in society at that time and depict them as intelligent, thinking, and capable decision makers. These women characters of Porter and Glaspell are reflective individuals capable of seeking and recognizing truth and justice even in an unfair world.

Chapter IV

The Importance of a Trial

In the texts analyzed for this research, the importance of a trial or semblance of one is necessary because it allows one to examine his or her own sense of right and wrong. Katherine Anne Porter and Susan Glaspell, as well as Harper Lee and John Grisham, are appropriate for inclusion in this chapter because they speak of people who resort to unusual means to implement justice. It is not necessary for a formal trial to take place in a courtroom; justice can occur anywhere in the presence of peers who are to determine the guilt or innocence of the accused.

One of the most noted fictional trials in American literature is found in *To Kill A Mockingbird*. Atticus Finch's defense of Tom Robinson is most interesting because Finch goes beyond the required half hearted practice of merely representing a Negro client to providing a defense. While justifying to Scout his defending Tom Robinson after she inquires if all lawyers defend Negroes, Atticus explains his reasons for defending Tom:

...The main one is, if I didn't, I couldn't hold my head up in town, I couldn't represent this county in the legislature, I couldn't even tell you or Jem not to do something again... Scout, simply by the nature of the work, every lawyer gets at least one case in his life that affects him personally. (Lee 76)

Atticus' insistence upon upholding the Constitution and the oath of allegiance he took to that document prevents his providing Tom with any less.

The town is angered because Atticus does not adhere to the routine of not defending his client, but actually attempts to prove that Tom Robinson did not assault Mayella Ewell. His closing argument was factual and to the point; and, by all accounts, Tom Robinson should have been acquitted. Due to the racial tenor in the South during the 1930s, there was no way Tom could be found not guilty. Atticus presents the following observations in his closing argument:

But there is one way in this country in which all men are created equal—there is one human institution that makes a pauper the equal of a Rockefeller, the stupidest man the equal of an Einstein, and the ignorant man the equal of any college president. That institution gentlemen is the court. It can be the Supreme Court of the United States or the humblest J.P. court in the land, or this honorable court which you serve. Our courts have their faults, as does any human institution, but in this country our courts are the great levelers, and in our courts all men are created equal. (205)

After Atticus presents his impassioned, logical closing argument, the jury retires to deliberate the verdict. A jury of his peers is not judging Tom Robinson because there are no Negroes who serve as jurors. When the jury returns several hours later and delivers a verdict of guilty, there is a small measure of victory for Atticus and those who are proponents of rights and justice. He and others believe that the jury would return within minutes to deliver the verdict because one would expect, given the circumstances, a Negro's being tried for the assault of a white

woman, that it would not take long to convict him. The verdict, however, is not returned within minutes but after several hours and is, I believe, due to Atticus's plea to the juror's sense of duty:

I'm no idealist to believe firmly in the integrity of our courts and in the jury system—that is no ideal to me, it is living, working reality. Gentlemen, a court is no better than each man of you sitting before me on this jury. A court is only as sound as its jury, and a jury is only as sound as the men who make it up. I am confident you gentlemen will review without passion the evidence you have heard, come to a decision, and restore this defendant to his family. In the name of God, do your duty. (205)

The jury performs its duty by affirming the values of rural Alabama in the 1930s. Tom Robinson is found guilty due to the social conditions of the South. Atticus realizes that no matter how effectively he defended Tom, no white jury would allow Tom Robinson to leave the courtroom as a free man. He explains to Jem:

Those are twelve reasonable men in everyday life, Tom's jury, but you saw something come between them and reason... There's something in our world that makes men lose their heads—they couldn't be fair if they tried. In our courts, when it's a white man's word against a black man's, the white man always wins. (220)

Although the courts were not fair to minorities, it was still the only system that existed. Atticus' integrity required that he defend a man he knew never had a chance at justice. Harper Lee was fully aware of how unrealistic her novel would have seemed had she not allowed Tom Robinson to be accused, convicted, sentenced to death, and killed while supposedly attempting to run away. Lee was willing to show the ugly side of the court system that does not believe all men are created equal and to show the willingness of a jury to take the word of a socially unacceptable individual over a hard working honest Negro. Life is not just, and there can be no justice in a racist courtroom or world that refuses to see men as individuals and not a color.

John Grisham presents a modern day dilemma with a noticeably different twist: his defendant is guilty. Carl Lee never denies that he killed the two men accused of raping his daughter, and he stands trial for murder. Jake Brigance, Carl Lee's lawyer, must convince the jury that Carl Lee acted as he did because of the heinous nature of his daughter's rape and assault. It is not Jake, however, who convinces the jury, but a juror who asks the other jurors to imagine a rape:

She told them to pretend that the little girl had blond hair and blue eyes, that the two rapists were black, that they tied her foot to a tree and they raped her repeatedly and cussed her because she was white... And then she told them to imagine that the little girl belonged to them—their daughter.... And they voted, by secret ballot. All twelve said they would do the killing. (Grisham 513)

The jury could not acquit Carl Lee because they were unable to see beyond his race. It is sad that a child, Tanya Hailey, suffered a most brutal violation; but until a juror instructs the other jurors to imagine the child as white and their own, Carl Lee was headed for the electric chair. Justice would not have prevailed if some reason had not entered that jury room. It is true that Carl Lee was guilty of murder, but he acted as any father would. This truth is what the jurors are finally allowed to see. Again, the courtroom is a necessary arena for justice, for it is the common sense of the jurors in the deliberation room that allows Carl Lee to leave as a free man. Jake presented an admirable defense, but it was not enough. The jurors could not relate to Carl Lee. His actions were wrong, but his reason behind his actions was understandable. As Atticus said, “the court is only as sound as its jury” (Grisham 205). The wisdom of a woman was necessary to bring the jurors to a consensus; and, even so, they badgered one woman into a verdict of not guilty: “Wanda said she’d sit in that jury room until Christmas before she’d vote to convict, and if they were honest with themselves, they ought to feel the same way. Ten of them agreed with her, and one lady held out. They all started cryin’ and cussin’ her so bad, she finally caved in” (Grisham 513). It was not an immediate awareness of right and wrong, but Grisham’s jury is able to reach that point and apply justice as it should be, not based upon black and white, but what is right.

To Kill a Mockingbird and *A Time To Kill* are novels that approach courtroom drama according to Constitutional and legal issues. Central to the lawyers’ arguments is the idea that justice should occur based on a jury’s ability

to differentiate issues of right and wrong as they pertain to law. Atticus does, however, ask the jurors to look beyond the community dogma and apply their sense of morals and values to reach a verdict.

A trial is not the focal point of "Noon Wine." A trial occurs, but it is incidental to the action of the story and is seen as a formality. Royal Earle Thompson is tried in a much more unforgiving court, one that does not have a system of appeals, the court of public opinion. Mr. Thompson's peers acquit him in court, but condemn his actions outside the courtroom. "It hadn't been much of a trial, Mr. Burleigh saw to that" (Porter 162). It is unclear whether Mr. Burleigh convinced the jurors before the trial that it was "a cut and dried case" or if he was able to convince the jury effectively that Mr. Thompson acted as a reasonable man would in his situation. Robert Penn Warren states: "After the deed, there isn't, strangely enough, a scratch on the Swede's stomach. This doesn't bother the jury, and Mr. Thompson is acquitted in no time at all" (14). What is obvious is that Mr. Burleigh believes Mr. Thompson is guilty as does the community because of his reaction to Mr. Thompson when he comes to his office: "Mr. Burleigh seemed to have lost interest" (162). The formal trial has ended but the real one, the one that determines Mr. Thompson's position in the community, begins with his and Ellen's driving from farm to farm telling his side of the story. According to Thompson; "If he was given a chance he could explain the whole matter. At the trial they hadn't let him talk. They just asked questions and he answered yes or no, and they never did get to the core of the matter" (163). Had his attorney allowed him to explain, the jurors who obviously did not understand

why he took Mr. Hatch's life probably would have convicted Mr. Thompson. A conviction at trial may have precluded Ellen's losing her credibility and the family's being shamed by Mr. Thompson's denial of what really happened on the farm that day Mr. Hatch was killed. In this instance, the community functioned as jury and deliverers of the verdict, but it is Mr. Thompson who carries out a self-imposed sentence by ending his life:

Taking off his right shoe and sock, he set the butt of the shotgun along the ground with the twin barrels pointed towards his head. It was very awkward. He thought about this a little, leaning his head against the gun mouth. He was trembling and his head was drumming and he was deaf, and blind, but he lay down flat on the earth on his side, drew the barrel under his chin and fumbled for the trigger with his great toe. That way it would work. (176)

The court of public opinion is also evidenced in "María Concepción." The sympathetic, understanding woman and men in María Concepción's village find her not guilty of the crime of murder, yet they do not condone her actions. They realize she has taken the life of another, but María Concepción has suffered at the hands of the life she took. María Rosa creates conflicts for María Concepción where none originally existed. The final straw is María Rosa's returning and giving birth to Juan' son while María Concepción's baby has died. The claiming of María Rosa's son by María Concepción after the death of María Rosa completes the act of retribution because she is again complete. She is again one of them and accepted into their protective circle. "If there is solidarity in

suffering, there is also a circle of ‘secret and mighty sympathy’ which María Concepción recognizes for the first time, moving her to adopt María Rosa’s baby as her own” (West 80). The protection which Juan extends to María Concepción after she has murdered María Rosa, the acceptance of the village women, and the adoption of María Rosa’s baby signify a measure of justice:

The night, the earth under her, seemed to swell and recede together with a limitless, unhurried, benign breathing. She drooped and closed her eyes, feeling the slow rise and fall within her own body. She did not know what it was, but it eased her all through.... she was still aware of a strange, wakeful happiness. (21)

Finally, “A Jury of Her Peers” is also a story of justice which occurs in the court of private opinion of peers. The depressing kitchen of Minnie Wright serves as a courtroom; and Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters are finders of fact, determiners of the evidence, and, essentially, judge and jury. Realizing that there were mitigating circumstances that caused Minnie Wright to act wrongly, Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters, “a woman married to the law,” decide that Minnie Wright is a victim and they conceal evidence which would give the county attorney the motive he needs to make his case. Without evidence that Minnie Wright acted out of anger or premeditated the murder, the county attorney realizes that the jury would be sympathetic to Mrs. Wright because she is a woman. The two ladies in that kitchen are overcome by feelings of guilt and identify with Minnie Wright to the extent that they act to hide the dead bird and thus allow Mrs. Wright to avoid

prosecution. Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters apply a sense of right and wrong in their determination of facts and the evidence and realize that the appropriate thing to do is to protect Mrs. Wright:

Then Martha Hale's eyes pointed the way to the basket in which was hidden the thing that would make certain the conviction of the other woman—that woman who was not there and yet had been there with them all through that hour... Martha Hale snatched the box from the sheriff's wife, and got it into the pocket of her big coat just as the sheriff and the county attorney came back into the kitchen.

(172)

There is solidarity among the women because the potential for either of them or one of their contemporaries to be a victim just as Minnie Wright' had been. Glaspell is aware of social and gender inequities and allows a decision to occur by peers who are able to identify with and understand the circumstances of another's life and actions.

“Noon Wine,” “María Concepción,” and “A Jury of Her Peers,” move beyond what is legally right and wrong. Each work allows the characters to apply their own sense of morals and values to determine a “verdict.” There is a serious crime in each of the stories; in each case someone has been murdered. In all three instances, the community of peers asserts its own sense of justice.

Conclusion

Justice will always be an elusive ideal. If one relies upon the definition of justice and applies it to a legal standard, then one must assume that there are no gray areas in the law, only clear cut areas of black and white. This statement is not a reference to racial issues but an awareness that justice often does not take into account mitigating circumstances which may make understandable why a defendant behaves in a particular or even criminal manner.

Katherine Anne Porter and Susan Glaspell approached justice not as a set of legalistic rules and procedures followed to determine a person's fate, but as a true and comprehensive understanding of a character's actions as an individual. In "Noon Wine," Mr. Thompson is either a character Porter had difficulty respecting or one she wanted to depict to show how society reacts to a person when a crime is committed by him. Porter does not make him a likable character. One is not moved to extreme compassion for him because of his situation. We get the impression that Thompson is a failure, unreliable, and in some ways, unresponsive to the needs of his family. He fails them when he first gives control of his farm to his hired man, Olaf Helton, again, when he kills Homer T. Hatch, and finally, when he takes his own life. There are no substantive questions about a man who would insist his wife, a woman of great character and honesty, lie to give a justification of his actions. Porter seems to have no sympathy for him; yet she makes Ellen Thompson, the longsuffering, faithful wife who endures her husband's lie very sympathetic. We feel that the finality of her husband's death frees her from ever having to respond again sadly, "Yes that's the truth. Mr. Thompson was trying to save Mr. Helton's life" (164-65).

Porter presents María Concepción as a sympathetic yet strong-willed, determined character. It is the unfaithfulness of her husband and the loss of her newborn child that cause María Concepción to take the life and child of María Rosa. María Concepción seems to be compensated for the death of María Rosa, but I think that Porter allows her characters to understand that María Concepción must answer to a higher authority than the gendarmes or any court. Community acceptance of the situation occurs when the other characters, acting as a chorus, acknowledges that they might act in a similar manner in the same circumstances.

Similarly, Glaspell creates overwhelming sympathy for Minnie Wright; and we are left wondering how she endured twenty years in her drab existence because, clearly, she had no autonomy or freedom. Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters decide Minnie Wright's actions were understandable and excusable because of circumstances beyond her control. She lived in an uncheerful, depressing environment. The killing of her canary by her husband John Wright was the final straw; and she acted to alter her existence. Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters do not condone the murder of John Wright, but they understand and empathize by taking action to preclude a public trial.

In each story, there is a search for the truth, an examination of crime, and a determination of guilt within the standards of peers. The community in each story serves as a chorus, as observers who examine violent behavior by an individual character, and then assess a judgment. Both Porter and Glaspell present compelling situations in their stories which cause readers to examine the universal question of justice.

Writers will continue to explore issues of justice in their writing as long as discrimination continues in the areas of one's gender, race, and socioeconomic status as literature reflects society. Until we are able to uphold and adhere to and apply the premise of the Constitution that "all men are created equal," the search for justice will continue as we attempt to define our role and place in society.

Works Cited

- Butscher, Edward. "An Analysis of 'Noon Wine.'" *Reference Guide to Short Fiction*. Ed. Noelle Watson. Detroit: St. James P, 1994. 823-24.
- Declaration of Independence.
- DeMouy, Jane Krause. *Katherine Anne Porter's Women: The Eye of Her Fiction*. Austin: U of Texas P, 1983.
- Dymkowski, Christine. "On the Edge: The Plays of Susan Glaspell." *Modern Fiction*. 31 (1988): 91-105. Rpt. in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*. Ed. Mario Lazzari. Vol. 55. Detroit: Gale, 1995.
- Frost, Elizabeth and Katheryn Cullen-DuPont. *Women's Suffrage in America: An Eyewitness History*. New York: Facts on File, 1992.
- Givner, Joan. *Katherine Anne Porter: A Life*. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1982.
- Glaspell, Susan. "A Jury of Her Peers." *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*. Ed. Edgar V. Roberts. New Jersey: Prentice, 1992. 158-72.
- Grisham, John. *A Time to Kill*. New York: Dell, 1989.
- Hedges, Elaine. "Small Things Considered: Susan Glaspell's 'A Jury of Her Peers.'" *Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. 12 (1986): 89-110. Rpt. in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticisms*. Ed. Mario Lazzari. Vol. 55. Detroit: Gale, 1995.
- Jebb, John F. "A Time to Kill." *Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction*. Ed. Kirk H. Beetz. Vol. 7. Florida: Beacham, 1996. 4265-75.
- Jehlan, Myra. *Class and Character in Faulkner's South*. New York: Columbia P, 1976.

- Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. (1960). New York: Warner, 1982.
- Levin, Milton. "Susan Glaspell." *American Writers: A Collection of Literary Biographies*. Ed. Lea Baechler and A. Walton Liez. New York: Scribner's, 1991. 175-91.
- Liberman, Myron M. *Katherine Anne Porter's Fiction*. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1971.
- Lockhart, William B. ed. *Constitutional Law: Cases, Comments, Questions*. St. Paul: West, 1986.
- Makowsky, Veronica. "Susan Glaspell." *Modern American Writers*. Ed. Elaine Showalter. New York: Scribner's, 1991.
- Moddlemog, Debra. "Concepts of Justice in the Works of Katherine Anne Porter." *Mosaic* 26.4 (1994): 37-52.
- Mustazza, Leonard. "Generic Translation and Thematic Shift in Susan Glaspell's *Trifles* and "A Jury of Her Peers." *Studies in Short Fiction*. Fall (1989): 489-96. *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism*. Ed. Mario Lazzari. Vol. 55. Detroit: Gale, 1995.
- Noe, Marcia. "Region as Metaphor in the Plays of Susan Glaspell." *Western Illinois Regional Studies*. Spring (1981): 77-85. Rpt. in *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism*. Ed. Mario Lazzari. Vol. 55. Detroit: Gale, 1995.
- Porter, Katherine Anne. *Noon Wine: Pale Horse, Pale Rider*. New York: Random, 1939.
- . "María Concepción." *The Collected Stories of Katherine Anne Porter*. New

York: Harcourt, 1968.

---. "Noon Wine: The Sources." *The Collected Essays and Occasional Writings of Katherine Anne Porter*. Boston: Houghton, 1970.

Sulkes, Emilie F. "Noon Wine." *Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction*. Vol. 3. Florida: Beacham, 1996. 2987-89.

Theodore, Terry. "Susan Glaspell." *Magill's Survey of American Literature*. Ed. Frank Magill. Vol. 7. New York: Marshall, 1994. 2401-09.

US Const. Amend. XIV, sec.1.

---. Amend. XIX, sec.1.

Walsh, Thomas F. *Katherine Anne Porter and Mexico: The Illusion of Eden*. Austin: U of Texas P, 1992.

Warren, Robert Penn. "Irony With a Center." *Modern Critical Views: Katherine Anne Porter*. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea, 1986. 7-11.

West, Ray B. *Katherine Anne Porter*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1963.

Young, Bruce. "An Analysis of *To Kill A Mockingbird*." *Beecham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction*. Ed. Kirk Beetz. Vol. 5. Florida: Beacham, 1996. 4280-85.