The Serfdom of Women Portrayed by Margaret Atwood in The Handmaid’s Tale

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Abstract
The aim of this paper The Handmaid’s Tale is to scrutinize issues. As there is plenty of traditional feminist critique of male power structures in Atwood’s works, The Handmaid’s Tale argues the power structure of Gilead also analyses the feminine roles that support and allow the suppression of other women. Placing the novel in the contexts of Atwood’s career, feminism, and dystopian literature, provides a fuller understanding of how the novel functions as an expression of the divergence of women. Margaret Atwood focuses on the problems such as gender equality and the dangers of a hierarchical-structured system for women’s oppression. Her focal point is to mention the subservience of women in a male-dominated society and women’s enslavement in a consumer society in which women’s body is handled as object, an instrument and also as adorable item. Margaret Atwood is one of the foremost vivid writers in current Canadian literature. She has vigorously contributed to Canadian politics and its cause. Her works are mostly associated with social and political issues. She contemplates the relation between men and ladies and human basic rights, the topic of gender is the author’s major concern. She depicts the ladies in her novels that always search for their identity which is lost within the male-controlled societies. Oppression of ladies is another theme for her novels and it may be seen evidently in her writings. She encounters the lower position of girls in society. Atwood’s images of gender, the mistreatment and coercion of ladies, predominantly women’s bodies. She signifies the misery of her female characters limited in their feminine roles in her novels. Moreover, femininity is the main fear for examining The Handmaid’s Tale. In Gilead society, women are depressed about their freedom and ordered to serve the state in numerous ways and functions.

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The novel, narrated by Offred, substitutes between text describing her present life and expository sections during which she recalls her past. Offred is the protagonist of the novel *The Handmaid’s Tale*. Offred belongs to the category of Handmaids, fertile women forced in contact with children for elite, barren couples. She is called after the commander who owns them. She adopts the commander’s name like Fred, with the preceding letter ‘Of’. Though she remembers her real name she shouldn’t reveal it. monthly, when Offred is at the correct point in her cycle, she must have ritualized sex with the Commander while Serena sits behind her, holding her hands. Offred’s freedom is restricted. she will leave the house only on shopping trips, the door to her room cannot be completely shut, and therefore the Eyes, Gilead’s police force watches her every public move. As Offred narrates the story of her existence, she often slips into flashbacks. within the old world, before Gilead, Offred had an affair with Luke, a partner. Luke divorced his wife and married Offred, and they had a baby together. The architects of Gilead began their rise in technological power which make them determine pornography, it which up in an increase in prostitution, and ferocity against women. Pollution and chemical spills led to decreasing fertility rates. Using the military, they assassinated the president and members of Congress launched a revolution, claiming that they were taking power temporarily. They broke down on women’s rights. Aunt Lydia supervised the ladies, gives speeches exalting Gilead’s beliefs that ladies should be submissive to men and exclusively anxious with bearing children. In chapter 13 when Offred and the commander get into the bedroom. Offred lies on the bed, her head on the Wife’s lap, her hands within the Wife’s hands and he should bang together with her. That night Offred creeps out of her bed and into the lounge and says “I accustomed to consider my body as an instrument, of please, or a way of transportation, or an implement for the accomplishment of my will”. Offred’s musings show that she has internalized Gilead’s attitude towards women, which treats them not as individuals but as objects important just for childbearing.

Therefore, the paper explores not only the lifetime of Offred but also reveals all the ladies in this society. The events occur during a dystopian future where a totalitarian government has taken power and destitute women of their privileges.

**References**
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