



Resistance of Patriarchal Hegemony in Susan Glaspell's *Trifles*

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/jotmc.v9i9.90455>

Abstract

This paper investigates the theme of female subjugation in Susan Glaspell's *Trifles*. The micro-level observations made by women are considered as mere trifles by dismissing them from the legal investigation. Yet, the women eventually succeed in becoming the real heroes through their silent resistance by protecting Minnie. Their common shared experience of suffering enables them to build the strong emotional bond and thus empowering them to uncover the truth which they prefer to conceal from the men only to serve justice. The women's curious eyes catch the evidence by the moment they enter the house while the superficial men fail to perceive the reality hidden in these apparently irrelevant details. The paper argues that Glaspell critiques the male-centred legal system and reclaims the domestic sphere as a vital site of knowledge, resistance, and ethical judgement to validate how women's marginalization becomes the actual source of authority and ethical judgement. To authenticate its central argument, this paper draws on the feminist theory of Bell Hooks — that condemns patriarchy and encourages women's canonical role in literature and society. Bell Hooks' books *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love*, and *Feminist Theory: from margin to centre* function as the primary theoretical aspect.

Keywords: patriarchy, gendered investigation, suppression, resistance, justice

Introduction

This article deeply explores Susan Glaspell's *Trifles*, in which Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters are inconspicuously rejected by the men for focusing on what they believe inessential—such as an unfinished quilt and Minnie's preserved jars. Conversely, due to their attention to these so called trifles, the women succeed to uncover the hidden truth which ultimately protects Minnie. The three men ridicule the messy kitchen and chaotic household with their reproachful conclusion regarding Minnie as a poor housewife. Hitherto their eyes cannot examine the core reasons behind such

bizarre and disturbing household atmosphere. They investigate superficially blinding themselves to decode the keen emotional truth, and their incapability to understand the faint clues makes them failure in detecting the real motive behind the murder. As Bell Hooks (1984) says, “Within the present family structure, individuals learn to accept sexist oppression as “natural” and are primed to support other forms of oppression including heterosexist domination” (p. 38). Their detachment reflects their poor emotional intelligence making them unable to be the fastidious investigators of the murder. Their stereotypical inhibiting mind is the true cause behind their superficial judgement. Susan Glaspell never declared herself as a feminist, but her *Trifles* stood as one of the pioneering catalysts of the feminist movement of 1960s in America. Hence, Glaspell criticizes the patriarchal hegemony in belittling the female characters and dismissing the domestic environment as irrelevant “trifles.” Thus, this paper draws the Bell Hooks’ feminist insights from her books, *The Will to Change* and *Feminist theory: from Margin to Center*, to argue that Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters—despite being in periphery—emerge as the true investigators. Their emotional intelligence and scrupulous investigation expose the failure of males, who entitle themselves as authoritative, and elucidate how systems embedded in sexism and emotional repression cannot deliver true justice. In order to address this claim, this study aims to address the following research questions:

1. Why do the male characters diminish the women’s interest in domestic trivial details and their emotional attachment to Minnie?
2. How do the women eventually succeed in finding the Minnie’s motif behind the murder?
3. How do the women become the real heroine in saving Minnie by investigating the evidence of trifles?

Literature Review

While previous scholars have analyzed various aspects of *Trifles* through various perspectives, this article addresses a different and unexplored issue. While discussing the literature review of the play, Dipesh Neupane (2022) states that “The men have not only oppressed the women, they also blame the women for enjoying the only things their oppression allows them to have” (p. 29). His article focuses on the sheer domination of women and the resulting consequences they face in the patriarchal society.

Guswanto and Husna (2019), in their research article, examine that “in relation to the male-dominated society, Mr. John Wright is one example of the authoritative persons in that time. As a man, he had the authority to decide everything in his family. He had no consideration about his wife. He never talked to his wife in deciding everything in his family. He did not care about what happened in his wife’s life” (p. 29). Guswanto and Husna focus on the psychological aspect of gender relations, emphasizing how women are expected to think and act completely according to male authority. Their study manifests how male dominance not only controls external situations but also extremely affects the psychological and emotional well-being of women.

In the same manner, Charles Buckley (2021) attended the one-act performance of the play on November 5, 2021 which was directed by Rachel Wolf. In his review article, he describes the play as a compelling literary piece that examines all forms of evidence—even those that may initially seem insignificant while also explaining how prejudice can hinder the real investigation and that ultimately leads to false conclusions. For him, it is a hidden gem which is beautified by well-

crafted characters, perfect setting, and technical richness that collectively represent the women as the real heroines of daily life.

Similarly, reviewer Ken Jaworowski (2010) interprets that *Trifles* is the play of courageous women who are the true solvers of the murder, while their male counterparts appear blind and unaware. Rather than recognizing the women's intuition, the men disparage them as insignificant and haughtily valorise themselves as the authentic sole lawful investigators. The researcher, Hodge (1975) points out that, "The domination usually present within the family-of children by adults, and of female by male-are forms of group oppression which are easily translated into the "rightful" group oppression of other people defined by "race" (racism), by nationality (colonialism), by "religion," or by "other means" (p. 233). In *Trifles*, this oppression is evidently depicted by the scene where male's activities are set in public places, legal, economic, cultural, and other "public areas" with power and prestige, while female's activities are set in the "private areas" next to families, stoves, and children (Duan, 2008, p. 55). Thus, most of the time, the kitchen not only represents the triviality of the family itself but also represents the submissive position in the family (Wang, 2006, p. 164). This scene illuminates how the so-called patriarchal supremacy exists. In this regard, Mc Peak (2024) states that, "*Trifles* can be additionally interpreted as a safer, less direct attack to the standing social order because audiences are able to engage empathetically with the plight of the abused woman, and are not asked to engage critically with the logos of the piece" (p. 7). The women audience can relate to Minnie's suffering more due to the empathetic mode of reception yet men may not grasp that depth of her psychological trauma and despite the play's ironical exposure of patriarchal attitude.

Even though several scholars have studied *Trifles* through feminist, psychological and many other perspectives—often giving the stress regarding the marginalization of women, symbolic domestic sphere, and the critique of patriarchal supremacy—there is still a significant gap in the literature in the scenario of women's role as active investigators and protectors of Minnie Wright. In this article, the researcher tries to explore how the women- initially judged by the men as insignificant—come out as silent rebels who finally solve the murder case by outsmarting their male counterparts. The men were extremely supercilious that they consistently underestimate the women's intelligence and thus fail to indict Minnie Wright. Absurdly, they remain oblivious that the true motive behind the murder has already been discovered—not by their shallow investigation, but by the women's meticulous observation and empathy. Consequently, the men are unwittingly portrayed as the real fools in the play.

Moreover, Bell Hooks' feminist theory—particularly her notion on emotional repression, the limits of patriarchal masculinity, and the relationship between justice and empathy—have been rarely applied to *Trifles* by predecessors. This research addresses that gap with the argument that women, though dismissed as "trifles," can subvert patriarchal expectations through emotional intelligence and unity. Bell Hooks' feminist perspective truly guides this paper to reinterpret Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters not as passive observers, but as the true moral investigators who not only uncover the truth but also silently protect Minnie Wright, while the men's superficial methods only fail them to grasp the emotional and ethical veracity of the crime.

Methodology

This research article is based on close textual analysis. It explores on Susan Glaspell's play *Trifles* drawing on the theoretical insights from Bell Hooks seminal works: *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love*, and *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. These books provide theoretical foundation for this study.

Discussion and Result

The Superficial Men

The men's shallow interpretation deter them from judging the genuine cause behind the crime, as they are more preoccupied in criticizing Minnie's housekeeping than really indulging in the murder investigation. They notice the jars on the shelf, which seem aged and on the verge of bursting, and disparage Minnie for her alleged lack of hygiene. When Mrs. Peters remarks that Minnie was anxious about whether her jars "would break" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 10) while in jail, the men ridicule her concern. The sheriff sarcastically derides Minnie's worry over the preserves despite being "held for murder and worrying about preserves" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 10). In truth, the jars symbolize the women's protective instinct toward Minnie. When the country attorney speculates about her preoccupation with such seemingly minor matters, Mr. Hale bluntly retorts that "women are used to worrying over trifles" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 10). The men's dismissive perception of women's insights impedes any serious investigation into the subtle domestic details. This is because, as Hooks (2004) asserts, "Despite changes in the nature of gender roles, ours is still a patriarchal culture where sexism rules the changes day" (p. 102). Therefore, the country attorney has that audacity to reproach Minnie for the unwashed dishes, soiled towels, and a waterlogged sink, branding her a negligent housekeeper and promptly forbids any further inquiry in the kitchen, deeming it insignificant. Glaspell is not opposite to women; rather, her attempt is to justify how females are truly placed and treated as minors.

The men search the kitchen, bedroom, and barn but find nothing of interest. The county attorney's negligence is notable—he refuses to pay attention to what Mrs. Peters is carrying for Minnie, assuming they are harmless items. He thinks of Mrs. Peters as just a sheriff's wife, closely tied to the law but not likely to notice anything important. The country attorney's patronizing and mocking comments about the women's discussion of whether Minnie intended to 'quilt or knot' the blanket reveals the men's immaturity and their superficial attitude toward matters they consider unimportant. Here, Hooks (2004) is right when she states that "a man who is unabashedly and unequivocally committed to patriarchal masculinity will both fear and hate all that the culture deems feminine and womanly" (p.101). Men are raised with a kind of training that teaches them to see women as feeble. Therefore, Mr. Hale's sarcastic assertion that women are preoccupied with "trifles" wounds Mrs. Hale deeply, yet Mrs. Peters initially aligns with the men, believing they are engaged in more important matters because they cannot move "over the image of themselves as provider" (Hooks, 2004, p. 103). This internalized belief is a key reason behind their discrimination against women and "all these myths establish the idea of women's inferiority" (Beauvoir, 2009, p. 265). The men consider the quilt as nothing more than a piece of fabric but for women it is a narration of a silent testimony that discloses the emotional and psychological history behind the murder.

The Shrewd Mrs. Hale

Mrs. Hale is confident and courageous woman, and her complete physical presence symbolizes her core strength and audacity. She plays a crucial role in taking the audacious decision to conceal the reality regarding the broken birdcage and the canary's death, hence diverting the men's suspiciousness away from Minnie. Mrs. Hale instantly comes to the conclusion that John Wright killed the canary only by the sight of the cage's violently damaged door — Minnie's sole companion in an isolated and silent home. Childless and confined in "a quiet house" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 19), Minnie lived under the control of a "hard man" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 19) without companionship or human connection. According to Bell Hooks (1984), "Between women and men, sexism is most often expressed in the form of male domination which leads to discrimination, exploitation, or oppression" (p. 47). The woman is suffering more mentally than physically due to the man's abuse as "male violence against women in personal relationship is one of the most blatant expressions of the use of abusive force to maintain domination and control" (Hooks, 1984, p. 120). Mrs. Hale demonstrates both empathy and insight as she pieces together the emotional abuse Minnie endured. She ultimately concludes that Minnie killed her husband not out of malice, but as a desperate response to years of oppression, and therefore should not be judged as guilty in the traditional sense.

Mrs. Hale never felt at ease in John Wright's home, located 'down in a hollow' (Glaspell, 1916, p. 19) - a place marked by isolation and emptiness, evoking a gothic atmosphere of desolation. This physical seclusion portrays the mental darkness and emotional void Minnie silently suffered. Mrs. Peters, however, initially defends John Wright as it would be unfair to judge him quickly in short limited understanding of Minnie's social relations. She points out that John is generally regarded as a good man by townspeople. However, Mrs. Hale sharply contests this perception and counters that spending time with John was similar to enduring 'a raw wind that gets to the bone' (Glaspell, 1916, p. 19). Her perception emphasizes the emotional coldness and exploitive environment of the Wright household. There is very little research that documents the extent to which depression about the nature of work leads men to act violently in their domestic lives (Hooks, 2004, p. 91), and it is often a form of blackmail when men claim their anger and frustration rise because their women compel them to act that way. It is because "to know love, men must be able to let go the will to dominate" (Hooks, 2004, p. xvii). Although Mrs. Peters is unfamiliar with both John and Minnie, she is quick to pass judgment on Minnie and readily sides with John. Mrs. Hale experiences guilt for having neglected to visit Minnie Wright for nearly a year, a neglect she attributes in part to the cold and uninviting nature of John Wright. She reflects on this with a sense of remorse and self-blame, even acknowledging her own neglect by admitting that failing to visit Minnie "once in a while was a crime" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 23), a statement that reveals both her guilt and her growing awareness of the emotional isolation Minnie suffered.

Mrs. Hale cautiously observes the uneven stitching in the unfinished quilt, noticing that "all the rest of it has been so nice and even" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 16), except for one section which has noticeable erratic sewing. She catches this inconsistency that prompts her to question what might have caused Minnie to sew in such a nervous and unusual manner. Her curiosity initiates a deeper psychological investigation into Minnie's mental state. She remembers Minnie as being "real sweet and pretty" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 20) who was like a bird—gentle and full of life. Mrs. Hale falls into

reflective silence while describing how Minnie changed after her marriage. It reveals the emotional and psychological damage Minnie endured which became the possible motive for the murder.

Mrs. Hale consistently defends Minnie throughout the play asserting that Minnie could not have committed murder without any forceful and justified cause. Sexist ideology teaches women that to be female is to be a victim (Hooks, 1984, p. 45). Mrs. Hale makes an epic revelation that all women suffer similar silent inhuman treatment. She affirms that women should support one another because they all “go through the same things” (Glaspell, 1916, p. 23). This shared experience is the main reason behind the emergence of women as the genuine investigators in the play. Mrs. Hale’s deep concern for Minnie, especially in covering the truth about the jars, reflects the emotional unanimity women possess. The county attorney is contemptuous to women when he says “at last we found out that she was not going to quilt it” (Glaspell, 1916, p. 25), accidentally revealing a deeper meaning. In fact, Minnie was not going to quilt; she was going to knot. She truly wanted to knot her marriage, knot her husband, and knot her oppression. Mrs. Hale’s clarification of Minnie’s intention to “knot it” (Glaspell, 1916, p. 25) mirrors her own oppressed desire to free herself from subjugation and suggesting all women to break the chain of patriarchal hegemony.

Mrs. Hale takes issue with every disparaging remark made by the men. She is the one who draws a symbolic connection between Minnie’s emotional despair and the erratically stitched quilt, revealing her ability to interpret Minnie’s psychological state. Her perceptiveness is truly commendable. Although she is deeply affected by the men’s derogatory attitude toward Minnie, her quiet composure and insight make her the true heroine of the play. She does not directly confront the men—partly because she, too, is socially powerless—but she succeeds in outwitting them. It is because “only experiences encountered by male characters are called “universal” or basic to “the human condition.” The “female experience is peripheral to the central concern of literature—which is man’s struggle with nature, God, fate, himself, and, not frequently, woman. Woman is always “the other” (Register, 1989, p. 10). The men do “other” the women in *Trifles*. It is not the first time that women are marginalized because they are condemned since ages they are not left pious even in religious books. For instance, Gilbert and Gubar critique Milton’s *Paradise Lost* for belittling Eve because still the humanity considers Eve’s tempt a sin but does not judge Satan’s maliciousness behind her “fall.” Gilbert and Gubar (1984) argue that, “Despite Eve’s apparent passivity and domesticity, Milton himself seems deliberately to have sketched so many parallels between her and Satan that it is hard at times for the unwary reader to distinguish the sinfulness of one from that of the other” (p. 196). Therefore, it is easier for the patriarchy to consider women nothing and the literature rather never gives prestigious place for females ever. Despite this, Mrs. Hale defends Minnie against the attorney’s criticism of the unwashed towel, pointing out that Minnie was responsible for managing the household, the farm, and her demanding husband. Under such overwhelming exhaustion, it is unrealistic to expect everything to remain perfectly kept. Presenting them as weaker one is not the goal of Glaspell; rather she is laughing at patriarchy for their shadowed image constructed just by being violent over women because they know women are fastidious and rigorous.

Similarly, Mrs. Hale’s resentment toward the men’s criticism of Minnie’s dirty towels reveals her role as a quiet yet resolute defender of women—almost a silent freedom fighter. Glaspell portrays how women are marginalized everywhere and men are supposed to be in cannon.

Therefore, Mrs. Hale's bold remark, "Men's hands are not always as clean as they might be" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 11), carries a sharp and coldly critical undertone, exposing the hypocrisy and narcissism of the men. It is more difficult for men to do the work of emotional development because this work requires individuals to be emotionally aware — to feel (Hooks, 2004, p. 70). Although the household appeared orderly on the surface, Minnie was emotionally wounded each day, metaphorically "butchered" by a life of isolation and emotional neglect. Mr. Wright's harsh and piercing words were enough to destroy Minnie's mentality. Mrs. Hale senses the cause of Minnie's detachment to her husband's death and recognizes it not as ruthlessness, but as the result of years of silent miseries.

Thus, Glaspell challenges the patriarchy by emphasizing how it gives privilege to men to be recognized by their own names while women are identified through their husbands' surnames. All over the play, female characters remain unnamed, stressing their loss of personal identity. Yet Minnie's first name is only revealed by Mrs. Hale on the second half of the play when she recalls about Minnie's cheerful and sovereign life, before marriage, whom once known as Minnie Foster—an ecstatic and spirited choir singer.

Mrs. Peter: Angel Turned Defender

Mrs. Peters starts sympathizing with Minnie by comparing to her own past reminiscing a childhood trauma when a boy killed her kitten. She also intensely resonates with Minnie's suffering—on the bereavement of her two years old infant. This kind of psychological and emotional recognition empower both women to steadily come across the probable reason behind Minnie's act of murdering John. Moreover, Mrs. Peters for a moment leaves this understanding only due to her fear of patriarchal authority. She also advises Mrs. Hale not to draw conclusions hastily as they cannot be assured "who killed" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 22) John. She underscores that law is responsible to judge and punish crimes, and affirms that "men are there to do so," defending her support to the existing legal system. Mrs. Peters is excessively worried with how the men might perceive them. Her apprehension is about how the men might ridicule harsh truth—that Minnie killed John for such small canary. Hooks (2004) says "women can be as wedded to patriarchal thinking and action as men" (p. 23). Similarly, Mrs. Peters is basically married to law of her husband just as attorney says. Mrs. Hale reveals seeing a gun in John Wright's house which Mrs. Peter cannot fully grasp. This remark symbolizes John's authoritarian control over Minnie and the domineering atmosphere in which she breathes. Due to the lack of in-depth comprehension Mrs. Peter cannot feel it rather she is obsessed with the weird circumstance of John's death—his wrung neck—and further indicates that Minnie may have murdered her husband with precise plan.

Glaspell describes Mrs. Peters as "a slight wiry woman, a thin nervous face" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 5), indicating her frail physical and mental state, which reflects her acquiescent position in the society. Mrs. Peters is reluctant to touch quilt as attorney strictly ordered them not to disturb anything, as any item could function as evidence. In contrast, Mrs. Hale is disregarding this warning—her shrewdness and audacity manifest colossal degree of rebelliousness and courage. Mrs. Peters laughingly reminds on Minnie's appeal for her apron in prison—an aspect that signifies Minnie's deep affection to the daily tedious household chores. This implies Minnie's shabby life where she has little real agency that disconnected her even from the "Ladies Aid" (Glaspell, 1916,

p. 13). As Hooks (1984) argues “women also believed that a person in authority has the right to use force to maintain authority” (p. 119). Hence, Mrs. Peters’ submissive nature leads her to accept this viewpoint, trusting that the men will uncover the truth—one that the women are expected to acknowledge without question. Representing woman as weak character is the feature of patriarchal literature. Judith Fetterley aligns with this when she studies *The Great Gatsby* which is a “love story centred in hostility to women and the concomitant strategy of the scapegoat” (1978, p. 72). She has studied several American fictions in her book, *The Resisting Reader*, and discovered how woman characters are portrayed in periphery with condemnation.

Consequently, Glaspell has tightly caught this hypocritical nature of patriarchy and presents the women’s solidarity that stems from their own shared experiences of oppression. The harsh reality is that they, too, endure mistreatment at the hands of their husbands. As a result, Mrs. Peters lacks the confidence to defend Minnie in the presence—or even the absence—of men. She embodies the role of the “angel in the house” (Woolf, 1924, p. 285), as her thoughts are shaped by patriarchal expectations and she struggles to voice any dissent. Therefore, Elaine Showalter argues that women must not be the silent readers of the men’s texts rather they must be the writer of their own literature (Blamires, 1991, p. 376). Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own* encourages women to establish themselves as writers and intellectuals, a message that complements Susan Glaspell’s portrayal of silent rebellion in *Trifles*. Woolf (1929) reflects on how societal restrictions silenced women’s creativity, stating, “That one would find any woman in that state of mind in the sixteenth century was obviously impossible” (p. 28) since even a sister of Shakespeare would never have received the same privileges or opportunities as he did. Similarly, in *Trifles*, Mrs. Peters initially aligns with the men, believing their concerns are more important and that domestic matters are trivial. However, as she uncovers the emotional and psychological toll of Mrs. Wright’s isolation she begins to question that mindset. It is because “whenever a woman is ready to speak, a process of liberation begins, so it has powerful political meaning . . . when we tell others the story of our lives, our self-consciousness becomes clear” (Hooks, 1989, p. 13). By the end, Mr. Peters, along with Mrs. Hale, defies male authority by choosing empathy over legal duty—symbolically breaking the chain of female silence and subordination. She does not have head-on-face with the men directly but her silent revolt indicates the initiation of a personal revolution toward liberation.

Thus, women do have strong intuition to perceive psychological gradation that men fail to understand. Mrs. Peters compassionately associates to Minnie through her own suffering of losing a kitten and a child—representing women’s intense emotional intellect. However, the men’s unawareness superficial attitudes are responsible for their futile and shallow investigation—lacking insight to trivial quests.

The Red Box: A Treasure for Truth

Minnie had experienced the acute pain of childlessness for a long period, and thus she bought the canary for the companionship. Mrs. Hale is immensely assured that John Wright could not tolerate the happiness of Minnie—her enjoyment in spending time with her bird and its cheerful singing. Therefore, he made it “still.” His anger silenced the bird. The delicate red box which contains the lifeless body of a canary wrapped in silk, instantly alarms Mrs. Hale to connect the evidences—the cage, the broken door, the red box, and the dead bird. Noticing the canary’s neck

was wrung, she deduces that John likely caused its death. Wrapping the dead canary's body in silk signifies Minnie's unconditional love for the bird, and that she intended to "bury it in that pretty box" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 22). Mrs. Hale's courageous decision to conceal the box beneath the quilt scraps before the men return is truly admirable.

The audience feels Minnie through these two women despite her absence who was pretty "caged bird" much like her canary. While inspecting the birdcage, they discover that one of its hinges has been forcibly pulled apart. Although, Mrs. Hale wishes to leave, they are obliged to remain longer because the "men" are taking their time with the investigation. At the end, the women communicate through subtle, unspoken understanding because "the basis for bonding was shared victimization, hence the emphasis on common oppression" (Hooks, 1984, p. 45). Mrs. Peters is unable to hide the red box in her bag, and Mrs. Hale promptly "snatches the box and puts it in the pocket of her big coat" (Glaspell, 1916, p. 25) symbolizing their silent complicity because "sexist discrimination, exploitation, and oppression have created the war between the sexes" (Hooks, 1984, p. 34). This act of quietly concealing the red box embodies the women's collective resistance against the patriarchal justice system that disregards their perspective, ultimately succeeding in saving their gender. This truly shows that the "men who win on patriarchal terms end up losing in terms of their substantive quality of life" (Hooks, 2004, p. 72).

Result

In *Trifles*, the authoritative men try to impose their control on women that significantly conceals inherent trauma endured by them but they respond with silent suffering. This patriarchy not only robs women's freedom but also immures them to traditional roles as caretakers—expecting them to be the surrogate mothers to their husbands to the unpaid invisible slaves to perform relentless labor, management of household chores, land, and farm only to be invisible within their own homes. Moreover, men dominate language and narrative disregarding women's voices. Not only this, they reject women's concerns as trivial. Yet, it is the women who, at the end, come out as the true investigators, revealing the hidden motives behind the crime by their attentive scrupulous interpretation of the "trifles" which men overlook. They succeed to reveal that Minnie's profound emotional and social oppression was the real motive to kill her husband.

The women are not officially the part of the investigation but their quiet and subtle inquiry eventually proves far more insightful and impactful than the shallow search of supercilious men. They are sheer heedful to seemingly trivial details that reveal the emotional truths and concealed tensions that the men fail to see. The keen shrewdness of Mrs. Hale, contrasted with the cowed timidity of Mrs. Peters—finally exposes the primary reason behind the murder. The flippant and contemptuous men underestimate domestic matters that simply contrast with the careful and detailed observations of women. The men mock and dismiss the "trifles," whereas the women comprehend their importance with the a deeper awareness shaped by their lived experiences.

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