

## SOLITUDE AND INDEPENDENCE IN KATE CHOPIN'S THE AWAKENING

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### ABSTRACT

Kate Chopin [1851 – 1904] was an American white, of the south and she wrote of a woman and her life, from an angle that was very new to her age. The newness led to a lot of hostility and Kate Chopin quit writing because of that. When we read the novel *The Awakening* today, we do not understand how it should have created such hostility in those days. That is how perhaps we would respond to a reading of D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* today. Her original readers thought that it was an obscene book. They thought the book obscene because the woman betrayed acknowledged social proprieties in man – woman relationships. That also shows how this conventional society was, and perhaps is, hypocritical and partial. Society was unkind to Kate Chopin because, she presented Edna's transgression of the marital bond. Would this society have responded equally critically, if Mr. Leonce Pontellier had been unfaithful to his wife in a nonchalant way? Women of conventional society have always accepted the male-sponsored and male-centred norms, without question.

**KEYWORDS:** Solitude, Independence, Society, Custom, Tradition