

*Sitting Pretty in Eternal Silence: How Female Expectations and Liberation are Depicted in Kate Chopin's and Angela Carter's Literary Texts*

Presenter Danielle Gorman, English major

Mentored by Stacey Morin

Kate Chopin's 1894 "The Story of an Hour" considers how Mrs. Louise Mallard, an oppressed wife, manages to achieve her freedom through death. In a similar manner, Angela Carter's 1979 "The Tiger's Bride" explores the female narrator's escape from the expectations she endures in the human world through her decision to become an animal. This paper explores the historical and cultural contexts surrounding both stories and the rigid gender expectations placed on women. Although the stories were written during different eras and in different cultures, both reveal the stagnant changes female expectations have experienced in American and British societies. Furthermore, both stories also indicate that the only way female expectations can be escaped from is through death, yet Chopin and Carter do not depict these demises as tragedies but as new beginnings for the women. As a result of their unique depictions, Chopin and Carter offer a new perspective that challenges the standard notion of death.