

# Gender Roles in *The Scarlet Letter*



By Chunyang Ding

# Background



- ⌘ Anne Hutchinson's role in colonial America
- ⌘ Society of paternalism
- ⌘ Nathaniel Hawthorne's own upbringing
- ⌘ Changes of the 1850's

# Thesis

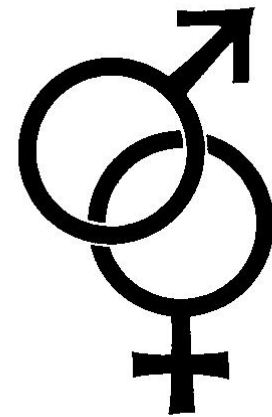


☞ Nathaniel Hawthorne depicts a culture in which the gender roles are negatively influencing the progression of society, through the role reversal of Hester and Dimmesdale, the societal clashes with women before connecting Hester with traditional feminine values in order to persuade the contemporary society to cautiously accept a better balance of genders.

# Role Reversal



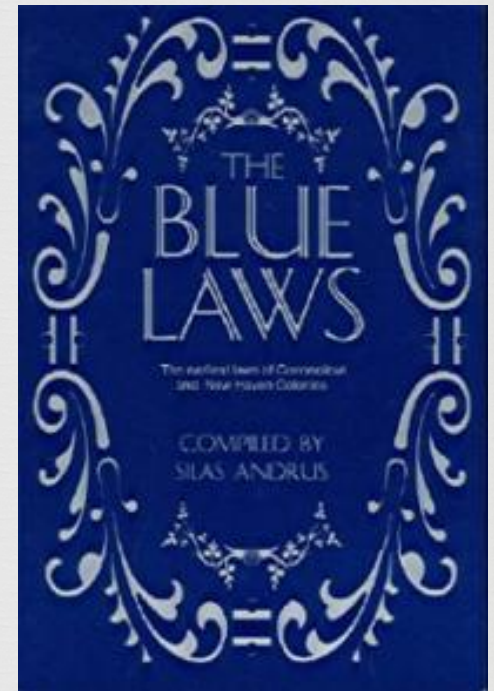
- ☞ Heather's independence, intelligence, and braveness
- ☞ Dimmesdale taking on more feminine or gentler roles
- ☞ Heather's embrace of guilt v Dimmesdale's internalization.



# Societal Clash



- ∞ Male-dominated religious system
- ∞ Societal Norms and Punishment



# Traditional Feminine Behaviors

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- ∞ Arts of sewing and embroidery
- ∞ Maternal Instinct with Pearl



# Conclusion



- ∞ Hester's return to society as wealthy and wise
- ∞ Her acceptance of no real big change
- ∞ Reflects upon Hawthorne's introspection of contemporary society, to cautiously accept women but to not fear, as there would still be traditional values.

# Bibliography



- ☞ Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Sources, Criticism*. Comp. Sculley Bradley. New York: Norton, 1979. Print.