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THE FEMINIST DRAMA OF MEGAN TERRY AS REPRESENTED IN THE PLAYS CALM DOWN MOTHER, HOTHOUSE, APPROACHING SIMONE, AND AMERICAN KING'S ENGLISH FOR QUEENS.

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ABSTRACT

THE FEMINIST DRAMA OF MEGAN TERRY AS REPRESENTED IN THE PLAYS CALM DOWN MOTHER, HOTHOUSE, APPROACHING SIMONE, AND AMERICAN KING'S ENGLISH FOR QUEENS.

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One of the most interesting genres of Modern American Drama is the recently developed genre of feminist drama. Megan Terry, an early and extremely influential feminist playwright, played and important role in the development of this genre. Terry has been writing feminist drama since the 1960's, has laid many foundations for this genre, and has been a role model and a source of inspiration for playwrights in this field for the last 25 years.

Through the study of four of Terry's plays, Calm Down Mother, Hothouse, Approaching Simone, and American King's English for Queens, this thesis will explore the definition and general characteristics of feminist drama, as well as the contributions that Terry has made both to the American theatre and to the development of modern American feminist drama.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I	Introduction	1
Chapter II	A Definition of Feminist Drama	4
Chapter III	The Life and Career of Megan Terry	12
Chapter IV	Calm Down Mother	21
Chapter V	Hothouse	40
Chapter VI	Approaching Simone	58
Chapter VII	American King's English for Queens	76
Chapter VIII	Conclusion	91
	Notes	95
	Bibliography	106

Introduction

One of the most recent developments in modern American theatre is the emergence of a new genre called feminist drama. This genre is written by women and about women and explores situations, pressures, struggles and triumphs unique to their gender. Feminist Drama has it roots in the experimental Off- and Off-Off-Broadway theatres of the 1960's (where many of the early feminist playwrights began their theatrical careers), and came to fruition in the early 1970's, along with the women's liberation movement of that era.

Feminist drama is an important movement in modern American theatre. It has given women playwrights, who for so long have been excluded from the canon of dramatic literature, a chance to be published and performed. It also has given voice to a recently developed, but very important set of political and philosophical beliefs (those of the school of feminism). Finally, feminist drama has brought important social issues such as sexism, stereotypes, and the oppression of women and children to the stage, and it has done so in a rhetorical, didactic manner, in hopes of provoking social change. However, feminist drama is not just rhetoric, it is also art. Feminist drama instructs, provokes thought and action, but it also entertains and delights. For all of these reasons, because it gives women playwrights and feminist beliefs a chance to be heard, and because it is instructional, thought-provoking and artistic, delightful and entertaining,

feminist drama is an important genre which must not be ignored, but rather demands to be explored, studied, analyzed, and criticized as a legitimate dramatic form.

Before any of this can happen, however, feminist drama must be defined and understood. The purpose of this study to define and explain the content and intent of feminist drama by exploring the work of one of the first feminist dramatists, Megan Terry.

This study will begin with a general study of the genre of feminist drama. A working definition of this form of drama will be drawn from the writings of feminist critics Janet Brown, Diane Leavitt and Elizabeth Natalle. Also, common characteristics, specific subject matters and thematic trends of the genre will be discussed. The definition and characteristics of feminist drama will then be further explored as found in the work of playwright, Megan Terry.

Megan Terry, a forerunner in the development of feminist drama, began writing before the women's movement of the 1970's. Her early modern American feminist dramas have had enormous influence on the genre because of their feminist subjects and themes and their unique and innovative style. Megan Terry has not only shown women playwrights that they women <u>can</u> make it as writers, but has also shown them <u>how</u> to do so.

This study examines four works by Megan Terry, <u>Calm Down Mother</u>, <u>Hothouse</u>, <u>Approaching Simone</u>, and <u>American King's</u>

English for Queens. These works and Terry's career are examined not only in order to explore the artistry and feminine point of view of this dramatist, but also to explore the genre of feminist drama as a whole. Without Megan Terry, and without these four plays feminist drama would not be what it is today.

A Definition of Feminist Drama

Before exploring the work and career of Megan Terry, and before analyzing her four feminist plays, it is necessary to establish a working definition of feminist drama, and the common characteristics of plays of this genre. Feminist dramas vary a great deal in subject matter, theme, and style, they can be about almost anything, and be written in almost any style.

Because of this diversity, and because it is difficult to precisely define the word feminism as both a political movement and a philosophy, the term feminist drama is also a bit difficult to define. As Diane Leavitt reports,

> Megan Terry believes that people have a difficult time understanding what feminist theatre is because they are too engrossed in trying to identify the political position: 'There isn't one party line in feminism. What people fail to perceive is that everybody is an individual and each theatre company [here she is speaking of feminist theatre troupes] projects a different image.'[1]

Perhaps this diversity is due to the fact that the women's movement does not have a typical hierarchical structure like other political movements. There is no one leader in the women's movement, where every woman is her own leader, but rather several important figures in the movement,

as Terry pointed out in a personal telephone interview[2]. The feminists have rejected the patriarchal structure which creates leaders and followers, and allows for much less diversity.

Another issue that must be dealt with by critics and scholars trying to define the genre of feminist drama is the unwillingness of women playwrights to be labelled. These women do not want a development of a new aesthetic or form for all feminists to follow, for this would limit them. "Many feminist playwrights, including Susan Yankowitz, Megan Terry and Myrna Lamb, are against the formulation of an aesthetic because of implicit restrictions that would be disastrous to an emerging art form."[3]

Nevertheless, despite the diversity amongst feminist playwrights, a general working definition of feminist drama can be drawn, and common characteristics of this genre can be seen in plays by many different playwrights. Janet Brown, author of Feminist Drama: Definition and Critical Analysis states: "This feminist impulse is expressed dramatically in woman's struggle for autonomy against an oppressive, sexist society. When woman's struggle for autonomy is a play's central rhetorical motive, that play can be considered a feminist drama."[4] Another critic, Elizabeth Natalle (author of Feminist Theatre: A Study in Persuasion) defines feminist drama: "Generally most will agress that feminist theatre is theatre written by women which tries to explore the female

psyche, women's place in society and women's potential."[5] And yet another feminist critic and author of the book Feminist Theatre Groups, Dinah Leavitt states: "Feminist theatre seeks to discover what a woman is and could be, values the woman's experience, creates accurate characterizations and establishes a woman's tradition through a rediscovery and reappraisal of women's history."[6] A fourth and final definition comes from playwright Megan Terry: "Anything that gives women confidence, shows themselves to themselves, helps them to analyze whether it's a positive or negative image...it's nourishing."[7]

From these four similar definitions, a general working definition can be drawn. A feminist drama is a play written by a woman, or women, about women, and the unique experiences, positive or negative, that those women have while being women. Other general characteristics of plays of this genre are that they usually include very strong roles for women, and are usually didactic and/or rhetorical.

This generalized definition can include plays of all sorts, written by many different playwrights on various subjects. However, there are quite a number of subjects and themes which seem to be found frequently in feminist plays. These subjects focus on the life experiences of women, as well as issues that women would like to see resolved in society. They include the personal as well as the political, and often the personal is political and the political is personal. These subjects include: production and reproduction, women's

relationships to one another, family life, sickness and the loss of a loved one that often accompanies it, commonplace activities of women, the activities of women when men are not around, sexual stereotypes and the limitations that they can cause, the victimization of women by men and by society, the heroism of women from history (and often history is reexamined by the feminist playwright), and gender roles.

Feminist playwrights write about these subjects in plays with many themes and messages. However, as Beverly Byers Peavitts notes, there seem to be five major thematic trends of feminist drama. These themes are recurring in drama written by women, and often interlock and overlap in these dramas. The five major themes through which feminist playwrights offer their audiences varied messages are: 1) the social oppression of women; 2) the oppression of women in the family; 3) the relationship of mother and daughter; 4) women's struggle for autonomy; and 5) friendship among women.[8]

Feminist playwrights write for a variety of reasons. Feminist drama is usually didactic or rhetorical. It is designed to present a political point of view and to get its audience to think, and perhaps even to take action. One author notes on this aspect of feminist drama: "By using the stage as a speaking platform, feminists argue against their own oppression, seeking a change in their identity as lesser human beings and their subordinate position in society."[9] And Diane Leavitt remarked: "Feminists have successfully used

theatre as a means to combine public and private experiences to promote radical changes when other means have been closed."[10]

Perhaps the most didactic and rhetorical of all feminists writing for the theatre are those that work in the various feminist theatre troupes across the nation. These troupes often admit only women onto their stages and into their theatres, and voice very militantly feminist opinions through their productions. One author states: "All feminist theatres [referring to feminist theatre troupes] are rhetorical enterprises; their primary aim is action, not art."[11] Individual feminist dramatists, writing on their own, without a troupe, aim for both action and art in their work. They too are also quite didactic and/or rhetorical (that is they are writing to get audiences to think from a feminist point of view and to perhaps take action). Feminist playwrights promote the advancement of women by depicting them as strong, intelligent individuals. They also promote social change by showing the oppression that women have had to live with for so long and the atrocious ways women have been treated by society and their families. This oppression and these atrocities are presented by feminist dramatists to show the audience their existence and to force the audience to face them. Megan Terry is one such playwright, as noted by one critic:

> Her plays persistently criticize and subvert specific institutions and events in American society--from the war in Vietnam to the hypocritical behavior of parents toward adolescents--but these critiques are not merely casual gestures at topical issues or facile assaults on patriarchy and sexism. Rather, they are specifications of a vision that emphasizes a transformation of morality as the basis of social and political change.[12]

Feminist dramatists use a number of different techniques and styles to present their subjects, themes and rhetorical messages. These techniques and forms are again quite diverse, but some general characteristic techniques, forms and styles can be found.

Most, but not all, feminist dramatists choose to write in non-traditional, non-realistic modes. Even though there are women writing naturalistic works, the majority of the ones receiving publication and being produced diverge from conventional realism.[13] There are two possible reasons for this trend. First of all, feminist theatre has roots in the experimental, avant-garde theatre of the 1960's. Many feminist playwrights got their beginnings in such experimental Off-Off-Broadway theatres as the Open Theatre, Cafe La Mama, The Living Theatre etc. These groups "...sought to revolutionize through the collective or ensemble creation of new theatrical forms and contents, an art believed decaying."[14] These groups explored such issues and techniques as self-

exploration, group improvisation, nonverbal communication, and non-naturalistic ways of acting, directing and playwriting. It was in these groups that such early feminist dramatists as Megan Terry got their training. It is no wonder then, that today many feminists practice the same techniques and methods that were practiced in the experimental theatres of the 1960's. Another possible reason is the fact that many women are rebelling against the traditional male forms. These women do not want to follow the male example, but rather set their own and find their own forms and methods of playwriting. This tendency has a lot to do with the women's movement, and the desire to reject anything that is male-tradition oriented. "Feminist criticism, developed by the women's movement, promoted the idea that women's art would have to be expressed in new forms."[15]

And just what exactly are these new forms and new methods that feminist dramatists are using? There are a variety of them. "Plotless, circular, layered, poetic, choral, lyric, primal, ritual-like, multi-climactic, surreal, mosaic, collage-like and non-realistic are terms often use to describe the bulk of feminist drama."[16] Often these plays are episodic and circular in nature with fragmented plots "...because women's lives are episodic and fragmented."[17] And these plays are not arranged in a typical narrative manner with a logical chronological progression and a linear plot, but rather they contain "...the organization of discrete

elements (images, events, scenes, passages, word, what-have-you) around an unspoken thematic or emotional center."[18]

The techniques that women use with these non-linear, fragmented plots and circular structures, are often quite theatrical, and non-realistic. Feminist dramatists often use music, non-verbal communication, audience involvement, and they also often use the transformation device (where the characters and situations can transform in the middle of a scene into the middle of a scene into a totally new and unrelated characters and situations). Finally, feminist dramatists rarely keep the fourth wall intact.

Calm Down Mother, Hothouse, Approaching Simone, and American King's English for Queens, are four of Megan Terry's most feminist dramas. These plays can be used to illustrate the definition and criteria of feminist drama and to illustrate the influence of Megan Terry, and her contributions to this genre.

The Life and Career of Megan Terry

Megan Terry, one of the most prolific and most influential modern American feminist dramatists, has been working in the theatre since 1951. She has written many plays and has had over 60 of them published. Most of Terry's work has been in the non-commercial, and more experimental theatres both in and out of New York City. Before looking at Terry's feminine voice as represented in four of her dramas, it is interesting first to take a quick look at the life, background of the playwright.

Megan Terry was born Marguerite Duffy to Harold Duffy Jr. and Marguerite Cecilia Henry Duffy in Seattle, Washington, on July 22, 1934. Several members of Terry's very artistic family were involved in the performing arts. She says "I grew up being an audience for all these incredibly talented people. My mother was a great singer and performer, and my grandmother a marvelous storyteller. My aunt was a stage director, my uncle was a concert pianist, my cousin was pioneer in the field of creative dramatics for children."[1]

It is not any wonder that a child growing up in this family would develop a great love for the theatre. As a child, Terry went to see live children's theatre productions at the Seattle Repertory Playhouse. Terry remembers her reaction to the theatre at the age of seven: "I went and I looked at the stage and fell madly in love. I knew I wanted to do that, whatever it was."[2] From then on, she participated

in grade school dramatics, and did her own performances in her backyard.

Eventually, when she was a teenager, and after some personal hardships resulting from World War II and her parents' divorce, Terry returned to the Seattle Repertory Playhouse, this time looking for a job. The theatre at this time was run by Florence and Burton James. They eventually took her into the theatre and trained her. Florence James and her husband were extremely talented people, he being an excellent leading actor, and she a director who had studied with Stanislavsky.[3]

Here at the Seattle Repertory theatre, Terry received a classical grounding. She designed, built and painted sets while at this theatre and learned about Edward Gordon Craig and Adolph Appia. Also, because of the James' political beliefs, Terry learned to associate theatre with politics. Terry remembers "Mrs. James walked around with a copy of Jefferson under her arm at all times: when she wasn't directing or lecturing, she ran for office in the progressive party." Exposure to these beliefs "radicalized Terry at an early age."4 In high school, and while at the Seattle Repertory Playhouse, Terry became interested in Chekhov and read the Irish playwrights. She also performed small roles at the Playhouse. At this time, Mrs. James would have Terry and the other actors "...write biographies of what we were doing offstage--dialogue--so when I was playing Irina, I wrote

down all of the things she was thinking and saying before her entrance. That's one of the things that got me into writing...".[5] The Jameses also had Terry write personal biographies which included explorations of her deep personal and political feelings. All of these early experiences with the Jameses eventually influenced Terry to take up writing.

After graduating from high school in 1950, Terry went to the Banff School of Fine Arts in Alberta, Canada. The Jameses taught classes here in addition to their work with the Seattle Repertory Playhouse. Terry went to the school to study acting and directing, and received a theatre scholarship. While at this school, her classical training was furthered by chances to play in Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, and The Taming of the Shrew, among others.[6]

The next fall, Terry began her Sophomore year at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, where she studied psychology and sociology, and read Antonin Artaud. Here she also designed sets for the university theatre, and was technical director for the Edmonton Children's Theatre. "It was this backstage experience which made her decide she would rather be a playwright, 'responsible for the entire concept of not only what went on stage, but for the whole environment of the audience.'"[7]

Due to an illness in the family, Terry was unable to stay in school in Canada, and in the fall of 1953, she entered the University of Washington to study creative dramatics, and

began teaching at the Cornish School of Allied Arts (where she organized the Cornish Players).[8] Three of the improvisations that she developed and "wrote up" while at the Cornish School were produced in Seattle in the spring of 1955, The Dirt Boat was premiered by Seattle's KING-TV, and the Beach Grass and Seascape were performed by the Cornish Players. Terry's fourth script Go Out and Move the Car was done by the adult program at the Cornish School this same year.[9]

In June, 1956, Terry received her Bachelor's of Education from the University of Washington, resigned from the Cornish School and returned for a short while to the Banff School. However, this same year, back in Seattle, she had a bad experience in the theatre. Terry had staged some of her own work, along with some selections of Eugene O'Neill's "...and a reviewer consigned them both to 'a burlesque house on Skid Row'".[10] At this point, Terry decided to move to New York: "I decided New York would be more hospitable to the direction I felt I had to take my theatre work, and it was." [11]

By the time she got to New York, she had changed her name to Megan Terry, but she did not let anyone know that she was a playwright. Terry tells of these early years in New York:

> I wrote in secret and wouldn't tell anybody. It was involved with this whole thing 'women shouldn't be able to do that.' Since I felt that playwrights were the pinnacle of civilization, for me to aspire to that seemed out of reach. But

> two of my friends found one of my plays and took it to my agent. She called me up and I went to her house and she kissed me on the forehead and said 'You're talented.'...[12]

During the years from 1958 to 1963, Terry wrote and started many scripts of many different styles and lengths. The first play Terry wrote during this period in New York was Ex-Miss Copper Queen on a Set of Pills, which was produced seven years later in 1963 by the Playwrights' Unit at Cherry Lane Theatre Off-Broadway. At the premiere of this show, Terry met two men who were to change her life, Joseph Chaikin, and Michael Smith.

Terry recalls:

> ...they came back stage and said 'We like your writing.' Then they walked me home and said 'You know, we can't stand the commercial theatre. Do you want to come with us? We want to start some kind of a group that will make it possible to live. Because it's impossible to live in the commercial theatre as it's set up in New York.' I said, 'Sure.' And then we began the Open Theatre.[13]

The Open Theatre was designed as a theatre in which all members of the company, the actors, directors, and playwrights would be equal, and they all were striving to find "a new style of acting and directing to go with a new style of

play."[14] Chaikin started an acting workshop at the Open Theater to explore and develop this new style.

The Open Theatre used many improvisational techniques derived from the theatre games of Viola Spolin. One of these techniques was the transformation technique. This technique (which will be described in great detail in a subsequent chapter), and many others were adapted by Terry as she began to write improvisations and latter scripts for the group. Two of these scripts were the transformational plays Calm Down Mother, and Keep Tightly Closed in a Cool Dry Place. These plays premiered on a double bill by the Open Theatre at the Sheridan Square Playhouse on March 29, 1965.

Another important play written by Terry while at the Open Theatre is her rock musical Viet Rock. This play is a collaboration play written with the actors during six months of Saturday workshops at the Open Theatre in 1965-66, in which the company explored their reactions to and against the Vietnam war by means of improvisation.

Viet Rock opened at the Cafe La Mama on May 21, 1966, and received semi-favorable notice. It was selected, however, by Robert Brustein, the then newly appointed dean of the Yale School of Drama to open the School's professional season. It then returned to New York were it ran for another sixty-two performances as the first American rock musical.

In 1967, Terry left the Open Theatre to go to Yale on an American Broadcasting Company "Writing for the Camera"

Fellowship.[15] And in the Spring of the same year, she was commissioned by a television station in New York to write a play for television. The play Terry wrote was a "futuristic soap opera called Home: or Future Soap." Officials for the National Educational Television saw the show, and produced it nationally on the "NET Playhouse." It was the first commissioned play to be produced nationally on television.[16]

Following this production, Terry saw a number of her other works done at various Off- and Off-Off-Broadway theatres in New York City and elsewhere. Changes was done at the Cafe La Mama, Jack-Jack was done at the Firehouse Theatre in Minneapolis, Massachusetts Trust was done at Brandeis University. The Tommy Allen Show was done in Los Angeles, New York and Omaha, Nebraska.[17]

In 1970, Terry wrote perhaps her most important piece, Approaching Simone. This play was presented at both Boston University and at the La Mama Experimental Theatre Club, and ran for less than ten nights total. Nevertheless, Terry won the Obie Award for Best New Play of 1969-1970.[18]

Terry remained in New York for a few more years, and worked on one last collaboration with the Open Theatre (Nightwalk written by Terry, Sam Shepard, and Jean van Itallie). In 1972, she joined with five other women playwrights (Maria Irene Fornes, Rosalyn Drexler, Julie Bovasso, Adrienne Kennedy and Rochelle Owens) to form the Women's Theatre Council which "...came together to demonstrate

the existence of feminist drama and to support each other as well as other playwrights in achieving productions of plays that arose from women's vision."[19] Then, in January of 1974, she moved to Omaha to join her friend and Open Theatre colleague JoAnn Schmidman as playwright-in-residence at the Omaha Magic Theatre.

The Omaha Magic Theatre is a laboratory theatre which includes a group of actors, directors, writers, visual artists, and musicians dedicated to developing new American musical plays.[20] The majority of Terry's works written since 1974 have been produced by this theatre company. The most popular of Terry's works to be done at the Omaha Magic Theatre are Babes in the Bighouse, American King's English for Queens, Brazil Fado, and Goona Goona. During her most recent years at the Omaha Magic Theatre, Terry has been quite involved with writing plays which deal with such important social issues as teenage alcoholism, and child abuse. At present, Terry is still working with the Omaha Magic Theatre as an actress, but she will be returning shortly to her typewriter to create another work for the Magic Theatre's upcoming season.[21]

Megan Terry has been involved in many aspects of the theatre for most of her life. She has worked as designer, actor, director and playwright for various theatres across the country, and these experiences bring a rich perspective to her writing. Keeping this in mind, we can now turn to Terry's

four feminist dramas, Calm Down Mother, Hothouse, Approaching Simone, and American King's English for Queens.

These selected plays written over a time span of twenty years (beginning with Calm Down Mother written while Terry was with the Open Theater, and ending with American King's English for Queens, written while Terry was at the Omaha Magic Theatre) are all feminist pieces championing the strength of women, while at the same time protesting their oppression. They were chosen because they are clearly feminist in their points of view. Secondly, they all contain subject matters and themes which are common in this genre. They also all contain experimental, non-realistic techniques and structures found in most feminist dramas. And finally, these plays were chosen because of their diversity. Through careful study and analysis of these works, the reader will have a clearer understanding of this distinctly female form of drama.

Calm Down Mother

Calm Down Mother, a one-act play written by Terry while she was working at Joseph Chaikin's Open Theatre, has been "...often hailed as the first truly feminist American drama...".[1] While it may be difficult to prove beyond any doubt that this play, or any other for that matter, was the "first truly feminist American drama", it was certainly one of the first (produced in 1965, before the women's liberation movement began in the 1970's) and one of the most significant works of feminist drama ever written.

Calm Down Mother was first produced (on a double bill with another of Terry's works, Keep Tightly Closed in a Cool Dry Place) in March 1965, at the Sheridan Square Playhouse by the Open Theatre company. It is a play that Terry notes was written for the very talented women who were members of this company. Terry believed that these women were developing, becoming better and better actors, but realized that there were no substantial roles for them in most plays written by men. Also she notes that many of these women had weight problems, and were often not being cast for this reason. Terry decided to write a play with roles that any of the women in the company could play without regard to their weight or height.[2] Thus, Calm Down Mother was a "woman's play" before it was even written, for it was begun with women in mind.

This play is very typical of Terry's style in that it is a transformational drama (Terry's subtitle to this work is

"A Transformation for Three Women"). It is a series of scenes or vignettes involving a number of different female characters. The actors (three in number) involved in the production of this piece play all of the characters by means of a technique called transformation.

The transformation is an acting and a playwriting technique whereby without any logical explanation or transition, characters and situations change or transform abruptly into different characters and situations. This technique in drama relies solely on the skill of the author to make the transformation work and to fit into the rest of the play as a unified whole, and on the performance and skill of the actor to be able to transform so completely from one character to another without any sort of transition. This technique is a difficult one to master both for the author and the actor, but it can be a highly effective technique for presenting the message of the drama.

Calm Down Mother is made up of several transformations, making a series of eight vignettes possible, all dealing with women and their various relationships to one another. The first vignette, or as author Phyllis Jane Rose calls it, the first "action bloc"[3], deals with three women making speeches to assert their independence. One of these women is named and modeled "after the nineteenth century American feminist and literary critic,"[4] Margaret Fuller. This character says: "From the time I could speak and go alone, my father addressed

me not as a plaything, but as a living mind,"[5] and she later proclaims "I am Margaret Fuller and I accept the universe!" and "I accept. I accept, not as a furry animal plaything, but as a mind, as a living loving blinding mind."[6]

This is a very strong assertion for a woman to make on stage. One author noted:

> This is a stunning declaration of human independence. But the speaker's name is Margaret Fuller, and what is most provocative about her declaration is the very fact that she is a girl, a young woman, a female human being: women have publicly declared their human identity in terms of their intellect less frequently in literature than they have in life.[7]

But the character has done just that, publicly declared her identity in terms of her intellect. She also has asserted that it is possible for a woman to achieve, and be successful in terms of intellect and to "accept the universe as a living mind." As Keyssar explains, "For most women...it is difficult to know oneself as a 'living mind,' and the montage of scenes that follows in Calm Down Mother catches moments in that struggle for a variety of women characters."[8] This opening vignette sets the tone for the rest of the play which explores women's struggles to come to terms with their lives intellectually.

The next scene takes place in a delicatessen in Brooklyn.[9] The characters in this scene are two elderly women who work at the delicatessen and a young girl who stops in to buy a six-pack of ale. As the elder women talk with the young girl, they admire her lovely hair, reminisce about how beautiful their own hair used to be before they aged, and marvel at how soft the young girl's skin feels. This vignette is quite feminist in its exploration of aging and the supposed loss of physical beauty that goes along with it. Terry seems to be trying to show her audience just how limiting it can be for a woman to be too preoccupied with her physical appearance. For the elderly women in this vignette seem unable to accept the fact that they are aging, and that they are losing their hair, but that it is alright, and that they can still be happy even without their long curly hair and milk-like soft skin.

The two elderly women are not the only ones who are limited by their preoccupation with their physical appearance. For the young girl in the scene appears to feel the same way they do. When one of the women tells her that her hair fell out after receiving anesthesia for an operation the girl asks, "Couldn't they uh make tests...allergies...you should have been tested...well you know you may have been allergic to whatever they knocked you out with...Your hair fell out fer God's sake. It's important for a girl for God's sake. Her hair. You know what I mean."[10] The young girl too is very

concerned and preoccupied with physical appearance. Terry, like so many other feminists, wishes to speak out against the tendency of our society to judge women only by their physical beauty and not by their inner beauty and personality.

The women of this scene have become too preoccupied, too obsessed with their beauty. Men and society have told them for so long that a woman must be beautiful, must have soft skin and long curly hair, that when the elderly women loose these surface physical characteristics, they feel very badly about it, and indeed, mourn for their loss. The young girl is also affected by preoccupation with physical beauty as she empathizes with the elderly women who have lost their hair. In this vignette, Terry shows what an oppressive and detrimental effect a preoccupation with physical beauty (that women often have because of society's and men's view) can have of women of all ages.

Following this scene, the actors "transform" out of their characters, to "become themselves" and address the audience. The next action bloc begins with the actors expressing their rage at society and the limitations it puts on them. Woman Two says: "I get to the point in my life where the anger that people send me, the disappointment they show me, the criticism they yell at me can be absorbed by me and sent right on through me into the ground all the way down to China and out the other side."[11] The women then become angrier and angrier,

and express their anger by pounding their fists into their palms and yelling to the audience "I WANT TO HIT!"[12]

Yet Terry shows the audience that this is not the solution for women and offers an alternative:

> Woman Three: "Talk...Talk...talk...lay bare every part of your limited life. Maybe you could force your life to grow into lives. Facts. Add up all the desperate facts, pitiful few facts as they are-- add them all up to enter on the human record, short as it is. Keep writing. Maybe if I keep talking and writing, listing all the facts of my life, I won't seem so small, at least not to me. When I get scared I can pick up all the lists--all the long lists of my life and read them out loud to myself, and maybe I won't feel so crippled, so unconnected--at least not to myself... A lot of people must start writing with the absurd conviction they are talking to or will contact someone. SOMEONE! SOMEONE! SOMEONE![13]

The message to the women of the audience seems clear, and is quite feminist: That women must not be overtaken with rage, and that they must not let other people's criticism and

disapproval limit them. Instead they must make something out of themselves and their lives, prove that they are people and then reach out to others to share their discoveries.

The next transformation involves just two of the actors and deals with two sisters. One sister is getting a divorce, and the other has come to support her through the change and get settled in her new life. We also find out that the sisters' mother is dying, and that one of them, Nancy, (who has come to help her sister Sally through her divorce) is having a very difficult time dealing with their mother's cancer.

The subject matter of this scene, illness and the loss of a loved one, is common in feminist drama (for example illness is explored in Honor Moore's Mourning Pieces, Corrine Jacker's Bits and Pieces, and Alice Childress' Wedding Band).[14] In this play, Terry shows women how they can deal with the devastation that comes with the illness and death of a loved one: by leaning on other women for support and by returning that support. This vignette ends with the women freezing in a loving, supportive embrace.

The next transformation brings the actors to a scene in a nursing home. Two of the actors play patients in the nursing home, Mrs. Tweed and Mrs. Watermellon. Mrs. Tweed and Mrs. Watermellon spend most of the scene bickering and teasing one another. Mrs. Watermellon antagonizes Mrs. Tweed with what she believes to be the truth about them now that they are

older: that they cannot reproduce and therefore are useless. Mrs. Watermellon tells Mrs. Tweed that she knows where the "sunrise" (or life) begins: "The world is waiting for the sunrise, and I'm the only one who knows where it begins."[15] And after Mrs. Tweed asks her where it does begin, Mrs. Watermellon tells her: (Clasping her breast) "Here, right here, right here it starts. From the old ticker it starts and pumps and thumps around, coagulates in my belly and once a month bursts out onto the ground...but all the color's gone...all but one...all but one."[16] And then she says to Mrs. Tweed: "You three-minute egg! You runny, puny, twelve-weeks-old, three minute egg. You're underdone and overripe."[17]

This scene ends with the entrance of the nurse with their meal. The nurse is a flat and mechanical personality, who does nothing to help comfort these women in their old age, but who just adds to their frustration and unhappiness by treating them like children. However, the entrance of the nurse does help to bring the other two women together as they stand against the nurse and refuse to eat her meal.

This scene not only criticizes and attacks society's tendency to mistreat aging women by sending them to a nursing home where they are forgotten and made to feel unloved and useless, but also criticizes elderly women's perception of themselves. Terry attacks the elderly women who put limitations on themselves and each other by telling themselves and each other that they are useless and unwanted. However,

she does seem to offer a solution to women in this situation: these women should turn to one another for support, friendship and strength (just as Mrs. Watermellon and Mrs. Tweed do with the entrance of the Nurse) rather than degrade and bicker with one another.

The three actors transform into prostitutes for the next vignette of Calm Down Mother. The characters of this scene are an experienced prostitute named Inez who is getting ready to go out on a call with two less experienced call girls Felicia and Momo. As the women get ready, Momo and Felicia banter and fight over who is more experienced, who gets the mirror, and over money Momo has hidden from their pimp. The women of this scene cannot seem to treat each other with any amount of kindness. They continue to fight and be nasty to each other throughout the duration of the scene.

With this scene Terry seems to be showing the limitations women like Momo, Inez and Felicia place on themselves by selling their bodies. They are at the beck and call of the men who they visit and of their pimp, Ricky. They do not have control over their lives, and because of this cannot get along with each other and be friends. This scene parallels the previous scene in the nursing home in which the two elderly women have trouble getting along with one another and being friends. With these two scenes, Terry seems to be showing women that they need to be friends, to bond together, to support and love one another, especially in trying times and

situations, in order to overcome the limitations placed on them by men and society.

Following the prostitute scene, and before the next vignette, the actors again step out of character. This time, instead of reaching out to the audience they reach out to each other, and form a triangle to give each other confidence and tell each other again and again "Have confidence. You have been found."[18] This mini-scene is yet another affirmation of the strength and support women can find in one another.

The final action bloc finds the actors playing two young women and their mother who are doing the dishes in their tenement kitchen. The oldest daughter, Sue, starts a conversation about birth control. She tells her mother and sister that she is tired of hearing men tell people that birth control is wrong. She believes that since she can produce one egg every month for the next thirty years, she has three hundred and sixty chances of becoming pregnant inside her body. Therefore, she feels that it is alright for her to use birth control. She also believes that the men who are preaching against birth control are just trying to control women's lives and bodies. She says:

> So if god sees fit to flush them [her eggs]
> down the pipe every month if they don't meet
> up with an electric male shock, then who the hell
> are these priests and all to scream about pills
> and controls? Tell me that! Who the hell are they?

> They want me to save my eggs till they can get around to making them into babies, they can line up and screw the test tubes![19]

Sue then goes on to say that they will not have her eggs, that she will take control of them, and of her body, and will continue to take her birth control pills. As she asserts all of this, her mother and sister are shocked, and the scene ends with Sue's mother kicking her out of the house.[20]

The feminist voice in this scene is very clear. Terry is asserting that women must take control of their lives and their bodies, and indeed, of their eggs, and not let the men limit them by forcing them to have babies. She also seems to be showing women that it is time that they take control of their sexuality by choosing birth control as a legitimate way of enjoying that sexuality, and ignoring what society or what men tell them.

The character Sue in this scene seems to answer a lot of the questions that Terry has raised throughout the play. For example, Terry raises the issue of women's bodies and women selling them to men in an earlier scene about prostitutes. The characters of this scene are not happy characters, they fight with one another and have to answer to their pimp's beck and call. But Sue, in the final scene takes control of her body. She decides that men will not tell her what to do with her body or with her sexuality and she decides that birth

control in one way she can regain control of her body and life.

Also, Sue asserts her independence very strongly in this scene. She is perhaps the most independent woman in the play, for she stands up not only to society, but to her family as well. The portrayal of Sue embodies a strong, independent female that has control of both her mind and her body and who is going to make it. This final scene fits in nicely with the rest of the play, and by placing it so close to the ending, Terry is able to close with a strong-willed independent role model for all women.

Calm Down Mother ends with the actors again "coming out of character" and speaking directly to the audience. The women speak of their body, of parts of their anatomy:

TOGETHER (They place their hands on bellies) Our bellies

WOMAN TWO (On Sides) Our bodies

TOGETHER (Back on Bellies) Our bellies

TOGETHER (On bellies) Our bellies

WOMAN THREE (On sides) Our bodies

TOGETHER (On bellies) Our bellies

WOMAN ONE (On breasts) Our funnies

TOGETHER (bellies) Our bellies

WOMAN TWO (sides) Bodies

WOMAN ONE (bellies) Our eggies

WOMAN THREE (bellies) Our eggies

WOMAN TWO (bellies) The eggies in our beggies

WOMAN ONE (sides) Are enough

WOMAN TWO (sides) Are enough.

WOMAN THREE (sides) Are enough

TOGETHER (Turn their backs on the audience) ARE THEY?[22]

This ending sums up Calm Down Mother with the message to the women in the audience that there is more to life than their bodies. Terry is telling the audience that women should not be limited to their anatomies and to the fact that they can have children. Instead, women need to explore the other aspects of their lives such as their intellect, and their relationships with other women. Women's bodies are not enough, they also need to learn as Margaret Fuller says to accept the world "...as a living, loving, mind."

In a personal interview, Terry said that the ending of Calm Down Mother is ironic and is optimistic. She also stated that the ending is about the duality of the body and the mind, and about the power of the mind. Also, with this ending, Terry said that she was trying to make the feminist statement that "There is more to a female than just her eggies and her beggies."[22]

Also, with this scene, Megan Terry reminds her audience time and time again of the limitations placed on women, by men and society that they can and must overcome. In this transformational drama, Terry is able explore many subjects that are of great concern to feminists even today, some twenty-years after the piece was written. These subjects are

the concern about women who are aging, women dealing with their anger against men and society, women trying to deal with illnesses such as cancer and the losses these illnesses bring with them, and the problem of women needing to take control of their bodies, but not letting their bodies control them, or letting men or society control them. It seems somewhat remarkable that Terry wrote this piece with such strong feminist messages before the woman's movement of the early 1970's had even begun. Perhaps this is why Calm Down Mother has been hailed " the first truly feminist American drama."

The fact that Terry raises these women's issues in Calm Down Mother is enough to make it a truly feminist work which undoubtedly inspired other female playwrights (and indeed female directors and actors as well). It also contains an inspirational and encouraging message for women in other walks of life, for it shows women who are becoming stronger and stronger, and learning to survive their oppression by relying on their intellects (as in the speech where woman three talks directly to the audience, telling them to write [which indeed can mean to keep working or producing in whatever medium] and to keep communicating and using their intellects until someone listens) as well as their bodies, and by leaning on other women for support. In this work, Terry does not just present the audience with issues and problems that women have to face in their lives every day, but she also presents solutions as well. As one author put it: "Enacting her own feminist

vision of American romanticism, Terry has chosen in most of her plays to highlight the positive, though incremental, change that is available: women, in her dramas, are 'alive and well' and on the way to doing better."[23]

An exploration of the Terry's feminist drama Calm Down Mother would not be complete without a careful study of its style. Just as other feminist dramatists (and indeed many other types of experimental dramatist who write for political purposes) choose to reject the more traditional, realistic, psychologically-motivated forms that so many (male) playwrights have used, so has Terry with Calm Down Mother (and indeed with many of her other works as well. Lynda Hart notes: "Terry's work represents a sustained project to offer alternatives to realism as a form that perpetuates male-centered power structures."[24] In the majority of her works, Terry does away with narrative, chronologically-oriented plots with a central, main protagonist, and works rather in the mode of transformational drama. In fact, she has used the technique of transformation so often that it has become her distinctive trademark.

The transformation technique came out of the improvisational exercises Joseph Chaikin had his actors do in his workshop at the Open Theatre in the 1960's. These exercises were adaptations of Viola Spolin's theatre games. One author says transformations are defined "...by a non-psychological, action and image-oriented conception of a

character which negates the notion of a fixed reality or situation in favor of the continuous displacement of one reality with another."[25] And, as Keyssar notes, "Spolin's theatre games meshed perfectly with Terry's vision of a theatre in which actors created and altered the world in front of the audience, relying on their own resources of body, voice and imagination."[26]

This technique, the transformation, is a very effective style for the feminism of Megan Terry, not just in the play Calm Down Mother, but in many subsequent plays as well. It is effective because it is a break with the male tradition. It tells other women that they do not have to do things the same way that men have traditionally done them. It is also effective because it breaks down the stereotypes that damage all women and that feminism speaks out against. It breaks down these stereotypes because it allows, in fact it even forces, actors to play all type of characters of all ages. For example, the women cast in Calm Down Mother play a variety of different "types" of women (from prostitutes to young girls living in tenement housing to women living or working in nursing home) and a variety of different ages. Because of this very reason, traditional "type-casting" which contributes to society's stereotyped images of what prostitutes look like, or what young or old women should look or act like, is impossible.

Another aspect of Calm Down Mother that reinforces the feminist voice of Terry is the unique structure of the play. As Terry herself pointed out, up until the point at which she and others at the Open Theatre started working with the transformational drama, most plays were like a pyramid in structure. They were written with one main character and "everyone else illuminates that one character."[27] She noted that with Calm Down Mother she wanted to show different aspects of all of the characters. And in another interview, she said:

> I started writing transformation plays because most plays are about one person--one person gets to show three or four aspects of the personality, while all the other people have supporting roles and usually are stereotypes. What if you could see all the aspects of all the people? Most three-act plays spend two acts building to a climax, with a short denouement, and that's it. What if there were plays with ten climaxes?[28]

This non-hierarchical, episodic structure which does not acknowledge a main character who stands out as a leader is inherently feminist in nature in that it denies the structure not only of the traditional drama of men, but because it also denies the hierarchical structure of the patriarchic society. This structure, while not completely unique to feminism (indeed this structure is used in plays by other types of

plays as well) is used with great frequency by feminists in their writings, art and organization. Early works of art such as Terry's Calm Down Mother with this type of non-hierarchical, non-pyramid-like structure served as models for feminist artists of later years, and contributed greatly to the development of the unique style of these artists.

It is important not only to note this feminist structure of Calm Down Mother but also to study its effectiveness in presenting the content of the play. Because Terry does not focus on one single character, or even three specific characters, she makes the play less personal and more universal. It forces the audience not to identify and become over-involved with the characters, but rather forces them to listen to the message of the play. It also forces the audience to look at the society in which the characters live rather than the characters themselves. It reinforces the very feminist belief that "the personal is political and the political is personal".

As one critic noted: "The early transformation plays, eg. Calm Down Mother, which were inspired by and developed with the Open Theatre...militate against a private world." The same author also said: "The nature of the transformation play is that people and situations are rapidly transformed into other people and situations, that no private residue of a character is allowed to accumulate, that people as function, people as

symbol of certain American conditions wipe out all possibilities of people as people."[29]

And so with her structure, style and technique, Terry is able to make her feminist statements loudly and clearly. She forces her audiences not to pity and sympathize with one or two characters, but to observe what is happening to a number of characters, and what a number of characters are saying and doing, and to explore and think about a number of characters and situations and the reasons that these characters and situations exist as they do.

Thus, Calm Down Mother can be seen to be a truly feminist drama. It was feminist in its initiation, because Terry wrote the play specifically for women and for her female colleagues. It is feminist in the subjects it presents. It is feminist in theme. And it is feminist in technique, style and structure. Is it indeed the "first truly feminist American drama?"

When asked this, Terry noted that it indeed was a play of firsts. Its form was innovative and new, for it was one of the first American dramas with a non-hierarchical structure, with the transformation technique, and it was the "first play written to show off the performer, to celebrate the power of the actor."[30] All of these firsts make this play an important and influential one in the genre of modern American feminist drama.

Hothouse

Hothouse, a semi-biographical drama, was started by Terry at approximately the same time that she was working on her transformational works, Calm Down Mother, Keep Tightly Closed in a Cool Dry Place, and a more realistic one act play entitled Ex-Miss Copper Queen on a Set of Pills. She worked on all of these plays one month during the summer of 1964, while being funded by a Rockefeller Foundation Grant at the Office for Advanced Drama research in Minneapolis, Minnesota.[1]

Hothouse is a rather unique play for Terry, for it is one of just a handful of her plays that is written in a realistic, "well-made play" style. While the bulk of her plays, especially her more feminist pieces are written as transformational dramas with experimental non-naturalistic techniques, the traditional style and structure of Hothouse works well for this feminist piece of drama.

When asked about this play, and why she chose realism for the work, Terry said simply that she found that this was the style that was necessary for the story that she wanted to tell. She said of both this work and of her one-act play Ex-Miss Copper Queen on a Set of Pills, "I thought I had to tell the story in that way." She also pointed out that she has always been a fan of naturalism, and that the style of her plays depend on the story, whether it is personal (like Hothouse) or not, and on the mood that she is in at the time.[2]

Because it is such a personal play, Terry remembers that Hothouse took ten to fifteen years of rewriting and revisions before it was ready for production.[3] While this play won the Stanley Drama Award in 1964, it did not receive its premiere production until February of 1974 at the Circle Repertory in New York City. The story takes place in Seattle, where she was raised, and she says that she grew up with the people in this drama.[4] Nevertheless, this semi-biographical drama is not just personal, it is political as well: it illustrates the problems and limitations of not only the women with whom she grew up, but of women everywhere and from every generation who do not have control over their lives.

The setting of Hothouse, is a small house in a fishing village near the city of Seattle in 1955. The house is warped from the dampness of the weather, and a bit run down. It is also overrun with house plants and is surrounded on the outside by wild growths of weeds, wild berries and various trees. This setting is extremely effective, creating just the right mood, and emphasizing the message of the play. For this house is a home to both house plants and people who are left to grow wild, and are uncared for. As Bonnie Marranca points out for the characters of this play, "Home is a 'hothouse' which stifles emotional growth and personal independence...".[5]

In this hothouse live three generations of women. Ma, the eldest, is an "old boot-legger" who lives with her daughter and granddaughter, and spends most of her time

drinking and playing cards with her latest live-in boyfriend, Banty. Her daughter, Roz, a heavy drinker with a live-in boyfriend of her own, spends a lot of time wondering why her husband Jack has left her and how she can get him back. The third woman who lives in the hothouse is Jody, a young, pretty twenty-year old who also, spends a lot of time drinking, and who has a college-boy boyfriend named David. These women all live, love and drink in their hothouse.

The plot takes place in twenty-four hours, and in one location as do the plots of most "well-made plays". The story opens with a light, playful scene between Jody and her boyfriend, who wants to stay with her for a while, but cannot, because Jody must make dinner for her mother. Already in the first scene, the audience sees how much the women characters in the play depend on one another and care for one another. For Jody chooses to spend time helping her mother and grandmother, rather than spend time with her boyfriend.

As Jody goes into the house, we find out that her mother is not yet home, and she immediately becomes worried that she is out at the bar getting into trouble. Also, at this point, we are introduced to Jody's "direct, gruff and lusty," grandmother, who "holds a little man on her lap".[6] As these two characters drink and play cards, Terry reveals to us the role-reversal of this relationship, for it is the man, Banty, who is wearing an apron, and who waits on the women by bringing them drinks.[7]

After Jody joins them for a drink, Ma reveals that Jack, Jody's father, is planning to divorce her mother Roz, and is planning on using Roz's best friend, Doll, for a divorce witness.[8] After they have a few more drinks, Roz enters drunk and singing, and tells the others that she has invited Doll home to give her another chance. She also has brought home her latest boyfriend Andy, and a drunken couple that she has picked up from one of the bars she visited earlier.

As the night wears on, these characters have a party and get more and more drunk, and things start to heat up. We first find out the circumstances of Roz's marriage and divorce. It is revealed that Roz has cheated many times on her husband, beginning during the years that he was away at war. And she is still cheating on him with her current live-in boyfriend Andy.

Roz gets drunker and she finally erupts. She kicks Andy out, with the help of Jody, who calls Andy a "mooch" [9], and who realizes that the fact that her mother has a live-in boyfriend will not look good to a divorce judge. Roz also confronts Doll, finds out that her suspicions about an affair between Doll and Jack are correct, and kicks her out. At this point, the party breaks up, and everyone either leaves or goes to bed, and Jody and Roz are left together for the first time.

The final scene of the first act, between Jody and Roz is a very warm and tender one. They talk to each other about their men, about the marriage between Jack and Roz, and Jody

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convinces her mother to try to get her father back. This scene shows how wrapped up these two characters are in their men, and how it seems impossible to them to be happy without their men. Nevertheless, Terry ends the act with a warm, tender image of female love as Roz tucks her daughter into bed and sings her a lullaby.

Act Two begins the next morning with Jody "moaning herself awake."[10] She has a hangover and has overslept, forgetting about the promise she made to make David lunch. As she awakens, she finds the house full of activity. Banty is ironing Ma's dress (evidence again of Terry's gender role reversal), and Roz is cleaning up the house and getting ready to go out and find Jack. Jody forgets about David completely, until he knocks on the door.

After a few minutes of flirting with her daughter's boyfriend, Roz goes off to find her husband, and Ma and Banty go off to the bar. Jody and David are alone. After a few minutes of playful conversation, David asks Jody to marry him. This startles her and, as Terry explains in her stage direction, Jody "Breaks from him. A new thought for her. She fights down anger at this demand. She hadn't counted on how much he wanted her."[11] This reaction to a marriage proposal from a young girl in love seems a bit strange. However, for Jody, who has grown up mainly in the company of women, and who has not seen evidence of the happiness that marriage can bring in her own home, the proposal is new and strange for her. In

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fact it seems to be a demand rather than a proposal, a demand that would take her away from home and from the women that love her.

David persists however, and tells her how much fun it would be to be married to one another. He also tells her that he wants to teach her, to turn her into better person, in fact he tells her, "I believe in you, I believe in guts...in spite of everything, you've made your own personality, no matter what the bad influences around you...Some of the greatest Americans have come from the worst homes. And you're gonna prove my theory."[12]

In this scene, Terry certainly does not portray marriage as it is traditionally portrayed. She does not portray marriage as a joyful union of two people who will live with and love one another happily ever after. Instead, Terry paints a portrait of one young man's idea of marriage as a way to mold his mate into a better person and to use her to "prove a theory" that she can be a "good person" like himself, in spite of her background.

Jody, however does not accept his approval, in fact she does get a bit angry at it, and then changes the subject by talking about an old boyfriend that she lost to the Korean war. David comforts her, and they end up making love.

They are interrupted, however, by Jody's father and Doll, who have come to catch Roz in the act of cheating on him. After a violent scene between Jack and David, and after Jody

tells her father that Roz is out looking for him, Jack tells Doll to leave so that he can be alone with his daughter. Jack then tells Jody to get her clothes packed; he wants her to come live with him. He tells her: "I'm gonna take care of you. I'm sick of your mother poisoning your mind against me. You're the only kid I got. And no kid a mine's gonna live in this hellhole any longer."[13]

This begins the big confrontation scene between Jack and Jody. They confront each other about the past and present and about Jack and Roz's marriage. Jody tells her father that she resents him for not always being there, and for going away to the war when he did not have to, leaving her to care for her mother, and leaving Roz and Ma with the mortgage and his gambling bills. She tells him:

> And what did you leave me with? 'Take care of your Mother for me, Jody'...me and Margaret O'Brien, what a scene. And I cried and promised I would. And I tried. But oh boy, Buster, what a hellion you gave me to take care of. The Army, the Navy and the Merchant Marine couldn't take care of her, but me, I tried. A ten-year-old kid tried. Well, I'm exhausted. I feel a hundred and ten now, and you say you're going to run off again.[14]

Jack retaliates by saying that he was fighting for her and for her mother, to keep them safe from the Japanese. In her anger against Jack, Jody tells him what it was like when

he was gone, and how Roz and Doll ran all over town to find men to bring home to their beds. As soon as this is out, Roz enters from the kitchen.

With Roz's entrance comes the climax of the play. It is during this scene that Jody finds out the truth about her mother and father and the truth about their marriage. At this point Jody finds out that her parents have been unfaithful to each other for years. She also finds out that Jack forced Roz (at gunpoint) to have an abortion when he thought that she was pregnant with another man's child (which is a remarkably powerful and feminist statement on men and how they try to take away women's power and try to control women and their bodies). However, the truth is also revealed to Jack, for Roz tells him that she never cheated on him until she had found out that he cheated on her first. She also tells him that it was his own child that he forced her to abort, not another man's. And finally, she reveals that the abortion that she was forced to have made her unable to bear any more children.

These revelations stun Jody. In fact, they make her ill. She now knows the truth about her parents, and what terrible things they have done to one another. But there is one more truth to be revealed. In the heat of the moment Jack blurts out the fact that Jody had just told him about Roz's behavior during the war, and Roz sees that she may not be able to trust Jody like she thought she could, and that Jody is not completely on her side in this argument, that she blames her

as much as she blames her father for what happened to the family. Roz feels very betrayed, and tries to get both Jack and Jody to leave. Calling them two-of-a-kind. But Jody tells her: "I'm like you. I'm exactly like you. But I wish to Christ I could just be you and not have to think about it!"[15] As this exclamation reveals, at this point, Jody realizes what marriage has done to her mother and father, she also realizes that her mother is a powerless, trapped woman who depends too much on alcohol and men. However, at this point Jody also realizes that she too is just as powerless as Roz, and that she too will be miserable because of the men and alcohol in her life. She even tells her mother that she wishes she did not realize all of this. She wishes that she did not see how marriage, men and alcohol has ruined her mother's life and is about to ruin her own. She wishes rather that she did not have this knowledge, that she could just go on without knowing how unhappy and powerless they both are.

Jody then yells at her mother for not keeping the family together and for treating both her and her father so hurtfully. The argument gets so heated that it gets physical, and Roz ends up hitting Jody. This is the final straw for Jody, and she leaves exclaiming to her parents that they make her sick and disgust her.

After she is gone, Jack and Roz decide that they are not going to get a divorce after all, and that Jack will move back

into the hothouse. The second act ends with Roz proclaiming the need for a party to celebrate their reunion.

Act Three takes place that night between midnight and 1:00 a.m. It starts with the party that Roz has thrown to celebrate Jack's moving back in. As the scene opens, everyone is drunk and Roz is entertaining with a song. Soon, however, Ma runs everyone off, and Roz and Jack retire to their bedroom. All goes well, until Roz asks Jack to hold her after they make love. He gets angry because he wants to sleep, and ends up hitting her and running off again.

This scene is followed by another warm scene between mother and daughter. After Jack leaves, Roz calls her mother who leaves Banty, and comes to comfort her and help her clean her wound. Roz sits on Ma's lap, and Ma sings to her. Roz and Ma hold each other and fall asleep. This scene is one of the few truly warm scenes in the play. Terry illustrates at this point in the play how women must lean on one another and comfort one another if they are to survive the sufferings that men have caused them. This scene is a celebration of unity among women and of mother-daughter love.

As soon as they are asleep, Jody comes home with her boyfriend David. She has decided that she is going to get her things and leave town with him. But when Jody sees her mother and sees that she has been hurt, she asks David to wait outside for her. She goes to her mother and embraces her and tells her she is sorry for their quarrel earlier in the day.

When she hears what happened between her mother and her father, she promises to go find her father. When David objects, she asks him to go home. He does finally leave, but not without telling Jody what a dead end her home is, and asking her how she could do this to him. He says: "Only this evening...how could you love me like that if you didn't mean it? You're mine now, Jody. Look at me. Jody!". And she tells him: "You really mean so much to me...you...made me feel again." His reply: "What good is it that I made you feel again if that feeling isn't for me?"[16]

David is still only thinking about himself in this relationship, and about how he can mold Jody into a good mate who will make him feel good. He really has no concern for her as a person or an individual.

As David is leaving, he makes an observation: "Jesus Christ! You all have the same eyes." [17] This observation of how much the three women are alike physically can be seen to be symbolic of their emotional unity as well. Ma, Roz, and Jody look alike, think alike, and feel alike. This unity is both good and bad. It is bad because the women are trapped by their relationship to one another in the hothouse which overflows with men and drink. However, and more importantly, this unity makes the women stronger and happier because even though they are trapped and quite powerless, they have each other's love, comfort and caring to help them survive.

After David leaves, Ma goes back to Banty. Roz and Jody are alone again. They drink to a fresh start, and Jody wonders if she will ever be able to make it on her own. She asks her mother "Oh, Momma. Oh, Momma. Won't I ever be able to look out of my eyes..."[18] Roz responds by singing to her, and telling her how much she loves her. She tells Jody that the one thing she never has to do without is love. The play ends with the two women embracing, and promising each other that they will start anew the next day, and will try to bring Jack back. The final image of the play, after Jody comforts her mother and tells her that everything is going to be alright, is that of Jody opening her arms to the world and saying (like she did when she was a little girl): "COME IN BUGS...COME IN FLIES..." and welcoming the outside world and the hope it brings.[19]

The feminist message of this play is clear. It's message is a "...feminist statement on solidarity among women...".[20] And it is about "...the positive side of matriarchal love and how women have been able to maintain themselves even though they've had no power, through the love that is passed from grandmother to mother to daughter."[21] It is the women of this play who end up surviving and who end up learning something. For at the end, Jody and Roz realize the importance of their love for one another, and the importance of their mutual support. The men of the play learn nothing. Both David and Jack feel that women are theirs for the taking, and are to be

controlled by men, and this attitude does not change at the end of the play because they both have learned nothing. However, it is the men who loose in the end, who leave the hothouse with nothing and without the love, support and strength that the women find in one another.

As one author notes, Hothouse is a play of contrasts. "...the relationships suffocate and nourish, they provide warmth and humor as well as shock and pain."[22] The relationship between Jody and her mother is good in that it is loving, caring and supporting, and it is bad because Jody is becoming just like Roz, a heavy drinker who loves her men too much for her own good. Jody even recognizes this when she tells her mother that she is just like her and when in the end she asks Roz if she will ever be able to see out of her own eyes. The ending is one of contrast as well. The play ends on both a positive note as well as negative one, for Roz and Jody realize that they can find love and support in one another, but yet they are still determined that they need to find Jack and get him to move home.

Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that this ending is not completely optimistic, Terry still makes a very important feminist statement for women all over the world and from all generations. The statement is that women need to realize that they can live without men, and that they can find power and strength, even though they are oppressed by society and by

their family, if they bond together and rely on each other for love, comfort and support.

Terry also makes an anti-war statement as she shows what the separation due to war has done to this family: it has turned Roz into a heavy drinker who runs around with all sorts of men, causing her husband to leave her, and it has left Jody without her first love (for she lost her first boyfriend Ray to the Korean war), and without a father. As Terry said recently: "My biggest resentment about the war, besides the obvious destruction, is how it wrecks families. Our family was destroyed by World War II, our extended family."[23]

The concern about war, and the concern with family continuity that is evident in not only Hothouse, but in other of Terry's works as well, is feminist in nature, for she does not glorify war and/or soldiers like many male authors, but rather blames the men who start the wars for the oppression of women and destruction of family that it causes.

And so Hothouse can be proven to be a feminist drama. It illustrates how marriage and the traditional male-centered American family can oppress women and how it does not work in all cases. It shows how war can ruin families. And it shows how men have almost destroyed women by taking away their powers, and making them believe that they have no life at all without men. But most importantly, Hothouse shows women fighting back, and women finding strength, support and love

through other women, and women making it on their own, without men.

One last aspect of Hothouse that needs to be analyzed is its style and structure. As previously mentioned, Hothouse is one of the very few works written by Terry in a more traditional style. It does not use the experimental techniques that many feminist playwrights have used often in their dramas about women and women's experiences. As one scholar notes: "The portrayal of female characters within the family unit--with their confinement to the domestic setting, their dependence on the husband, their often defeatist, determinist view of the opportunities for change--makes realism a "prisonhouse of art" for women..."[24]

But in Hothouse, realism is not a "prisonhouse of art". Rather the realistic technique and structure is altered by Terry to fit her story and her feminist message. For example, "In contrast to most well-made modern plays...the central characters are women and the world of the play is distinctively female."[25] Terry takes an already established and very traditional form of drama (that of the realistic, well-made play) and alters it to include a female world rather than the traditional male-centered dramatic world and with male characters. The female characters in this work are the important ones, and the strong ones, while the men exist only in relation to the women.

Also, in Hothouse, Terry relies very little on narrative development, and exposition as do many traditional well-made plays. It is a play of "words functioning as gestures"[26] dialogue is what propels the piece forward, and in which "...Terry's words function on stage as physical action, as mediations that gradually change the people who speak them and the relations between them."[27] It is the dialogue of this piece that defines the characters as well as the plot, rather than the physical action upon the stage.

Like most Western drama, Hothouse involves a recognition scene. In this recognition scene, the characters learn something about themselves that change them, and that they have to accept in order to become a better person. This recognition is what makes the resolution of the play possible. In most traditional drama, the recognition usually depends upon some truth about the past being revealed, so that the protagonist will know the truth and become a better person for it (see the classic example of Oedipus Rex or Macbeth).

In Hothouse, there are past truths that are revealed. However, these truths are not what make the resolution possible. The fact that these truths are not known is not what keeps the characters unhappy and unable to get on with their lives. Instead, "both Jody and Roz are caught in elemental confusions about their own identities."[28] They both are trying to define themselves in terms of their men, and both seem to feel that they cannot make it without their men.

both seem to feel that they cannot make it without their men. Roz and Jody need to realize that this is not true and that they can make it together without men.

There is not a revelation in Hothouse which brings about a major change in the character. Rather, the recognition involves the characters' finally seeing who they really are, and their acceptance of that person which brings about the resolution of the drama. Jody realizes that she must try to learn to be independent from her mother, grandmother and boyfriend, accept who she is and try to see out of her own eyes, and yet still love and care for the women she lives with. And Roz must accept the fact that she is a mother, and a daughter, not just a wife and a lover, and learn how to accept the love and comfort from the women around her, and to return that love and comfort.

With the resolution of Hothouse depending more on self-acceptance than on any revelation of the past, Terry seems to be telling women that they should not dwell on the past, nor on the reasons that they are in the situations in which they find themselves. Instead, Terry would perhaps assert, women must to learn to accept themselves for what they are, and to learn how to be self-reliant while at the same time remembering that there is love and support to be found in other women.

Hothouse is a play that does what it sets out to do. It presents a very realistic story about women, their oppression

and their powerlessness. Terry shows the audience how men have caused women intense emotional and physical pain for generations but yet she also shows the women in the audience that this pain does not need to be endured forever. Terry illustrates the strength and power of love and support that can exist between women. She shows women that they can rely on each other to ease the pain that men inflict upon them, and to find the strength that they will need to survive. It is this key to survival, this illustration of women "making it" which makes Hothouse an important piece of feminist drama.

Approaching Simone

One of Megan Terry's most important works, and certainly her most critically acclaimed, is her biographical work Approaching Simone, based on the life of Simone Weil. Terry completed this play for presentation at the centennial of Boston University on February 26, 1970. In Boston, the production was presented with Boston University students, and directed by Maxine Klein. It ran for only four nights, before it moved to New York's La Mama Experimental Club at the invitation of Ellen Stewart. Here, the production only ran for a total of five performances, and was widely acclaimed by the critics as one of the best plays of the seasons. Approaching Simone also won the Obie Award for Best New Play of the 1969-1970 season.[1]

Approaching Simone is based on the life and writings of Simone Weil, a French, Jewish philosopher, theologian, and educator of the 1930's and 1940's. Simone Weil was a unique individual with a highly developed mind, "...whose intense desire was to be an active and responsible citizen of Western Civilization."[2] Even though she was "born female, French and Jewish, she allowed none of these labels--or the stereotyped expectations associated with them--to predetermine the set of her mind and her soul."[3]

Simone Weil lived her life selflessly and compassionately, and was a true hero not only to her country, but to women everywhere and from every generation. She wrote for socialist

and Communist magazines, worked in factories with the working class, helping them to strike for their rights, she was active in the Spanish Civil War, and through her writings she explored metaphysical issues and "...the relationships between spirituality and politics."[4]

Simone lived passionately, with a profound sense of social responsibility. "She struggled much of her life to justify in her mind what she felt in her heart--that it is every person's right to have good done to her or him."[5] Because of these beliefs, Simone lived a life of sacrifices. When she was young, she sent her sugar to the soldiers on the front, she taught young people in unconventional ways that she felt were right and necessary (even though they cost her her job) and she worked manually in factories and on the front at war to help others and so she could know what the people in these situations were going through. Even in her death, Simone sacrificed. Simone Weil died in 1943, at the age of thirty-four, from starvation. She refused to eat as long as soldiers involved in World War II were starving at the front.

It is this great personality, this great mind, this great, selfless hero that Terry chose for her work Approaching Simone. This work is a series of vignettes from Simone's life, in which "...Simone exemplifies the gradual liberation of a woman as she transforms herself into a creative person by the concerted efforts of her own will."[6]

The play contains Terry's signature technique, the transformation, as all of the cast, except for the actor playing Simone, transforms throughout the piece to play a variety of characters from different events from different stages of Simone's life. However, the actor playing Simone does not change. In fact, as Terry says in her stage directions, "No matter what age Simone is during a scene, she always behaves and speaks as if she were somewhere near thirty."[7] This technique serves to focus all of the attention on the character of Simone, and does not give the audience a chance to identify with, or sympathize with any of the supporting characters. As Phyllis Jane Wagner states: "All roles except hers [Simone's] are played by ever-transforming members of the ensemble; she alone remains intransigently herself throughout and thus, as supporting characters change with the changing circumstances of her life, audience
attention is focused on Simone from the beginning of the play to the end."[8]

The play opens with a song which illuminates Simone's intense mind, and her desire to find truth and genius. The Chorus proclaims, "IF THE FOOL PERSISTS IN HIS FOLLY HE WILL BECOME WISE...ANYONE CAN BECOME/ANYONE CAN KNOW TRUTH/ ONLY MAKE THE EFFORT OF ATTENTION/ STAY IN THE DARK INSIDE YOUR HEAD TILL IT LIGHTS YOUR WAY/ ATTENTION, PULL YOUR WILL/ GENIUS IS INVISIBLE."[9] This song is a introduction to Simone, her writings, and her life long desire to find the truth.

Following this choral introduction, Terry presents scenes from Simone's childhood. The first of these includes Simone, her parents and her brother carrying heavy luggage. Simone is upset because no one will let her carry any luggage because she is too little. She insists on carrying her share, carrying the same amount of luggage that her brother carries. Already, in this early scene, Terry has illustrated the unique sense of responsibility that Simone felt throughout her life, as well as her desire to be strong and to not be limited by the her size or the fact that she was a girl.[10]

The next two scenes illustrate Simone's desire at an early age to develop her intellect and to find genius inside of herself. She studies Racine with her brother determined to do as well as he in school, and "...turns away as if slapped by an invisible hand"[11], when a visitor, after hearing that Simone's brother has done very well in mathematics at school, says that "He's the genius, and (pointing at Simone) she's the beauty."[12]

Following these scenes are three more scenes illustrating what a unique child Simone was. In these scenes, Simone refuses to wear stockings because the workers' children do not have any, mails her sugar (which was somewhat scarce during wartime) to the soldiers on the front because "They don't have any,"[13] and chooses to watch the sunset rather than play with the other young children. Terry's Simone is a rather extraordinary young child who enjoys the peace and solitude

of nature over the company of other children, and who selflessly shares her advantages with people less fortunate than herself.

Following these scenes of Simone's childhood is a scene which Terry calls "Simone at Fourteen--When and Why She Wants to Kill Herself."[14] Simone is alone in her room with a migraine headache in this scene, and the other members of the ensemble become "aspects of her self-doubt, self-loathing, and pain and anguish," which "appear to torture her."[15]

The members of the ensemble tell Simone that she is stupid, that she is just a girl, and that she will never amount to anything. "Simone's fears tell her that she has no talent, that she is stupid and awkward, that her mind is as slow as her 'miserable body': that she is 'nothing but a girl'...the pain she suffers is proof, it must be some kind of punishment. She will 'never know the truth,' her mind is too dim."[16] Her fears and anxieties build and build and ultimately suggest suicide. Simone almost concedes, for she shouts "If I can't find the way to justice and truth, then I don't want to live! I'm mediocre! Only the truly great can enter that transcendent kingdom where truth lives."[17]

But then Simone hears another voice. It is a calmer voice, her own voice of reason. This voice brings the will to live back to Simone with "ANYONE CAN KNOW THE TRUTH/DESIRE, DESIRE/ ONLY MAKE THE EFFORT OF ATTENTION/ FOCUS ON THE DARK INSIDE YOUR HEAD/UNTIL IT LIGHTS YOUR WAY/ THE SIMPLEST MAN

MAY KNOW TRUTH/ IF HE REACHES OUT EVERY DAY."[18] Simone, even at fourteen, has a great moral desire to know the truth, and to live a truly great (rather than mediocre) life. And already, at fourteen, Simone is experiencing the limitations placed on her due to the fact that she is a woman, and is choosing to ignore these limitations, to go beyond them and achieve greatness even though she is a woman. With Simone's choice not to kill herself, and not to be limited by the fact that she is a woman, Terry makes the statement that anyone, even a young girl, can achieve this greatness, and know the truth. The fact that the character who makes this realization is a woman, makes the feminist statement that women are capable of knowing the truth as well as men.

As the play progresses, the audience is taken through scenes of Simone's young adulthood. These scenes include an evening in a nightclub with a few of her friends, in which Simone expresses her concern with the treatment of black people in African colonies, her concern with the happenings in Germany, and her deep desire to work with her hands.[19]

Two other scenes from this period of Simone's life show her in the classroom teaching philosophy to teenage girls in rather unconventional ways. She takes her students hiking, and talks to them about how to live, and about how she has chosen not to fall in love (because she enjoys her freedom too much). These scenes also show Simone going in front of the school boards of the two schools and getting fired at one for

taking the students on an unauthorized field trip and for putting the writings of her students into print (after all, the school board says she was "not authorized to print the work of nobodys"[20]), and at the other for an unauthorized hike and for insubordination. But Simone goes peacefully, in the first incident proclaiming when told that she was fired "That is a fact that I accepted in advance."[21], and in the second incident proclaiming, "It is the condition of my teaching."[22]

Simone refuses to be mediocre. She rejects the status quo. She is willing to lose her job rather than sacrifice either her morals or her greatness. She wants to live, and to teach her students how to live morally and with greatness.

The next few scenes deal with Simone's experience of working in a factory. She has taken a job in a factory "to study the relationship of the worker to his work", and to have some "contact with real life"[23]

Act Two begins with a short scene in which Simone is writing a letter to her brother, asking him to speak to a physicist for her about one of her calculus theories. This scene is a very short scene, which is included to show one of Simone's theories, and to illustrate her supreme intellect. It is followed by a musical scene between Simone and the chorus which explores some of her more mystical, philosophical writings. "There is something sacred in every person,"[24] says Simone. With the chorus she goes on to explain that what is sacred in a person is not his/her personality, nor his/her

thoughts. Simone explains to the chorus (and the audience) that "There is something in all of us that goes on indomitably expecting, in the teeth of all experience of crimes committed, suffered and witnessed, that good....That good and not evil will be done to you. It is this faith above all that is sacred in every human being."[25]

After this scene, which gives voice to some of Simone's thoughts and writings, Terry returns to incidents in Simone's life in which she sacrificed herself to help other people. Included in this section of the play is a scene in which, in spite of her frailness, Simone helps a group of unemployed men split rock on the roadside. The scene then jumps back to the factory in which Simone and the other workers are striking for higher pay and better representation. Simone does not need to help these people. She does not need to suffer with them. She comes from a family that has the wealth to support her in a much nicer fashion. Nevertheless, Simone, with her unique sense of social responsibility, sacrifices herself, and helps people who are not as advantaged as herself.

Next, Terry turns to the political life of Simone Weil. One scene takes place at a meeting of leftist coalition parties. Simone is giving a speech against Stalin's attempts to "purge" Russia. Her anti-Stalin views are not very popular with the other people present at the meeting, and Simone is run off.[26] She feels that the others in the meeting, along with other politicians are going to drive her country into a

useless war, and so she decides to go fight in the Spanish Civil War, a war which she feels is just.

While is Spain, Simone refuses to use a rifle. She also is appalled at the fact that the people she works with laugh at the men that they shoot. She is angry and realizes that they are fools and nothing but pawns in the war between Russia and Germany.[27] She is so angry about this that she accidentally spills hot oil (she is at camp, cooking for the soldiers) on herself and is severely burned.[28] The fact that Simone is injured while cooking, a traditionally "female activity" is both ironic and feminist. For in the midst of a great war, Simone is only hurt by stereotypical "womanly duties".

Simone's parents come to Spain to bring her home, and the next scene, entitled "Visitation"[29] takes place while Simone is alone in her room suffering from her injury and the illness that it has brought. As Simone laments the fact that she is sick, and that she cannot work, she cries out to God. At this point, the rest of the ensemble enter the stage and lift Simone up, "...giving her a total caress. They hum. They take her pain into their bodies, until all but five who lift her up to God are feeling the pain that she had.""[30] The ensemble then undress Simone, and put her clothes on their bodies, then they put her down and exit.

Simone is now "transfixed, warmed and filled with divine love."[31] She sings a poem of George Herbert's entitled "Love

III". Terry selected this poem because of a statement Simone Weil wrote in her Notebooks: "Examples of perfect poems, i.e., having a beginning and end, and a duration which is an image of eternity. There are a few of them...'Love' of Herbert is one."[32] Terry chose this poem to illustrate the feeling that Simone had after her "...mystical experience of God's love".[33] This scene then flows into a song which explains Simone Weil's thoughts on God. Simone sings that she believes that God created man so that he could be loved and that it is men and women's responsibility to become the type of being that God needs to love him. As Wagner points out: "This is the beginning of Simone's mystical vision of human life and of her carefully constructed arguments for the value of human suffering."[34]

In the scenes that follow, Terry further explores Simone's experiences with religion. In one, Simone has gone to a Catholic Priest for help in finding work, and also to speak with him about Christ. The Father wants to baptize Simone, but she refuses. She tells him, "I prefer to stand at the door of the church," and later, "I don't want to belong to any groups. I want to be invisible, so that I can move among all groups. I'm suspicious of structures, and especially the structure of the Catholic Church, it has been totalitarian since the time of the Roman Empire."[36] This scene illustrates what a clear and independent thinker Simone was. She does not accept the status quo, or the established church

simply because of society's expectations. Rather she questions the church, explores it, and searches further for the answers to her religious questions.

The next scene takes place in Harlem. This time Simone and a friend have decided to go to a church with a predominately black congregation. They listen to the sermon and to the gospel music, and are overcome with emotion. They join the congregation in song and dance just before the scene ends.

These scenes deal with Simone's thoughts and explorations in religion and show what a truly great thinker and mystic Simone Weil was. She feels the need to reach out to God, and does so, but yet will not allow herself to be baptized. She does not trust organized religion (perhaps because it leads to mediocrity?), and chooses rather to remain separate from society to seek her own spiritual salvation.

The rest of the play deals with Simone's work for her country during World War II. One scene deals with her trying to convince the officials to allow herself and other women to go to the front to help the male soldiers. She appeals to the officials "...to get [her] out of a this painful moral situation."[37] She feels the deep moral need to help her country, and this is one way she could do so.

In this scene, Simone is championing the power of all women. She tells the officials that the women could comfort and nurture the men at war, and bring a bit of human kindness back to it. She is not only pleading with the officials to

let her help and fulfill her moral responsibility, but also to recognize and utilize women's unique abilities and powers.

The next scene involves a speech Simone gave protesting the war. She explores the stupidity of France's involvement in the war, and explains that the original objective is lost, and that the war is one of empty words and meaninglessness. But her audience does not listen to her and the war goes on.

Simone's next speech is to the wounded in the hospital. She addresses these men to comfort and enlighten them. She tells them, that because of their affliction, they are more aware of life that those at the front who die unaware.[38] She tries to prepare them for death, and "to awaken them to Grace, to the necessity of self-transcendence..."[39] At the very end of the scene she tells them: "You have the opportunity and the function of knowing the truth of the world's affliction. Contemplate its reality!"[40]

In the final scene, Terry explores the situation surrounding Simone's death. She has committed suicide by not eating, She would not eat as long as there were people in France starving. Woman One says: "She wouldn't eat. She wouldn't eat the bombs of the Germans, she wouldn't eat the furnace of the Nazis. She swallowed the pride of France, but it didn't stick to her ribs."[41]

Even in her death, Simone is a selfless individual. And even in her death she was concerned with people less fortunate than herself. Terry has illustrated in Approaching Simone not

only what a powerful mind Simone Weil had, but also what a caring, patriotic and socially responsible individual she was.

Approaching Simone is a uniquely feminist piece of drama. It is one of the few dramatic works ever written with a self-aware, independent, female protagonist who is not identified through her relation to a man, and who is a truly great and extraordinary hero. It is also one of the few biographical dramas with a feminine hero.

As author C.W.E. Bigsby noted in his book A Critical Introduction to Twentieth Century American Drama Vol. Three: Beyond Broadway, traditional drama, written by men throughout history paint three stereotypical portraits of women. The women in these dramas are usually portrayed as "the pure mother," "the corrupting seductress," or "the threatening emasculator."[42] Rarely are women characters in plays written by men portrayed as individual, intelligent, and autonomous people.

The feminist dramatists rebelled against this tradition in the 1970's and began to write plays with strong, individual women who were not identified through their relationships to the men in their lives, but who were either completely autonomous, or struggling for their autonomy. As playwright and critic Honor Moore stated, "When autonomy became an issue for many women, women's individual struggles became material for drama."[43]

Approaching Simone is one such drama. It is a drama which rebels against the traditional. It is does so by presenting a positive description of a female historical figure who struggles for her identity (or autonomy) and her individual liberation. It is unique also because Simone is not identified by her relationship to the men in her life. And finally, it is unique because it presents women from a feminist viewpoint. It shows a woman who does not need men and who is just as intelligent and strong (if not more so) than the men around her.

The play is a powerful statement for women everywhere--it shows women what they are capable of doing if they set their minds to it, and gives them and excellent role-model to follow as well. As Phyllis Jane Wagner says: "In the play, the character Simone exemplifies the gradual liberation of a women as she transforms herself into a creative person by the concerted efforts of her own will. She is not only the first self-aware protagonist to appear in any of Terry's plays, but the first heroic figure as well..."[44]

Terry indeed wrote this play with the intention of providing other women with a role-model. She states "...we've been living in a homosexual society...Men run everything... Women and children have no rights or status, they're only reflections or extensions..."[45] She feels that this narrowness in society has really limited women:

> Women haven't had the time or the opportunity or just haven't take the power in their own hands to create a model outside of themselves of what's in here, of what they really know. They've imitated masculine models. And when I saw this through Simone, I began to get a picture of the possibilities of how to construct--out there for people to walk into--what's going on in here, or what was going on in Simone. Then people will say, 'My God it is possible; women are free to do this and can.' And once several women have built a few structures, they're going to be building structures all over the place. Because all you have to do is show that it's possible, and then all kinds of people will start adding to it.[46]

Terry also says she feels the need "...to come out and be as strong as I can for other women. They need models, they need to know that a woman can make it and think clearly in a womanly way. All the heroes are dead and killed or compromised and women need heroes. That's why I wrote Approaching Simone."[47]

And so, Terry has written a play with a model of strength for women. Through the life and writings of Simone Weil, Terry shows women that they too can research, learn and know the truth, that they can to anything men can do, and that they to can be role-models and/or heroes.

But Approaching Simone does not speak only to women. Terry also remembers that she wrote the play because she so admired Simone's "supreme intelligence", her dedication and the fact that she was so unselfish.[48] Terry wanted her character to be a model not only for women, but for all people: "To 'save men and their society' was indeed one of Terry's hopes in writing Approaching Simone--to save human beings and their society."[49] This drama is intended to celebrate Simone Weil's supreme mind and being, to help save all society and, to provide a strong role model for women everywhere.

The technique and style used by Terry to achieve these goals is very effective. Terry once stated "I have been consciously building my technique so that I could write a play about her."[50] This technique that she built turned out to be a very powerful and theatrical mix of styles and techniques used by Terry in her early works. There are elements of realism (or at least selected realism), of musical drama, and of the transformational drama in Approaching Simone.

As mentioned before, Terry only uses the transformation technique in the depiction of the minor characters of the play in order to focus all of the attention onto the character of Simone. This technique works well as does the structure of the piece. In this work, as in most of her other works, Terry does not choose an chronological, narrative structure. Instead she chooses an episodic structure which illustrates

many different events in Simone's life. As Helen Keyssar notes "Terry's architectural, episodic style lends itself well to a biographical drama, in which the epiphanic as well as the ordinary moments of Simone's life and death are equally embraced."[51]

Another technique employed by Terry that is highly effective is the inclusion of many words spoken and written by Simone throughout her life. She also includes poetry that Simone admired. All of these interjections illustrate what a powerful mind Simone had, and strengthens the audience's admiration for this hero.

This style, these techniques, and the sheer theatricality of Terry's presentation are what make this drama work. As theatre critic Catharine Hughes notes: "Miss Terry's achievement...lies in the surprising theatricality with which she invests that seemingly untheatrical life. More particularly impressive in this regard is her successful employment of any number of experimental theatre approaches that, in other hands, have too often seemed mere gimmicks...".[52]

Through these techniques, and her style and structure, that Terry consciously developed for this piece, she has written a powerful piece of drama. This drama speaks to everyone by showing them a truly powerful mind and soul. More importantly, however, is the fact that Terry has also written a truly powerful piece of feminist drama. With Approaching

Simone, Terry has shown the world that female heroes do exist, that female individuality and autonomy is possible, and she has given women all over a role-model to follow in their own struggles for autonomy.

American King's English for Queens

The last piece of feminist drama by Terry to be analyzed in this study, American King's English for Queens is perhaps more didactic and feminist than the three plays mentioned previously. American King's English for Queens was written by Terry in 1978, and was first staged in March and April of that year at the Omaha Magic Theatre, where Terry was and still is a playwright in residence.

This play "...examines language's crucial role in the development of sexist attitudes and stereotypes...".[1] It also examines the oppression of women in the American family due to expectations due to the English language.

American King's English for Queens, like Hothouse is another of Terry's "family" plays.[2] The family that the story is centered on is the Connell family, which includes the mother and the father, three daughters, Susu, Kate, and Jamie, one son, Doug, and a feral child that the children have found while out on the prairie snipe hunting, whom they name Silver Morgan.

The first act deals with the Connell family before they bring Silver Morgan home. The play begins (after a brief introduction by Silver Morgan) with a playful scene between the children and their parents one night before the children are put to bed. Throughout this scene, the children play around with the English language and with sounds. The children question the English language, and wonder why they

cannot make up their own language. The children ask "English, why English?", ask "why isn't it called Patricia/ Or Amerakish?", and declare "I'm singing pig!/I speak star./ I speak alfalfa./ I speak crow. etc". But to all of this nonsense, their father replies "It's English! English!/ To speak all this you've had to use English./ All you know is your mother tongue."[3] Later in the scene, the children find out that one of their ancestors was Spanish, and they delight in this, and play around with the Spanish language. But by the end of the scene they are told again that they must use English, their mother tongue. This scene illustrates the possibilities of playing with language "...and the realization that English isn't the only 'medium' through which the human mind can communicate with itself and with others."[4]

The next scene involves a confrontation between the eldest daughter, Susu and her father. As her father stops her to tell her to take out the trash, she stalls for time by saying "Yeah, but...".[5] This phrase upsets the father tremendously, and he calls the family to together to make an example of Susu. He does not want his children to say 'Yeah, but..." because "There is no such word as 'yeahbut'." And, after all, "The way one speaks shows one's intelligence." He does not want other people thinking that his children are stupid, and therefore wants them to speak properly.[6] This scene shows the importance that people place on language, and

that the type of language that a person uses can communicate what type of person s/he is.

In the following scene, the audience sees for the first time the direction that the play is going. This scene is between the mother and the youngest daughter, Jamie, who has spotted a rabbit in their garden. Jamie tells her mother "The rabbit's eating our lettuce", to which the mother replies "Is he?". This confuses Jamie and she replies "No. I said the rabbit."[7] The scene that ensues is an argument between mother and daughter about the rabbit in the garden. The mother keeps calling the rabbit a "he", and this confuses the young girl, who associates the pronoun "he" only with her father, who is at work, and who cannot be out in the garden eating lettuce. The young girl tells her mother "You told me Momma rabbits have babies," and then asks "How can he have babies."[8] In her mind, since rabbits have babies, the rabbit must not be a "he", but rather a "she". The confusion mounts between mother and daughter, and is not resolved. Jamie finally leaves the room frustrated, after asking her mother "If all the rabbits are boys, are all the cats girls?" In a worksheet made out by Terry, for use by leaders of discussions which followed the Omaha Magic Theatre's production of the play, the playwright describes the scene: "Confusion and 'miss-communication' caused by the generic pronoun 'he'."[10] This is the first depiction of the sexism of English in <u>American King's English for Queens</u>.

Next, the play moves into the kitchen. The mother, Julia is making stew and wondering about "the meaning of life." She is feeling oppressed by her role as wife and mother, and is recalls herself at the age of sixteen when she told herself "Julie, you're sixteen. Life has just begun...Julie, Julie. Let's have fun!" She tries to ignore this voice "...by throwing herself into making veal stew for the family."[11]

This message of this scene is a familiar one in feminist drama. The women of these dramas often find themselves yearning, confused, and feeling depressed. They feel this way when they realize what that their whole lives are taken up with family responsibilities and with filling the stereotypical gender role of wife and mother. Similar messages can be found in plays such as Tina Howe's Birth and After Birth, Anne Commire's Shay, and Myrna Lamb's Apple Pie.[12]

While Julia is in the kitchen making stew, and wondering about her life, the children play a game in the living room. The game that they are playing is some sort of career game for little girls. The game is full of stereotypical language which reinforces limitations that society places on children by stereotyping certain careers. For example, the careers that this game promotes for girls are ballet dancers, nurses, teachers, airline hostesses, and models. The game also explains the necessary qualities that a person must have in order to succeed in these occupations. The nurse and teacher must have patience, and the airline hostess and model must not

have sloppy make up. When Doug gets a card that says that his make up is sloppy, he gets mad and tells his sister that she cannot be a model either because she is too fat. He gets very upset however, when he gets a card that says that he is emotional, which is good for and actress or a model.[13]

As Terry says about this scene, "Much of the language is taken from an actual commercial game for little girls. Its description of job roles and qualifications implies that only females do these jobs...the girls and the boy argue over what job roles are possible or appropriate, using lots of controlling and put-down language like: 'You're too little,''too short,' 'too fat,' 'too emotional,' 'lazy,' 'crazy,' 'dopey.' Male ballet dancers are characterized as 'too short," stewardesses as mere 'waitresses.'" .[14]. This scene shows the limitations that language and stereotypical gender roles can place on children as they grow up and look to the future and their careers.

The next scene involves the mother, father and the eldest daughter, who comes home from a school activity and announces that she is in love. This upsets her father, who tells her that "Romantic love is neurotic."[15] He tells her that he admires societies in which marriages are arranged. After she leaves the room, the father tells the mother that he is worried about their children not knowing about the value of the dollar, and that he does not want a "...foolish dreamy child."[16] The scene is changed a bit when Julia begins singing

a medley of love songs that were popular when they got married. Her husband, however is not romanced and sings his own song about microwave ovens and other kitchen appliances.

The languages of the mother and the father are very different in this scene. The father's is a language of the dollar, while the language of the mother is romantic. These two languages do not seem to mix, and have limitations on each of these two characters because of the expectations that they create.

The final scene of the first act again explores the effect that sexist language and stereotypes can have on young children. This scene takes place in the family's bathroom, where Doug and Dad are having a "man to man talk". During this talk, Dad shows Doug how to stand, and how to hold himself like a man.[17] He also tells his son: " A man protects his sisters, his wife and his mother, And his father when his father can no longer protect himself," and later, after he has slapped Doug when Doug insists that he is going to marry Mommy, "Don't cry. Men don't cry. If you cry, I'll make you wear your sister's clothes to school."[18] This scene shows the unfair expectations that fathers place on their sons at an early age, by telling them that they are men. As one critic says, "Men's behavior is seen as a function of what they are called: Doug is a boy at nine years old, but when called a 'man' he can <u>be</u> one. Crucial to the meaning of 'man' is its negative, i.e., not girl, the ultimate degradation."[19] This

scene, then, shows the limitations and oppressions that are placed on children due to the sexist language that surrounds them, and to the stereotypical expectations that society has of them due to their gender.

Act Two begins with a transformation for the actors. They are no longer a family, but rather big kids and little kids out on the prairie on a snipe hunt. As they hunt, the big kids tease the younger kids by telling them that they are too little, and not old enough to go on a snipe hunt. They also antagonize the little kids by insulting them with the comment: "You hang out with girls."[20] The little kids, however, despite the teasing, catch what they believe to be a snipe, but which in actuality is a feral girl raised by prairie dogs. As soon as the little kids catch the snipe, the big kids exit, shocked. This scene explores the power of language, and the way that people use it as weapons. As Terry states, "It's the language of 'ageism' (older kids vs. younger) and initiation, or put-down, power and barter."[21]

The actors all transform back into their original characters in the Connell home, and wait for Dad to come home to show him "the snipe". When he gets home, however, he is not ready to see their surprise. He has received bad news at the office. The business that he works for has been sold, and he thinks that he may loose his job. While loosing his job is not actually very likely, they have taken away his secretary, which has made him very angry. He announces that

he is going to have to learn to type, and that he feels badly for the way that he treated his secretary: "I'm sorry, dear Lord, I ever asked her to comb her hair. I'm sorry, dear Lord, for yelling at her to replace her lipstick after lunch. I'm sorry, dear Lord for making her bring me and Bill coffee eight times a day with three sugars and heavy on the cream."[22]

And then he tells his family that they are going to have to start watching what they spend. He tells them that they can no longer go to McDonald's, that they have to get rid of the microwave, the television, the cars, and the minibikes. The children are devastated. They decide that now is the time to show their father their "snipe", and at this point they let the feral girl out of the bag. At first the father's inclination is to shoot it, but the rest of the family protests, which shocks the father as he claims: "Mutiny! In my own house! Why did you bring up my children to be so independent?"[23]

This scene examines many aspects of language,the effect that it has on people, and traditional stereotypes. First Terry examines "The language of business from corporate economics to office skills..." She also "reveals how the males expect the females to dress and act at the office, and the threat to Dad's ego when his job is in danger, his secretary is taken away and he has to learn how to type."[24] Also this scene explores "The language of affluence--of 'microwave,' 'mini-bikes,' and 'McDonald's'..."[25] The power

of these two languages and the effects that they have on the American family are explored by Terry.

After a short scene in which Doug visits the feral girl in the cage that the Connells place her in, and tells her that he does not like her, comes the final scene of the play. This scene takes place in the family room near the feral girl's cage. The three Connell sisters have snuck down to see her. The girls decide to teach the girl how to speak. Susu says: "We have to think of a way to teach her to talk without making her feel that being a girl is not as good as being a boy." They decide that the best way to do this is to work as a team. Susu tells her sisters: "I want to try. Women have got to get it together, and if we can't do it in our own home, where can we?" and later: "It's not just a scientific experiment with the Snipe, but to see if we can learn to work as a team. Boys do it all the time."[27]

The girls decide that the best way to teach the "snipe" to talk is to first try and communicate with her in her own language of chirps and barks. They do so, and seem to be making a bit of progress, seem to be communicating with the feral girl when Doug and Dad enter. Dad sees that the feral girl is touching Kate, and gets angry and decides to take the snipe to the zoo. The girls however, make him change his mind by communicating with him in his own language: the language of money. The girls convince their father that they can teach the girl how to speak, and clean her up and make her look like

Miss America. They argue that this would make them famous and that they could sell their story to a magazine for at least twenty-five thousand dollars.[28]

The father agrees, and they all decide to name the girl. Silver Morgan is the name that they decide on. Then the girls decide that they will let the men on their team (and let them help teach Silver to speak) only if they play by their rules. Kate tells them "...all the money we take in from our work with our captured creature is to be shared equally. And each member has only one vote."[29] Dad is willing to agree, but Doug hesitates: "But two men against five women?" he asks. His mother (who has entered the room) replies "But Dougie--why do you make yourself think that way? Why, we're <u>seven human beings.</u>" and he answers "We are? Are we human beings and men too?"[30]

The feminist message in this section of the scene is clear. The girls have found that they can work well together, just like the men, and the men are forced to realize it. The fact that the girls get their way, and overcome the oppression that the male members of the family are placing on them makes a strong statement that women are capable, intelligent human beings who will overcome the sexism of the family and of the English language.

The play ends with the whole family working together to teach Silver how to speak. They succeed in their endeavor by winning confidence of each other and of Silver, and by the end

of the play she is speaking English. At the very end of the play Doug and Dad ask the essential question of the play: "Do you think like you talk or talk like you think?"[31] And the Connell family realizes the power of the English language and the limitations that it can have and has over the human beings that speak it.

American King's English for Queens is a feminist drama which explores many language and gender issues. The play asks questions, and offers lessons "...about the uses and abuses of languages, sex roles, concepts of romance and the socialization process."[32] In this work, Terry explores how all of these issues effect women and children.

Many feminist themes are explored in American King's English for Queens. Besides being a play concerned "...with how we use everyday language to define the status of women and children within the family,"[33] it is also a play about sexual stereotypes, about the oppression of women that family can cause, about the silliness of the excessively money-oriented individual, the detrimental effect of the commercialism and materialism of today's society, about the need for women to find their power by working as a team and forcing men to give them their deserved equality. All of these themes are secondary to Terry's primary theme of the effect of language on the American family, but all contribute to the overall feminist attitude of the work. They also are all themes that can be found in other works by feminist playwrights.

Nevertheless, the prominent theme of the work is the power of language. As one author said "Through the dialogue that punctuates a family's interaction, the audience is shown that language helps to determine sex roles, lead to expectations of others based on, and determines social control."[34] And another author notes of this play, and of three other of her full-length plays (Babes in the Bighouse, The Tommy Allen Show, and Brazil Fado), "Unlike the absurdists, Terry does not investigate language to devalue it, nor meaning to abandon it, nor action to replace them both. Instead, all of her challenges testify her reluctance to allow the idea of meaningless to mask the uses made of language, action and meaning."[35]

In American King's English for Queens, Terry shows the power that language has to create sexual stereotypes that limit women and children, to make a person seem to be something just for the naming (for example, Silver Morgan is a 'snipe' until she is called a girl, then she begins to act like one, and Doug is a boy until he is called a man, then he begins to act like one), to make a person feel a certain way (for example the romance language of the love songs that the mother and father listened to while growing up made them feel in love), and to be used as weapons (for example the put-down language of the children on the snipe hunt). Two final language issues that Terry illustrates in this work is the fact that people can communicate by other languages than just

the spoken word (for in this work, they communicate by singing and by body language as well), and the question that she wants to pose to the audience with the work: "Do you talk like you think, or think like you talk." All of these language issues explored in this drama, and the other female themes that it deals with make it a truly feminist play.

In style and technique, American King's English for Queens is fairly typical of Terry's more recent works while at the Omaha Magic Theatre. There is still the element of transformation in this work, the characters sometimes transform into animals, pieces of furniture, and different children for the snipe hunt. Terry proves this technique again to be effective in her work, for the transformations in this piece succeed at keeping the audience's attention, and keeping them from over-sympathizing with the characters and not listening to the message of the work.

Another interesting technique that Terry uses in this work, and in many other works as well, is the inclusion of music. In fact American King's English for Queens is described as a musical (it is included in an anthology called High Energy Musicals from the Omaha Magic Theatre). This style helps to illustrate the Terry's belief that there are forms of communication other than the spoken word. It also helps to lighten the piece to make it more enjoyable.

A final element of style that needs to be discussed in any analysis of American King's English for Queens is its

didacticism. Terry is very interested in making her audience think with this piece. She closes the play with the essential question that she wants her audience to think about after they leave the theatre, when she has the father of the Connell family ask "Do you think like you talk or talk like you think." She also included an after-the-show discussion with the audience to further explore language issues with the audience. Terry calls these discussions the third act of the play.

Author Jean Natalle notes "The rhetorical impact of the play is actually derived from audience participation during the discussion period." These discussions are lead by a group of experts in the fields of history, psychology, sociology, English literature, theatre arts, philosophy, religion, and linguistics, whom the Terry and the Omaha Magic Theatre calls 'humanists'.[36] Using a worksheet prepared by Megan Terry, the humanists and the audience explored the effects of the English language on women in America. These humanists were the same experts that Terry relied on throughout the writing of this play for research and ideas. Terry and others from the Omaha Magic Theatre met with the humanists once a week and shared research during the developmental period of this drama. Terry states "We developed our piece after absorbing as much as we could from these brilliant and generous people."[37]

These two practices, of thorough researching with experts during the developmental phase, and of post-performance

discussions with the audience are not uncommon in the Omaha Magic Theatre, or in productions of feminist theatre groups. These practices are quite feminist in that they reflect this group's long tradition of collaboration and of consciousness-raising. They also help contribute to the didactism, or rhetorical impact of the play. The discussions afterwards were one way that Terry could guarantee that her audience would leave the theatre thinking about the issues that she felt were important, and questioning themselves. When asked if her plays were written with the intention of getting the audience to take action, Terry answered with a simple affirmation, and said that action is what makes theatre so exciting.[38]

This didactism and rhetorical force supplied by the discussions makes this piece even more feminist. For feminism is a political movement that wishes to provoke social change. This play seeks not only to point out problems with the American society, the American family, and its language, but also to provoke social change, to get its audience to take action to correct these problems.

Conclusion

In these four plays, Calm Down Mother, Hothouse, Approaching Simone, and American King's English for Queens, Megan Terry's feminist voice can be heard distinctly. These four plays truly fit the definition and description of feminist drama that has been studied and brought forth by such critics as Janet Brown, Elizabeth Natalle, and Dinah Leavitt.

These plays are written by a woman, about women and their unique experiences, positive or negative, that they have while being women. Calm Down Mother is about many different types of women and the way they perceive their bodies, the limitations they place on themselves, and about them overcoming their oppression. Hothouse is about a family of women who learn to live and love each other, to take care of themselves and to make it without men in their lives. Approaching Simone is about brilliant woman with a very intelligent mind and caring soul, who is able to overcome the limitations of being a woman, and become a fully autotomized individual. And American King's English for Queens is about a family who is victimized by sexual stereotypes and oppression, but in which the women end up taking a stand, and forcing their male relatives to let them be equal.

These plays deal with a great number of subjects very common to feminist drama. They all deal with family life to some extent. Calm Down Mother and Hothouse deal with commonplace activities of women, and with the activities of

women when men are not around. Calm Down Mother also deals with reproduction, American King's English for Queens with sexual stereotypes, and Approaching Simone with the heroization of a woman from history.

The most common thematic trends of plays written by women as set fourth by Beverly Byers Pevitts (see chapter 2) are all dealt with in these plays as well. For Terry treats the theme of social oppression in all four plays, the theme of family oppression in American King's English for Queens, the theme of mother-daughter relationships in Hothouse and Calm Down Mother, the theme of autonomy for women in Approaching Simone, and the theme of friendship among women in Calm Down Mother and Hothouse.

Furthermore, these plays all have innovative techniques and structures that are so common in women's drama. They have strong female characters, they have transformations, they have song, they have direct audience address, and they have circular and episodic plots.

Finally, all of these plays have a didactic purpose. Each is written to criticize society, and to evoke some sort of though and/or action from its audience.

Megan Terry is more than just a feminist dramatist. She is one of the first. As Helene Keyssar claims Megan Terry may truly be the mother of American feminist drama. When asked how she felt about this title, Terry claimed that it was a title of honor, but that she could not be called "the" mother.

She said she was startled to read this title in print, and wanted to say "But look at all the others." She claims that Gertrude Stein, Maria Irene Fornes, Rosalyn Drexler, Rochell Owens and JoAnn Schmidman are mothers and leaders of the genre as well as she.[1]

So perhaps Terry can best be called "one of the mothers of modern American feminist drama". She certainly was one of the first, writing feminist works as early as the 1960's, and one of the most innovative with all of her explorations into new forms, structures and techniques for drama.

Because of her work, which she has managed to get published and produced with great frequency in many theatres across the nation, Terry has been a great role model for other women playwrights. She has shown women that it is possible for them to succeed as playwrights, and has given them many examples of just how playwriting should be done. As Keyssar points out: "Since the early 1960's, Megan Terry has been a sustaining force in feminist drama, nurturing other American women playwrights and continually extending the reaches of her own plays."[2]

Megan Terry has been a key figure in the birth, growth, development and definition of a new genre of modern literature, that of the modern American feminist drama. Without these four works <u>Calm Down Mother</u>, <u>Hothouse</u>, <u>Approaching Simone</u>, and <u>American King's English for Queens</u>,

along with her numerous other plays, this genre would not be what it is today.

Ideas for further studies include a comparative study between different works written in different stages in Terry's career. Another interesting research topic would be a study comparing Terry's work to that of other dramatists (male or female), in order to trace her influences on the modern theatre. Because of the diversity of Ms. Terry's work and of the work of other feminist playwrights, the possibilities for research and studies in this field are virtually endless.

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[52]Catherine Hughes, "An Avant-Garde Simone Weil," America June 6, 1970: 612.

Chapter VII

[1]Terry, interview In Their Own 241.

[2]Rose 289.

[3]Megan Terry, "American King's English for Queens", High Energy Musicals from the Omaha Magic Theatre (New York: Broadway Play Publishing, Inc., 1983) 10.

[4]Terry, American 73.

[5]Terry, American 13.

[6]Terry, American 16.

[7]Terry, American 18.

[8]Terry, American 19.

[9]Terry, American 20.

[10]Terry, American 73.

[11]Terry, American 73.

[12]Pevitts 68.

[13]Terry, American 27.

[14]Terry, American 73.

[15]Terry, American 31.

[16]Terry, American 33.

[17]Terry, American 36.

[18]Terry, American 37.

[19]Kathleen Gregory Klein, "Language and Meaning in Megan Terry's 1970's 'Musicals'," Modern Drama Dec. 1984: 576.

[20]Terry, American 41.

[21]Terry, American 74.

[22]Terry, American 49.

[23]Terry, American 53.

[24]Terry, American 74.

[25]Terry, American 74.

[26]Terry, American 59.

[27]Terry, American 59.

[28]Terry, American 65.

[29]Terry, American 67.

[30]Terry, American 67-8.

[31]Terry, American 69.

[332]Marranca 192.

[33]Megan Terry, "Omaha Magic: Playwright's Theatre," The Southwestern Review, 6.9 (1981): 17.

[34]Natalle 87.

[35]Klein 574.

[36]Terry, Omaha 17.

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38Terry, telephone.

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[2]Keyssar 53.

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