

## ABSTRACT

The study is divided into two main parts: the first part is a feminist reading of three plays for Wendy Wasserstein (1950-2006)—*Uncommon Women and Others* (1977), *Isn't It Romantic* (1983), and *The Sisters Rosensweig* (1992)—and the second part is an analytic reading of these three plays as comedies.

The study is divided into three chapters. The first chapter, "The Chronicles: The Uncommon Life of Wendy Wasserstein (1950-2006)," represents a comprehensive chronicle of the playwright's background, her family, education and career. Additionally, it presents a brief review of her major literary works and the influence of the feminist movements on her drama.

The second chapter, "The Search for Identity and the Dilemma of 'Having It All' in *Uncommon Women And Others*, *Isn't It Romantic*, and *The Sister Rosensweig*," focuses on representing how Wasserstein in three of her major plays dramatizes the contemporary women's quest for self-definition, and their perpetual struggle for their female identity, and how she addresses gender issues in a unique feminist perspective. In addition, this chapter explores how Wasserstein dramatizes women's dilemma of "having it all" in life and their pursuit of self-discovery in light of the contradictory mode of the feminist mystique and the feminism principles.

The third and last chapter, "Women Do Not Tell Jokes... Women Tell Stories: Humor in Modern Feminist Perspective," aims to explore Wasserstein's use of humor as a framework of writing the chosen plays, and as an example of woman playwright who employs humor to address serious issues in comedies. In addition, this chapter aims to investigate how in light of the humor motivational theories, Wasserstein manages significantly to explore themes of identity, sexuality, marriage, and relationships. In addition, the chapter explores

the motivational theories, which among the different theories of humor they are three of most primary theories. Then, in light of these humor theories, the chapter introduces an analytic reading of the aforementioned three plays as comedies which address serious feminist issues.