

Student Essay on Sin in the Scarlet Letter

Sin in the Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne

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Essay

Sin is an act that goes against the law or teachings of a particular religion. It is something that everybody should be forgiven for at one point or another in their lives. The classic novel *Scarlet Letter* is about three main characters Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale, and Roger Chillingworth who have committed sinful acts. Two of the characters are redeemed in their own way whereas one remains unredeemed.

Hester Prynne, the protagonist, is a beautiful woman married to Roger Chillingworth who sent her to America but did not show up when he was expected to. Therefore, Hester had an affair with Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale and had a child named Pearl. She was punished for committing adultery by having to wear the scarlet letter A on her chest. Hester was redeemed on the scaffold when Dimmesdale confessed to the town that he was the adulterer.

Arthur Dimmesdale is a reverend who has an affair with Hester Prynne. He is the father of Pearl but he will not admit it because he fears that the townspeople will hang him for committing adultery. Dimmesdale develops heart problems because he is constantly tortured with guilt. Pearl does not like the fact that he will not stand with her in public. When he finally stands with her on the scaffold she kisses him, thus redeeming him.

Roger Chillingworth is really Roger Prynne, Hester's husband. He sends Hester off to America where he is supposed to join her but is captured by Indians causing him to be late. When he does arrive in Boston, he finds that Hester has committed adultery and bares a child that is not his. He stays in Boston pretending to be a doctor so he can get revenge on Hester's lover. Chillingworth is the only character in this novel that remains unredeemed.

This novel just goes to show that sin has always been and will always be a part of human life. There are all kinds of ways people can react to sin. Some choose to hide it while others embrace it. No matter how sin is dealt with, it will always leave a mark.