

*Laura Mihaela Basalic*

**Victims in the Limelight: Subverting Abuse Tropes in Lynn Nottage's *Ruined***

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**Abstract:** The place of women playwrights was disputed or ignored on the American stage for a long time, few having the opportunity to have their work produced. The tide changed at the turn of the twenty-first century, when voices of women such as Lynn Nottage received praise from audiences and critics alike. It represents a remarkable feat, especially considering that her powerful, unapologetic play revolves around the controversial and sensitive topic of abuse. However, the story in *Ruined* differs from other such narratives because the playwright subverts the tropes of abuse stories in terms of focus, perspective, and character development. Unlike the traditional depictions of abuse, the spotlight here shines on the victims and on their response to the abuse; their voices guide the play. Moreover, Nottage does not approach aggression by pretending to have the answer to the problem, but by showing their audience the aftermath of abuse in the hope that it will generate social action to better protect the defenseless.

