Images of Spanish Women in the Novels *El cuarto de atrás* and *El embrujo de Shanghai*

The topic that I chose to study was the role of women and how each individual woman is viewed in the two contemporary Spanish novels. I first looked at the differences between the two novels with the women in them. In the first novel, *El cuarto de atrás*, women were shown as being weak and not able to be independent. In the second, *El embrujo de Shanghai*, the women were alone because of their husbands being absent as a result of the Spanish civil war, although they were indeed married.

Next I looked at Spain during the years of Franco’s dictatorship. Since both of the novels were written at that time, it was interesting to compare the consequences of Franco’s era within the two books. Before Franco, there was a lot of freedom for the women, but during the period represented by the novels, the women had one main purpose and that was to be housewives for their husbands.

Finally, I looked at the differences between the social and economic status of the women in each novel. I compared that to the authors and how each one of them grew up. I found that there is a direct correlation between the authors and their characters.