

# Feminism Reflected in Jane Austen 'S Pride and Prejudice

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## ABSTRACT

The novel "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen tells the story of the Bennet family, focusing on Mr. and Mrs. Bennet and their daughter Elizabeth. The novel explores the theme of family solidarity and the strength of women who challenged the cultural norms of the time, especially regarding marriage. Elizabeth faces many challenges but is able to overcome them with her intelligence and determination and find happiness. This article examines two questions related to the novel: "What feminist issues are reflected in 'Pride and Prejudice'?" and "What are the dominant roles of women in the novel?" Through our analysis, we hope to provide insight into the role of women in the early nineteenth century, when they were seen as weak and lacking the abilities of men. Our findings show that "Pride and Prejudice" offers valuable insights into feminism and helps readers better understand the struggles and contributions of women during this period. We hope that our analysis will give readers a deeper understanding of the novel and the importance of feminism in our society today.

**Keywords:** Feminism, *Pride and Prejudice* Novel

Feminism was born to protect the rights and roles of women in society as the development of culture and social structure increasingly distinguished women from men. The difference between women and men develops into discrimination, which then triggers harassment.

Feminism is a movement that advocates for gender equality in politics, economics, culture, and society. This includes seeking to establish equal opportunities for women in education and employment. According to Ritzer (2004:448), "Feminism is a kind of critical social theory which includes social context, political, economic, and history that are faced by injustice people who are faced with injustice". Austen's novel is principally concerned with the social framework of England's late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a patriarchal society where men held economic and social power. In an often ironic representation of the men and women attempting to gain a livelihood, Austen subtly and ironically points out faults in the system, raising questions about the values of English society and the country's power structure.

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* follows the Bennet family, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet and their five unmarried daughters. The family resides in Longbourn, a country estate in Hertfordshire, located approximately thirty miles from London. The family is not rich. The Bennet family fortune is strictly inherited by the nearest male heir, who happens to be Mr. Collins. Mrs. Bennet is all about finding suitable husbands for all her daughters, preferably rich ones. She sees a chance for her eldest

daughter, Jane, to marry Mr. Charles Bingley, a wealthy gentleman recently moving to the nearby Netherfield Park estate.

Reflecting on the historical context, during the 19th century, it needs to be clarified how women's resistance affected the social structures that men created. However, women are known to have been discriminated against and denied equal treatment. Over time, discriminatory practices were abolished, and an equal society was established.

Just so you know, the document is under the description given in the above paragraph. It describes the attitudes and actions of the main character, Elizabeth, as she tries to resist the discriminatory treatment she has received over the years due to male dominance. The explanation above relates to the quotation below.

*“Upon my word, sir,” cried Elizabeth, “your hope is a rather extraordinary one after my declaration. I do assure you that I am not one of those young ladies (if such young ladies there are) who are so daring as to risk their happiness on the chance of being asked a second time. I am perfectly serious in my refusal. You could not make ME happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who \ could make you so. Nay, were your friend Lady Catherine to know me, I am persuaded she would find me in every respect ill qualified for the situation.” (Page: 134).*

The quote above is from Elizabeth, who exemplifies the different societal views and expectations of women. In these views, women are often portrayed as seeking rich and noble men as a source of happiness. However, Elizabeth decides to reject Mr. Collins, who happens to be her father's heir. This decision is significant because the legal heir who manages the family wealth would normally be handed over to a male relative, such as a son or brother. While accepting Mr. Collins' proposal would bring her material happiness, Elizabeth cannot bring herself to do so because she has no love or affection for him.

Discrimination against women is common in societies where men are portrayed as superior. This problem makes women second only to men. *‘I’m thinking about story,’ replied Elizabeth. ‘Behavior cousin hurt my feelings. What underlies Vigilante attitude itself is it?’ (Page: 276).*

The above quote refers to an instance where Mr. Darcy mistreats Elizabeth. This treatment makes her feel insulted and insulted because she is not a perfect woman. Elizabeth feels like a second-class citizen who can be easily hurt and offended. This statement highlights the fact that women are often seen as inferior to men and can be easily intimidated and hurt. The article concludes that women in British society do not have equal status in all aspects, which can quickly disappear when men fear them. Another quote illustrates the position of women as second-class citizens.

*‘I certainly shall not. You know how I detest it, unless I am Particularly acquainted with my partner. At such an assembly as this it would be insupportable. Your sisters are engaged, and there is not another woman in the room whom it would not be a punishment to me to stand up with.’ (Page: 13).*

In this quote, Mr. Darcy declines Mr. Bingley's offer to choose a woman to dance with. Mr. Darcy believes that the women of the party must meet his standards. During the 19th century in British society, dance parties were a way of communication between men and women. However, Mr. Darcy refused to dance with women who were not of his class or social status. This document concludes that Mr. Darcy discriminated against Elizabeth because she had a lower social status. This type of discrimination against women in a social context was common during this period.

In the novel, parents strive to get their daughters married to rich men. However, the protagonist, Elizabeth, defies her parents' wishes and decides to pursue love on her own terms. Elizabeth's defiance can be seen as an example of feminist ideology.

Taking a sociological approach, Jane Austen tried to portray human nature as something that gloriously enriches life. Her novel portrays a society that is largely preoccupied with wealth and status.

"The position of women regarding inheritance needs to be strengthened. Currently, they do not have the right to inherit property, which is governed by the principle of primogeniture. This practice often leads to unfair treatment and discrimination against women. In the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, which is tied to trust, the result is that that woman has a right to inheritance." Jane Austen satirically portrays the societal expectations placed on women during the 19th century, particularly the pressure on mothers to provide suitable husbands for their daughters.

## REFERENCES

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