

Idea of the pride and prejudice novel

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



Marriage should be based upon love and how people feel for one another, or should it? The answer to that question might seem straightforward to most people currently, but in the 1800s it wasn't so simple. In one of the greatest love stories of all time, the classic novel *Pride and Prejudice* by well-known author and feminist Jane Austen in 1813, Marriages tended to be based on importance of a social class, usually two of the same, and sometimes the love wasn't there, just the comfort in materialistic things they wanted, be it a house, land, money or to show that they were doing better than others. Though that was not the reality.

This is showed throughout the story with three very different marriages. One marriage ends up being something real, a love every girl yearns for or a romance only some people dream of. In the novel by Austen, two unlikely people from different social classes defy all the odds and make it work, no matter what any standard says. The beginning may start off rocky as the two judges by first impressions but ends in a fairytale like story.

Pride and Prejudice, what does that have to do with this love story? According to the article *Pride and Prejudice* written by Everett Zimmerman it provides the readers a more thorough understanding; Although the meaning of the title has attracted considerable comment, the qualities of pride and prejudice have been interpreted so narrowly that the full significance of the title has been obscured. Indeed, R. C. Fox, who regards the title as, primarily, Jane Austen's concession to the popularity of alliterative and antithetical titles, has warned us not to be " misled by investing the title with more significance than is warranted." The usual interpretation is that the title is a reference to Darcy's pride, which causes him to

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reject Elizabeth and her family, and Elizabeth's resulting prejudice, which is reinforced by Wickham's false story about Darcy.

Reading this makes the reasoning for title more relatable. In the novel Mr. Darcy was a wealthy gentleman, the master of Pemberley. Though Darcy is intelligent and trustworthy, his excess of pride causes him to look down on his social inferiors. Over the course of the novel, he tempers his class-consciousness and learns to admire and love Elizabeth for her strong character Elizabeth was from a working-class family. She was intelligent, well read and quick-witted, with a tongue that occasionally proves too sharp for her own good, she is known as one of the first feminist of her time. Her realization of Darcy's essential goodness eventually triumphs over her initial prejudice against him, hence the title *Pride and Prejudice*. The novel set in England in the 1800s, known as the Victorian era was known for its hierarchy based on social class and sex, and not by equality. Women did not have much of a choice on what they wanted to do with their life and who they wanted to marry. Their sole purpose was to marry a gentleman that could offer comfort, bear children, and stay home to tend to the house. Elizabeth Bennet wanted to evolve that. She didnt feel as if a higher social class appointed someone any better or being a man rather than a woman gave a person more rights. Elizabeth did not care what others thought of her, she didnt conform to what others told her to. An example of this is when Collin asked for her hand in marriage and she turned him down, even though her mother demanded her to agree so she could have the house and land. Elizabeth didnt believe in sacrificing her happiness away to someone she wasnt in love with. She stood up for herself and what she believed in. As

stated in the article “Pride and Prejudice”: Power, Fantasy, and Subversion in Jane Austen by Judith Lowder Newton: Elizabeth’s world, moreover, allows her the power to change her lot through acting upon it, in that it allows her the power to alter Darcy’s behavior. Elizabeth’s world, that is, in contrast to the world of Jane Austen permits her something more than spiritual victories permit her more than that sense of autonomy that comes with wittily observing the confinements of one’s situation, with standing apart from them in spirit and having to bend to them in daily behavior. Elizabeth’s world, in short, permits her not only the energetic expression but the forceful use of those critical energies which Austen herself diverted into ironic novels.

Marriages in the book presented a necessary contrast the readers needed to understand the story completely, each marriage was different for various reasons. In the end Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy’s was the only true romance out of them all. As stated in the article *Pride & Prejudice and the Purpose of Marriage* written by Rebekah Hall:

Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* is often lauded as one of the greatest romances in British literature. Its comedic structure entertains readers with the fluctuations of Elizabeth Bennet’s relationship with Mr. Darcy. However, this novel is more than a simple love story. Although almost everyone marries by the end of the novel, some of the women of Elizabeth’s world are not as well-matched with their husbands as she is with hers. Unlike Elizabeth and Darcy’s affectionate relationship, many characters in the story make marriages of convenience. The monetary and social stability that the

marriage offers women is more important than the compatibility of the spouses.

The first marriage found in the story is that of Charlotte Lucas Elizabethr's best friend, to Collins. Charlotte, being a well-educated woman of small fortune (120; Vol. 1, ch. 22), hastily accepted Collins proposal in spite of her best friend, Elizabeth, rejecting the same proposal only a week before then. Charlotte married Collins mainly because he would be able to contribute for her and will be able to make her life fairly easy considering, that upon the passing of Mr. Bennet, Collins would be in possession of the Longbourn estate (120; Vol. 1, ch. 22). Charlotter's family, Like Elizabethr's family, did not receive their prosperity from their inheritances, but rather from working. People who earned their wealth in this fashion were considered to be of a lower class; so, when Mr. Collins does propose to Charlotte, it is seen as nothing but good fortune since he earned his money through inheritance and is in the command of the wealthy Lady Catherine. So, Charlotte married Collins not out of love but out of her urge for materialistic things.

Elizabethr's sister Lydiar's marriage was of an even more critical; she had run away and married Mr. Wickham; whose character was very suspicious after lying to Elizabeth about Mr. Darcy. At the time of her leaving Lydia was only sixteen years old and was rather unwise; this was clearly proved in her letter to Elizabeth stating her feelings toward Wickham. Wickham was ultimately forced to marry Lydia which caused him to stop his plan of leaving her and seizing her money to pay off his debts. Their marriage seemed prosperous in the beginning but as time passed they drifted apart and lived

for the most part in hardship, always asking Lydiar's sisters for financial support. Their marriage was not based from love either; it was based off of Lydiar's need to outshine her sisters and Wickhamr's need for wealth. In the past Wickham was able to take advantage of other women and basically raid them of their fortune; once he was finished with them, he would leave. He was striving to do the same to Lydia but was faced by Mr. Darcy, Elizabethr's prospective husband.

Of the three examined couples Elizabeth and Darcy have by far the most loving and prosperous relationship. Elizabeth initially met Mr. Darcy, one year before their marriage, at a coming out ball. Her fist opinion of him was he was extremely vain and not worthy of her affections, and similarly Mr. Darcy initially felt that Elizabeth was tolerable but not handsome enough to tempt him (12; Vol. 1, ch. 3 Darcyr's first impressions of Elizabeth and her family were that they were of a lower class and that Mrs. Bennet, Elizabethr's mother, was a scheming simpleton who tried to trick any rich bachelor into marrying one of her five daughters. Acting on his impression Darcy convinced his good friend Mr. Bingly into leaving the area and to break off relations with Jane, Elizabethr's oldest sister. When Elizabeth became aware of Mr. Darcyr's actions, she became cross quite with him and her opinion of him worsened and she was completely shocked when he proposed to her the first time. She declined his initial proposal and stated her grievances with him as her reasons for not accepting. After receiving a letter from him describing his actions and a visit to his estate in Pemberly she began to perceive Darcyr's genuine nature. After learning of his loyal nature, she started falling in love with him and in the end accepted his second marriage

proposal. Their relationship grew over time, and each had the chance to observe the others character; this being the case they both had an idea of what the other was truly like. A relationship like theirs typically lasts much longer than the others.

The idea of the novel seems to lie in the portrayal of social class, feminism, and the three different marriages. The union of Collins and Charlotte demonstrates the ideas of ambition and a one-sided marriage; whereas the union between Elizabeth and Darcy shows one of compassion and mutual love no matter the social class, they learned to look beyond. Lydiar's marriage to Wickham shows the gloomier side of society and how an unscrupulous character can easily take advantage of an innocent and foolish young vulnerable women who just wants a fairytale life with her prince charming. The novel by Austen set a good example of social class, marriage and new-found feminism in the 1800s in England.