

Jane austen's views towards marriage in pride and prejudice



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In this novel the main theme is the importance of how to get a husband, and preferably a rich one. In *Pride and Prejudice* Jane Austen has very strong views on marriage. We can see this because she has based the whole of her novel around marriage making it the dominant theme. Showing us a variety of different marriages. Starting from the first page where she reveals to us the marriage of Mr and Mrs Bennet and until towards the end when she finally reveals to us the marriage of Darcy and Elizabeth. From the opening sentence the readers are told that this novel is based around marriage. " It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife". This is an ironic sentence by the author setting the scene of topic straight away. This not only shows us that marriage is involved here " want of a wife" but it also tells the reader that a lot of the time when marriage was to be the subject, the word money or fortune was to be part of the conversation too. It tells us also that it was in the interest of a woman to marry a man with a fortune, or at least some good deal of money. As this chapter began with the first sentence revealing the theme of marriage to us, the last sentence in the chapter outlines the rest of the book and the marriages to follow. " The business of her life was to get her daughters married". We find out later that Mrs Bennet is not so very lucky to have all of her daughters in happy marriages. Yet she has still been showed as a very lucky mother towards the end " The Bennets were speedily pronounced to be the luckiest family in the world". Where she has been showed having three of her five daughters away and married. This shows how much society has changed because today a mother would probably wish their daughter with a good qualification. Rather than away and married soon as a proposal of marriage is set forward. This fact also produces maybe a <https://assignbuster.com/jane-austens-views-towards-marriage-in-pride-and-prejudice/>

suggestion to the reader that in them days maybe marriage was viewed by many as a competition. A competition that if won would provide the prizes of security and possibly good fortune if the man was to be one of £5000 a year, or maybe even more if you were to marry a man with the name Mr. Darcy. Not to forget the prize of becoming a wife even if it meant not necessarily marrying the man you loved. When Austen writes about the first marriage in her book she clearly reveals to the reader through the eyes of Mr and Mrs Bennet that a man and woman not necessarily married because of love. This also supports the fact that during Austen's time divorce wasn't very common. Otherwise this unsuccessful marriage most probably would be over. But during Austens time people who divorced were very frowned upon. So Mr Bennet had to stick in his marriage. The first marriage that is introduced to us in the opening pages of the novel is that of Mr and Mrs Bennett. As the reader reads on more and more revelations of the author's attitudes are revealed. For every man and woman marriage is a serious episode of their life. One which lasts for majority of their life. From this marriage we learn that Mr Bennet seems to have paid a very heavy price for his marriage because he has married a woman who he doesn't love, he simply had married her for her good looks; she was nor wealthy. Neither did he marry her for love. Mr Bennet now regrets that he had married Mrs Bennet as he finds her very annoying and takes advantage on every occasion to tease her. He does this at the end of the first chapter when he tells his wife that he is not going to visit Mr. Bingley. Yet with her lack of intelligence and with the failure of realising her own husband she fails to realise the sarcasm in his personality that he has possessed for twenty-three

years " the experience of three and twenty years had been insufficient to make his wife understand his character".