

Gustave flaubert's
description of the
fight for women to live
according to rules ...



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

“ Then upon the mouth, which had spoken lies, moaned in pride and cried out in lust”(256). Emma Bovary's attempts to achieve her unrealistic desires are also an attempt to break free of the restraints society puts on women. Unfortunately, she is not in a position to break through these barriers because of the lack of power women have in this time period. Her actions represent the struggle that women had trying to maintain an image to fit society's standards.

Emma Bovary talks about giving birth to a child so that he could live the life that she was not able to have. She does not want her son to be hampered by society's restrictions because it would give her some meaning to her life to have a child that “ is free”(23). Their society does not give women the opportunity to live fulfilling lives because they are limited in what they can achieve. Having a son to Emma represents the state of women's rights in the 19th century and it accurately depicts the struggle that comes with being a woman when you have to hope to have a son to be free. This is why Emma Bovary lacks any financial stability because women during this time period did not have the ability to make almost any money the way that men did. A woman's role was to be played in the house and more as a subservient to a man rather than their equal. These restrictions led Emma to riddle her marriage with dishonesty and infidelity.

Emma continues to struggle with achieving her unfulfilled desires because Charles does not seem to interest her after a short period of time. She does not have a viable excuse for her infidelity because she knew it was wrong by the restrictions of her marriage and she cannot justify her infidelity. Emma's

actions depict a woman who is selfish enough to violate the laws of marriage for her own needs.

“ She thirsted for his lips, she longed for his love and cursed herself for having allowed him to leave. She could not comprehend through what weakness or virtue she had deprived herself of such a happiness”(293).

In this situation, I believed that in the back of her mind she thought about Charles feelings momentarily which is why she did not go through with having intercourse with Leon this time. She understands how unfaithful she is and the image that she is presenting to those she encounters. At the same time, she seems unable to contain herself and her desires because she continues to be dishonest and continues her acts of infidelity. This is not a matter of society restraining her from her actions because she placed herself in this scenario by setting such high expectations for her desires. It is impossible for her to even get a taste of the desires because they are so far out of reach. Emma does what she wants although she knows there may be consequences because she is still longing that happiness that she has yet to find in her life.

Emma portrays herself as a selfish and very needy individual because of her thirstiness for not only her own happiness, but for financial stability as well. I can understand that because she is a woman she does not have the power to make money the way she wants to, but she wants more money than some men have. Her financial instability eventually contributes to her downfall because she ends up in debt not being able to pay off the money she owes.

It shows her carelessness and it shows how immoral she is acting
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considering she puts Charles in such a difficult situation to handle. The only sympathy that I have for her is because she is unable to do anything about her financial status. That is quickly countered by the fact that she continues to grow her debt although she knows that she does not have any financial funds to pull money from. That is what leads her to be reckless and ask various people for money because she digs herself a grave and eventually she has to lie in it.

Emma Bovary is put in a difficult situation in this book due to the fact that she is a woman with limited rights. Her situation only continues to grow worse the more she tries to fulfill her farfetched desires, which never happens. I can only help but wonder if her desires would be fulfilled if women had equal rights to men during this time. At the same time, I am sure it would help her financial status but her dream of finding the perfect man and living the perfect life would still be a dream to her.