

Pride and prejudice : a struggle against ourselves assignment

Sociology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Bonnet's marriage, Jane Austen tries to reflect on some problems related to the Victorian time. One of them is matrimony, which used to be based on fortune and social status, and according to the author's ideals, it should be accomplished under love; not under convenience. The role of women and the image of femininity are also mentioned, because ladies were meant to be good and tortuous: A woman must have a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, must possess a certain something in her air and manner of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and expressions [to accomplish. (Chap VIII, p 26) They also were supposed to deal with domestic life, develop their artistic skills, and follow certain tatty standards and manners to seduce the perfect man and become his wife. That's why Mr. Bennett got married to Mrs. Bennett, who was "captivated by youth and beauty, and that appearance of good humor, which youth and beauty generally give." (Chap 42, p 159) He was enlightened by such determined model of femininity that his wife possessed.

The relationship between them within the book, showed up sarcastically the effects of such arranged marriage once the years passed by: "He had married a woman whose weak understanding and illiberal mind, had very early in their marriage put an end to all real affection for her. Respect, esteem, and confidence, had vanished forever." (Chap 42, p 159) All the kindness and enjoyable personality of his wife disappeared, when he realized that the grade of silliness and shallow she had were far away from what he would have accepted. Mrs..

Bonnet's goal was to get her daughters married; for that reason, she used to bother his husband with small talks, chit chats and nonsense in order to
<https://assignbuster.com/pride-and-prejudice-a-struggle-against-ourselves-assignment/>

convince him to help her to find someone, but Mr.. Bennett didn't pay her much attention and used to make fun of her, because he didn't consider her as a person with substance: " Her mind Mrs.. Bennett] was less difficult to develop for she was a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. " (Chap 3, p 7) At some point they were so distanced that both were worried about their own situation.

This fact affected directly the way in which their daughters were raised, since Mr.. Bonnet's role in the family was to sustain it and Mrs.. Bonnet's to raise her daughters " wildly," because none of them were interested in providing them a better education: " Her father would never exert himself to restrain the wild giddiness of his youngest gutters; and her mother, with manner so far from right herself, was entirely Insensible of the evil. " (Chap 38, p 38) As a consequence of their displeasing parenthood, the girls didn't know how to deal with certain situations provoked by their parents' uselessness.

In fact, Lydia character and her eloped; Cane's first heartbroken; and Mr.. Dairy's bad opinion about the family were closely related to them. In spite of the argument and disagreements they had because of their lack of understanding, Mr.. And Mrs.. Bennett continued with their marriage due to the social inventions of keeping marriage for tradition, and also to avoid shame and dishonor, otherwise, it would have caused an alienation of any member of the Bonnet's family by the society: " But Mr..

Bennett was not of a disposition to seek comfort for the disappointment which his own imprudence had brought on. " (Chap 42, p 159) Unfortunately,

<https://assignbuster.com/pride-and-prejudice-a-struggle-against-ourselves-assignment/>

a marriage based on convenience, as well as Charlotte said, was a matter of chance; in the Bonnet's case, their lack of commitment brought them unhappiness and hard times that affected the whole family and the people around them. Characteristics are attractive to Mr.. Dairy? Is she feminine? Do I Need a Hero? ' Everyone is necessarily the hero of his own life story'. John Birth.

Life is full of heroes-and heroines-but, what makes a person to become a hero? In the case of Elizabeth, if she was a heroine, she certainly would be an unusual one. She defied the social conventions of that time, given the fact that she knew how to read and write; activities almost prohibited for women: " do you prefer reading to (play] cards? That is rather singular; ' Miss Elise Bennett,' said Miss Bentley, despises cards. She is a great reader and has no pleasure in anything else. M (p 24, chap 8) and Mr..

Dairy added: " and to all this she must yet add something more substantial, in the improvement of her mind by extensive reading. " (p 26, chap 9)

Indeed, the passion for reading was one of the reasons why she was so special for her father, but that point will be explained later on. How should a woman behave then? Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) wrote in his famous poem The Lady of Shallot (1833) how the Victorian society expected women to behave: they ought to be submissive and isolated at home: weaving, embroidering, looming, painting, etc. But Elizabeth was the opposite.

Elizabeth herself recognized in herself: Did you admire me for my impertinence? For the liveliness of your mind, I did. You may as well call it impertinence at once. It was very little less. The fact is, that you Nerve sick

of civility, of deference, of officious attention. You were disgusted with the Omen who were always speaking and looking, and thinking for your approbation alone. (p 256, chap 60) Dairy, as a matter of fact, loved all those fails and she knew it.

She also was a strong woman unafraid of showing herself exactly as she was, when saying: " I would wish not to be hasty in censuring any one; but I always speak what I think. (p 9, chap 4) In the novel, Austin characterizes her as a complete contradiction, for she is far away from the image imposed to women during the neo- classical. The author describes her as follow: " Elizabeth was a mixture of sweetness and rashness in her manner which made it difficult for her to affront anybody; and Dairy had never been so bewitched by any woman as he was by her" (p 35, chap 10), and that scared him.

In all that knowledge she had, " She hardly knew how to suppose that she could be an object of admiration to so great a man" (p 34, chap 10), but she didn't need to do anything. Then, he said to her: " I have had the pleasure of your acquaintance long enough to know, that you find great enjoyment in occasionally professing opinions which in fact are not your own. " (p 1 19, chap 31) he Nas definitely saying that he loves her for what she is; as simple as that. Now, the Addison that Elizabethan family had about her was quite different. On the one hand, Mrs..

Bennett considered her less feminine than her other daughters. She was feminine, but her femininity didn't fix with the standards of that period, and her mother wasn't able to appreciate it. In a conversation with her sister, she

<https://assignbuster.com/pride-and-prejudice-a-struggle-against-ourselves-assignment/>

explained her Lily's behavior: Why must she be scampering about the country, because her sister had a cold? Her hair so untidy, so blows! ' Yes, and her petticoat; six inches t, not doing its office. '(p 23, chap 8) His father, on the other hand, saw himself reflected on Elizabeth, because she enjoyed reading as much as he did; he considered her the boy he never had.

The way the author explains how her father perceived her is the following: Though he had detected with a critical eye more than one failure of perfect symmetry in her form, he was forced to acknowledge her figure to be light and pleasing; and in spite of his asserting that her manners were not those of the fashionable world, he was caught by their easy playfulness. (p 15, chap 5) But, the relation with his other daughters was different and when his wife reproached him that Elizabeth was his favorite, he simply said: " They are all silly and ignorant like other girls; but Lizzy has something more of quickness than her sisters. (p 2, chap 1) For closing, Elizabeth was a unique woman, capable to face an entire society, guided by her own heart. Well, after all, that's what heroes do! 4. Does Pride and Prejudice critique or accept social structures? Explain. Is the Knowledge of the Problem the First Step to Solve It? During the Victorian Period, women were meant to follow rigid social standards, which encouraged them to be good and virtuous; from this conception of femininity, the only objectives in women's life were motherhood and domesticity.