

Anne bronte feminist literary criticism english literature essay

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



Anne Bronte always depicts the problems of the oppressed sections in society. Self is the nucleus from which all her literary pieces emerge. Hers was a tough childhood with an ailing mother and insecure financial background. Right from her childhood days, Anne Bronte suffered a lot due to certain inconsistent domestic affairs. To add to her psychological dilemma, her mother passed away when she was hardly one year old (Shaw, 128). Kept away from motherly care and affection, Anne wanted to have emotional relaxation with her sisters. Writing was an activity she selected in order to divert herself from her intense psychological trauma. Though she has written only two novels, they comprehensively analyze her emotions and feelings vividly. Representation of Women in Agnes Grey Anne selected her own life as a source to derive themes for her novels. The character of Agnes Grey believes that she has individuality. Being a woman does not mean that she has to do all household activities. She can be a bread earner too. When Agnes' father becomes impoverished, all the female member of the family tries to cope with the situation by reducing expenses. Agnes wants to pursue a job, but is dissatisfied with the treatment of others. Everyone considers her as immature. The society is of the opinion that a young girl with not much exposure cannot mingle with people and go for a job. However, Agnes decides to assert her individuality by taking up a job to support her family (Bronte, 56). As in real life, Anne makes her character a governess. She wants to claim her identity by becoming someone who is beneficial to the society. Agnes Grey's sister also strives hard to earn money for the family. She is an artist and makes some money by selling her portraits. Agnes is a young woman with all tenderness. She exhibits her sensitive nature while

dealing with the weird children. Her duty as a governess is to educate and civilize them. Even though she achieves it in the early phase, children again become undisciplined and troublesome (Bronte, 78). Through the portrayal of female characters, the author stresses that a woman must have courage to face all situations. Agnes does not lose her wits on finding that she has been dismissed for not attending the children carefully. Everyone blames Agnes for the children's misbehavior. Yet, she does not become desperate. She searches for another job and eventually gets one. Through the novel *Agnes Grey*, Anne Bronte undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the plight of ordinary women who are destined to suffer under rich people. The Bloomfield family proves to be cruel to Agnes. Even though she is scolded and tortured by Mr. Bloomfield and Mrs. Bloomfield, she manages to remain there for some time. However, she is ruthlessly dismissed for not performing her duties perfectly (Carnell, 11). Agnes' destiny remains to be the same even after she joins another family as a governess. It is a fact that women are not given equal status to men in all societies. The male dominated social structure treats women faultily. Women are always oppressed everywhere. *Agnes Grey* is every woman whose fate is to suffer the oppression of the society. The society looks up on them as an inferior section. What Anne does here is to portray the genuine problems faced by women in all societies. *Agnes Grey* highlights the status of women in family as well as society. Like other literary creations, *Agnes Grey* also stems from her own personal experiences. Her feminine protest is all evident in the work. Representation of Women in *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* Quite different from the romantic ideologies of Charlotte Bronte and Emily Bronte, Anne Bronte employs

extreme realism to depict her ideas. *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* is an example for that. It is essentially a social commentary which investigates the social role of women. Though set in England, it is relevant to all regions and all cultures. It has become a controversial book as it presents bold attempts of women. To a woman living in the Victorian period, quitting a husband was an unimaginable act. Anne Bronte is a courageous woman who frankly portrayed such a woman character in the novel, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. Her audacious voice has, in fact, heralded a new era in English fiction (Jansson, 41). There was a purposeful departure from the established practices of the contemporary world. In the hands of Anne, female characters have won absolute freedom to question the conventions of the society. At the same time, she is not blind to the fact that women are oppressed in all societies. The male perspective is severely criticized in the novel. Gilbert's love for Helen cannot be considered as sincere. He suspects her companion, Frederick Lawrence, to be her lover. This leads Gilbert to attack Lawrence who is actually Helen's brother (Nash, 28). Even though minor ones, the other female characters in the novel communicate certain messages to the public. Their characterization exposes the characteristics of women in male centered social affairs. Eliza Millward is a character whom Gilbert flirts with initially. Here, Anne signifies that woman is a tool for men to indulge in love and sex. Similarly, Millicent Hargrave, Rose and Fergus Markham convey some elements of women of the time (Clapp, 118). Helen is a powerful character who represents the strong sides of womanhood. She realizes the fact that women are subjugated in every society. What she can all do is to suffer the ill-treatment of the domineering males. However, Helen

thinks quite differently. Protest is what dominates the text. She believes that a new world order will materialize only if women start to react. She slams the door in the face of her cruel husband and this clearly shows the feminine protest. In general, the society considers women as a second rate citizen. They are denied of many privileges such as freewill and freedom. Through the characterization of Helen, Anne means that women should not be constrained within the four walls of their homes. They have to come forward to change the very face of the society. Women have a role in family as well as society. Without their participation, society is absolutely incomplete. The novel is realistic in nature and it depicts certain life like situations of the contemporary world. Throughout the expanse of the world, it can be seen that there are both the oppressor and the oppressed. The sad thing is that women are the oppressed section for all time. However, certain bold voices are sure to come out from many corners. Helen's is one among them. She represents the aspirations of a large number of people, especial women, who dream a unique world with no gender discrimination. In this sense, The Tenant of Wildfell Hall is a remarkable attempt from a woman to facilitate better living environment for the entire women upon the earth (Senf, 449). While reading the two novels, it is clear that Anne Bronte has taken utmost care in portraying each and every woman character. Some of the characters exhibit different emotions. Submission and subjugation are also presented in the two novels. She presents them only to make people aware that these are the common problems faced by women in society. In short, it can be said that the women characters of Anne Bronte shows multifaceted characteristics. Work Cited Bronte, Anne. Agnes Grey. London: J. M. Dent and

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