

## A Study of Gender Bias- A Holistic Approach

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### Abstract

I 'd like to do research on gender bias in the household, historic, and societal realms, with a focus on Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* and George Eliot's *Adam Bede*. Even now, men and women are differently treated in domestic and social realms. I chose this issue because, as a woman, I can utilize my personal experience to illustrate gender inequality. It is a matter of international concern. The purpose of this research is to highlight the paradox of gender inequality between man and woman in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I 'd like to see if gender equality was achieved in twentieth century. Mary Wollstonecraft said that women are human beings before they are sexual beings. Shelley articulates a passionate plea for the creative as well as revolutionary role of woman. The women writers-Jane Austen, George Eliot, Bronte sisters and Virginia Woolf proved that the stereotype image of women was false. Usha Akella American poetess of Indian origin says, Women's themes are not less important than war and politics-a commonly held perception. Zainab Priya Dla, a South African Writer said in her essay, "Literature has often been polarized into what is appropriate and saleable from men writers versus women writers. This is genre-objectifying and also contextual." Saras Puti Derwi, an Indonesian academic and poetess remark, that due to the gender bias and social phobia, women writers write and publish their books under the male pseudonym. This culture should be changed. Women should be allowed to be transparent and truthful. In this study I shall look at how Jane Austen used male and female characters to portray her society. She brings up the issue of male and female inequality. With regard to gender issues, I shall find similarities and differences between Austen's *Northanger Abbey and Pride & Prejudice*. I am going to look into how the writer uses feminine frivolity to highlight the condition of women, and how she wants women to value and rather than frivolous stuff. Women should be educated, and marriage should be the last resort. It is still relevant today, as many parents in various nations place a higher value on their daughters' marriage than on their education. Similarly, Charlotte Bronte too informs the parents to give education to girls. Otherwise the girls would work only as governess and suffer in various ways particularly become the victim of the master's sexual desire. I would also compare and contrast some of the characters who serve as foils throughout *Jane Eyre* related to gender issues. Women remain poor and subordinate and men remain rich and independent. My moot point is -With particular attention to the novel's treatment of marriage, is there any way in which *Jane Eyre* might be considered anti-feminist. George Eliot in *Adam Bede* revolts against man's restrictions on woman's profession in the chapter Vocation through the character of Dinah. Even now the restriction continues in many places. Even after the societal changes by Revolutions and Reformations, in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Gender equality between men and women has not yet

been achieved. In this study I prove that though there are some liberal and broad-minded men, the world society remains as Patriarchal. It reveals that gender bias –an evil practice prevents not only the progress of woman but also the progress of the whole world. It should be abolished to gain universal peace. I emphasize in this study the necessity of creating a truly, just egalitarian world society.

**Key words:** Gender Bias, Women, Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, George Eliot, Victorian England, history, domestic and social sphere, Romanticism, Renaissance to the Enlightenment, empowerment 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, patriarchal, mother's role, law, equality, World society, achievement