
Jane Eyre: The Theme Of Social Equality

Throughout the story of Jane Eyre, we learn about the conditions, and emotions that come along with living in the mid 1800's Britain, Brontë explores the idea of "Social Equality" exposing the differences in rights between men and women, to define "Social Equality" it can be said as a state of actions, in a group of people who all have the same respect status, including civil rights, freedom of speech, and equal rights to social goods and necessities. Brontë also explores the idea of "Relationship Equality", and "Individual Equality". During the novel, they explore, the realism of inferiorism, and how it affects those past stated situations.

Jane Eyre is a Gothic novel written by Charlotte Brontë, about a young woman who struggles to trust, find love, and find her sense of belonging. Jane is kicked out of her aunt's home early in life, as a result of that she grows up, in a charity school. While at this school, Jane learns about God and her religious beliefs become a huge part of her life. Jane, once of age becomes bored with life and becomes a governess to a young woman, named Adele. As Jane sets off on this new adventure of being a governess she falls in love with a mysterious, broken man named Mr. Rochester, Adele's guardian. Jane, learns to trust, and finds a sense of belonging with Mr. Rochester. Rochester and Jane plan to marry, but it is revealed that Rochester is married to a mentally ill woman, and by law can not marry Jane. Jane after hearing of this tragic news flees, and finds herself on a missionaries doorstep, named St John. St John, being a man of God, feels that he needs a companion to help him spread the word of God. St John asks Jane to marry him, not out of love but because God's word needs to be spread. Jane, once again flees but only to go back to a even more broken Mr Rochester due to a fire caused by his ill wife. Jane, now feels equal to the Mr Rochester and now feels fit to marry him, know knowing valuable lessons about life such as trust, true love, and equality.

One of the most intriguing parts of Brontë's approach to "Social Equality" is that she takes part of two opposite sides of Social classes. Jane starts out as a poor, working class woman, but over time becomes a aristocat. Brontë instead focuses on Janes beliefs and values. She has her character Jane, follow the rightful christian women ways of the mid 1800s. At the time, if Jane had decided to stand up, for her Social rights and equalities that she deserves would be considered insane and disrespectful. In the modern literature we read today, we see the complete opposite of the woman standing up, and fighting for what they believe is right. Jane and Mr. Rochester's love depicts what two opposite social classes, on one half you have someone born into money and a aristocratic lifestyle, while on the other you have someone whos change in social classes happens often depending on how she acts and shows her self to others. Brontë's message and take when depicting Social Equality is to prove, that wealth doesn't reveal class, and that wealth and worldly items do not always counteract the lack of character. Jane during a discussion with Mr. Rochester says " do not think, sir, you have any right to command me, merely because you are older than I, or because you have seen more of the world than I have; your claim to superiority depends on the use you have made of your time and experience (Brontë Charlotte, Jane Eyre Penguin Books, 1997.) Brontë further, showing the idea of Social Equality and Inferior through two social classes. Brontë explores the social equality, with showing how it affects in relationships.

Relationship Equality is essential what drives Brontë's characters throughout Jane Eyre. When

Jane and Mr Rochester, it is fairly one sided in equality. Mr Rochester, is a takes a more forceful approach of showing emotions, because of his past experience and heartbreak. Jane on the other hand takes the opposite approach in showing emotions, where she is more calm and shy in showing her perspective. The way these two act, aren't far from each other as it is made out to seem. In Jane and Mr. Rochester's relationship, they see each other as the inferior. From both of their respective points of view, it's the other who isn't willing to love, the two of them can not find the key thing of what makes ever lasting relationships, which is trust. The range of emotions throughout their struggle of finding trust can be described as fire and ice. At times, they come off as un equal to one another or inferior. Jane, while begging Mr Rochester to not have her leaves says "Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong! - I have as much soul as you, - and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you!" (Brontë Charlotte Jane Eyre. Penguin Books, 1997.). Through Jane's emotions expressed through this quote it shows untrusted and inequality is what drives the story completely through the contrast of untrust and the view of being unequal to each other. Brontë shows that a relationship must be built on trust, and only with trust can love be found. Rochester, can't seem to trust Jane because of his past love and heartbreak, while Jane can't look past Rochesters way of life and his "sinful" decisions along with his lifestyle. Jane coming from a religious background, can't commit into a relationship to a non religious man. Jane, wants to find her individual equality before she devotes her life for another.

The last idea of equality that Brontë explores throughout her novel could be classified as "Individual Equality". Jane, journey through the novel is to find herself worth and love. Rochester as well, goes on the journey of dealing with his past and finding his love for himself. Rochester, feels because of his past that he can't trust another, or love another. For Rochester, his journey is to better himself so he can be a good man for Jane. Rochester, will do anything to prove that he is worth of all of Janes love. Rochester, while not being the best at it, shows his love for Jane by saying "I have for the first time found what I can truly love—I have found you. You are my sympathy—my better self—my good angel".(Brontë Charlotte, et al. Jane Eyre. Penguin Books, 1997). Brontë shows Rochesters journey, by having his character better himself for his relationship with Jane. Jane, shows her Individual Equality by proving herself to others. She comes from a lower social class, throughout her whole life she has to prove her worth. Brontë didn't have her character of Jane ever settle for anything less than what Jane worked for. The opposing side of Jane, the ones who doubted her are the infirorist in this novel. People believed Jane to stay, as a lower class teacher at a Christian school for girls, they had no true hope for Jane. Brontë drove the story, with the work of finding individual equality. Jane, and Rochester drive the story by putting in all they can offer to show their worth. Jane says to Rochester, " I care for myself. The more solitary, the more friendless, the more unsustained I am, the more I will respect myself. I will keep the law given by God; sanctioned by man. I will hold to the principles received by me when I was sane, and not mad—as I am now. Laws and principles are not for the times when there is no temptation: they are for such moments as this, when body and soul rise in mutiny against their rigour; stringent are they; inviolate they shall be. If at my individual convenience I might break them, what would be their worth? They have a worth—so I have always believed; and if I cannot believe it now, it is because I am insane—quite insane: with my veins running fire, and my heart beating faster than I can count its throbs. Preconceived opinions, foregone determinations, are all I have at this hour to stand by: there I plant my foot" (Brontë Charlotte et al. Jane Eyre. Penguin Books, 1997) .showing that she believes in that she has earned her right among society and believes in herself.

Jane Eyre, by Charlotte Brontë is a Gothic Novel, written in the mid 1800s about finding out your true equality vs the inferiorist in your life. She shows it in three aspects that every individual goes through in life, She shows that it is possible to become a somebody, when everyone believes you are nothing. Brontë shows that you can't be in a true functioning relationship without trust and devotion, even when the one you love can't seem to see your worth. Finally, Brontë shows that the most important equality in life, is the one of Individual. Nobody, is allowed to take away your self worth, in fact it is your responsibility to prove the inferior people, the doubters in your life wrong. To show your equality in life, is the most important lesson from Jane Eyre. The inferior people in your life, only have power if you can't prove your equal to them.