

*People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Amar Thelidji University, Laghouat
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English*



The Intersection of Gender and Class in Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre and Empowerment through Education

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
Master Degree in Civilization and Literature

By:

Ms. Eloued Fatima Zahra Sara

Ms. Mousli Houria

Board of Examiners:

- Mrs. Guellil Assia, University of Laghouat, Chairman
- Dr. Naoumi Mohamed, University of Laghouat, Supervisor
- Mrs. Salet Djihad, University of Laghouat, Examiner

2022-2023

Dedication:

In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

I dedicate this work to:

- *My beloved father, whose memory will forever shine brightly in my heart.*
- *My extraordinary mother, whose unwavering support and belief in me have been the driving force behind my journey.*
- *My beloved brothers, sisters, nieces, and nephews, with a special mention to Hadjer and Abdelrahmane.*
- *To everyone who believed in me.*

Fatima Zahra Sara

Dedication:

I dedicate this dissertation to my lovely parents for their unconditional support, patient, and love.

To my dear brothers and sister, who have provided me with encouragement.

To my partner in the work, to all my colleagues, friends and teachers at the university.

Houria

Acknowledgements

First, we would like to thank our supervisor Mr. Mohammed Naoumi who guided, supported and encouraged us to successfully accomplish this work.

Our special thanks are reserved for the chairperson and the members of the jury who have devoted much of their precious time to read and assess this work.

.

Abstract

In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Bronte vividly portrays female oppression during Victorian times. Where most women were moulded into dependent domestic creatures. The basic aim of this dissertation is to explore the intersection of social class and Victorian gender roles. To achieve the previous aim, this research employs the concept of intersectionality, proposed by the feminist framework, to show that it is not possible to discuss gender in *Jane Eyre* without taking class into account. Because social class issues contributed as well as Victorian gender prejudices when it came to oppressing women in the nineteenth century, further, it explores Jane Eyre's journey to autonomy through education. By employing a qualitative approach, this dissertation delves deep into the nuanced experiences of female characters in *Jane Eyre*. However, by examining oppressive forces, the research highlights the ways in which women face double oppression and presents a hopeful perspective by illustrating how the educated Victorian women represented by Jane Eyre could overcome these challenges.

Keywords: Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, Intersectionality, Victorian era, Double oppression, Social class, Gender roles, Education.

Table of Contents:

Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgements.....	III
Abstract.....	IV
Table of Contents.....	V
Introduction.....	01

Chapter One : The Victorian Era : Historical and Literary Background

1. English Society during the Victorian Era.....	06
2. Social Class.....	07
3. Gender Role.....	09
4. Intersectionality.....	11

Chapter Two: Education during the Victorian Era

1. Victorian Education.....	14
2. Victorian Boarding Schools.....	15
3. Female Education.....	17

4. The Victorian Governess.....	19
---------------------------------	----

Chapter Three: Double Oppression and Education as Path to Empowerment

in Jane Eyre:

1-Biography of Charlotte Bronte.....	23
2-Plot Summary	24
3- Double Oppression.....	25
3-1- Jane, the Oppressed Lower Class.....	25
3-2-Gender Oppression.....	30
4-- Education as a Path to Empowerment:.....	33
Conclusion.....	39
Works Cited.....	42

General Introduction

The physical differences between men and women have historically been a crucial reason for the unequal treatment they receive from society, resulting in the norm of superiority for men. However, these differences extend beyond physical appearance and affect societal expectations and behaviours associated with each gender. Society imposes specific criteria for how men and women should behave, men as masculine and women as feminine. Women are gentle and emotional, while men are strong and reasonable. These assumptions and standards reinforced stereotypes that led to gender differences and the oppression of women. For example, women are considered less important in many areas, such as education, because society assigns them a domestic role rather than encouraging their pursuit of education. In politics, women face limited opportunities for voting. Men have dominated society under a patriarchal system where they hold more power than women. In addition to that, women face further oppression when class discrimination is present.

This double oppression of women was evident in the Victorian Era (1837–1901). During this period, England experienced changes in different aspects. The country was also going through the Industrial Revolution, which significantly impacted its social structure and everyday life. It affected the class system by presenting new classes, the middle class and working class, next to the already existing upper class. This led the class system to be based on power, riches, and working and living conditions.

In Victorian societies, some middle-class girls were sent to boarding schools, and the facilities there, like those at Jane's school, were quite inadequate. Many lower-class ladies could not attend school and received their education at home from their mothers in order to become skilled housewives. Parents believed that a woman's duty was to establish a home that protected her from outside influences. As a result of this common belief, those parents rejected the notion of formal education.

Furthermore, as a result of the nineteenth century, professional women authors started to become more prominent and took it upon themselves to discuss various social issues. Some of these include the conflict between different social classes and women's status in society. Bronte, the well-known author of that era, explored these topics through her novels, showing a particular interest in addressing women's oppression and the difficulties of Victorian social classes.

However, in *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Bronte depicts the oppressive nature of Victorian society, which oppressed women based on biological and social class differences. Despite being written during the Victorian era, the novel highlights the transformation of Jane Eyre, an orphan girl without influence, wealth, or conventional beauty, into a self-reliant, wealthy, and influential woman of the Victorian era.

Wang Guofu, the author of the literary theory of feminism, argues that Charlotte Bronte's presentation of women's roles was distinctive, particularly her writing under the masculine pseudonym Currer Bell. She made a fresh and distinct vision of women, and in some ways, she changed her society's perception of females in terms of sexuality. " *Jane Eyre* embodies a new conception of women as heroines of vital strength and passionate feelings" (225-229).

The mid-Victorian feminists and writers, such as Charlotte Bronte, adapted a wide range of approaches in their attempts to deal with the threat of male dominance over female characters in their writing as a means of empowering women and challenging traditional gender dynamics (Heilmann 84). Gilbert and Gubar claim that liberation is the central theme of *Jane Eyre's* story. They argue that the difficulties experienced by Jane as she seeks to escape from the oppressive circumstances and achieve her freedom reflect the struggles faced by women in a patriarchal society. In essence, Jane's journey symbolizes the universal difficulties every woman must confront and ultimately conquer within a patriarchal social structure (339).

Over time, critics have approached *Jane Eyre* through different lenses, such as psychoanalytic, religious, and poststructuralist viewpoints, among others. Therefore, we adopt an intersectional approach in our research. Intersectionality is an important analytical framework within gender studies. Intersectionality is an analytical system for understanding how a person's different social identities combine to form diverse modes of segregation and oppression. "Intersectionality is a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and create obstacles" (Crenshaw 00:00:08 - 00:00:20). Taking an intersectional perspective in this research is crucial to understand how gender and class intersect. By utilizing intersectionality, this study answers the following questions:

1. How does the novel portray the intersection of gender and social class?
2. In what ways does *Jane Eyre* depict societies characterized by patriarchy and classism?
3. How does Jane's educational experience influence her determination to maintain her autonomy?

The dissertation will be divided into three chapters. Chapter one provide an explanation of the Victorian era, society, gender roles, and social class in this specific era, along with the theoretical framework of this paper, and will describe the concepts used throughout the other chapters. The second chapter deals with Victorian education, boarding schools, and women's education. Chapter three will look into class and gender in Jane Eyre and answer questions about how class and gender intersect and how Jane will maintain her independence by relying on her education.

Chapter One: The Victorian Era:

Historical and Literary Background

1-English Society during the Victorian Era:

The Victorian era takes its name from the British Queen Victoria whose reign was the longest of any British ruler from 1837 to 1901. This period in history witnessed significant social changes. Queen Victoria was a transformative leader who shaped the course of the nineteenth century in numerous ways. Under her reign, England saw a remarkable transformation. Victoria's influence was felt not only in England but across the globe (Chrisp 06).

Furthermore, as a result of the Industrial Revolution, railways and steam engines England was progressing towards becoming the most stable country in Europe. The Victorian era brought significant changes to England and its people, including women. The period marked a fundamental transformation in the country's history and saw the English people addressing various challenges within their society (Carter 243). This era also witnessed political and social reforms, which have both worsened and improved the lives of different groups in England. The growth of the middle class contributed to the massive increase in the population. However, this shifted the political power toward them, and by the end of the century, most men had gained the right to vote. While working class members in the lower ranks of social classes faced many societal problems, including unemployment, poverty, and horrific working conditions, especially for women and children.

Moreover, 19th century England was the most powerful and self-confident, thanks to three key events that shaped Victorian life before Queen Victoria's reign in 1837. These included the Duke of Wellington's victory against the French army, which fostered a sense of national pride; the Industrial Revolution, which turned England into a leading economic power; and the

Reform Bill of 1832, which opened the way for greater democracy and governmental responsibility for citizens' safety and well-being (Mitchell 01).

2-Social Class:

Class is a complex term, in use since the late eighteenth century, and employed in many different ways. In our context classes are the more or less distinct social groupings which at any given historical period, taken as a whole, constituted British Society. Different social classes can be (and were by the classes themselves) distinguished by inequalities in such areas as power, authority, wealth, working and living conditions , life-styles, life-span, education, religion, and culture (Cody).

In the early 1800s, the "working class" and the "middle class" emerged , and both became prominent in society.. The previous aristocracy, who had inherited their status, was joined by new nobility who had acquired wealth through trade, and industry success. This new nobility eventually evolved into what we now call the "upper class. David Cannadine, noted that their societal hierarchy is widely known for its strictness and close links to culture. This is partly because in Britain there is a well-established and formal system of hierarchy and order, which includes the monarchy. This system allows for the transmission and inheritance of prestige and honor over many generations (Cannadine).

Almost 75% of the population belonged to the working class and performed various physical jobs such as farming, factory work, domestic labor, and mining. The majority of these workers earned only enough to survive, and any unexpected events such as illness or layoffs could lead them into poverty. The less skilled workers often had to rely on other family

members' income to maintain financial stability, while skilled workers, who were about 15% of the working class, enjoyed more stable incomes. (Mitchell 18)

As the workers aged, they started earning less due to their declining physical health. Both boys and girls were required to work at a young age, often assisting older family members with the same work. Education was limited, and they started working before they were old enough for regular jobs. However, the parents might save a little money after their children get married. And if they lived long enough, they were likely to become poor again and end up in the workhouse, unless their children were able to support them. (The Working Class).

Moreover, the middle class grew significantly during the Victorian period from 15% to 25% of the population, consisting of diverse individuals including successful industrialists, wealthy bankers, large shopkeepers, businessmen, lawyers, and doctors. The rise of industrialists and factory owners fueled the growth of the middle class. Their political importance increased after the Reform Bill of 1832 granted voting rights to males who owned property (Mitchell 19).

In addition to that, the middle class maintained their values and beliefs despite their rise in social status and income, prioritizing hard work, sexual morality, and personal responsibility. Education became increasingly important for them, and they attended grammar or private schools. The middle class were mostly religious, and the majority of professionals attended the Church of England (Class).

On the other hand, the hereditary landowning class, including aristocrats and gentry, derived their income from renting out their property. These landowners possessed thousands of

acres, which were divided into farms leased out for long periods. They resided in comfortable country houses called manors or halls, along with their staff of servants (Mitchell 21).

The Aristocrats often did not need to work to support themselves as their families had accumulated wealth for generations. However, some of them were involved in running large businesses such as mining or shipping, and they received the best education from private tutors. They were also privileged due to their social status, which allowed them to buy expensive European clothing that was not accessible to the general public (Victorian Era).

3-Gender Role:

The terms "gender" and "sex" even though they have often been used interchangeably do not mean the same. The term "sex" is used to denote human females and males depending on biological features like chromosomes, hormones, sex organs and other physical features. While "gender" is used to denote women and men depending on social factors such as social role, behavior, identity and position. Gender is often linked to masculine and feminine traits (World Health Organization: WHO). Each society has its own expectations when it comes to gender roles. Therefore, gender roles can be different significantly from culture to culture. In essence, gender roles are culturally constructed and can look quite different across various societies (Press 16-17).

However, the Victorian era influenced gender roles in England; unlike previous centuries, men's and women's roles became more distinct and defined than ever before. In previous centuries, women often worked alongside family men in their businesses, and it was common for them to assist with customer service and other tasks while also managing domestic

responsibilities. But in the Victorian era, men increasingly left home to work in factories, shops, and offices, while women remained at home to oversee domestic duties (British Library).

The Victorian gender roles assigned to women in society included managing the household and caring for their husbands and children, resulting in disparities in education, employment, and human rights. Men were expected to provide for their families while women were supposed to stay home and take care of their children and house, this created a significant gender-based employment disparity. However, households led by widows demonstrate that many women had to find work to support themselves and their families, challenging prevailing gender norms and expectations (Hudson).

In addition to that, women were not granted the right to vote, own property, or pursue professional careers beyond those of teaching, domestic service, factory work, or agricultural labor. The prevailing societal belief was that women did not require a formal education (press 85).

Furthermore, in connection to female gender norms, according to Tosh, during the Victorian era, women were commonly thought to be more emotionally open than men. The ideal woman at this time was expected to be caring, and there was a perception of women as being like angels, particularly those who cared for the sick (28). Additionally, Victorian society valued women who were calm, comforting, and observant, and these were seen as desirable qualities. The role of a wife was to make the home a comfortable and welcoming place (Mitchell 266).

To sum up, during the Victorian era, there was a remarkable shift in gender roles where men worked outside the house and women were limited to domestic tasks. This resulted in gender-based inequalities in many areas. Society believed that women didn't need an education

and should be emotionally caring, making the home comfortable. Despite these norms, many women had to work to support themselves and their families, challenging traditional gender expectations.

4-Intersectionality:

Despite obstacles, women have always participated in the feminist movement and fought for their equality and rights. Feminists are aiming to gain equality in society in areas such as political rights, education, etc. However, defining feminism can be challenging but according to Hook, feminism is the struggle to put an end to the sexiest oppression. In general, feminists argue that in societies that uphold patriarchal values, women continue to face inequalities as men predominantly hold power. The existence of these power dynamics results in men holding positions that are more prominent compared to women. (Murfin and Ray 499).

The feminist movement witnessed the emergence of multiple waves; each one highlights a different aspect of feminist issues. Most noteworthy is the second wave that emerged in the Late Sixties, seeking to improve women's status. This movement aimed to challenge the gender roles prevalent in domestic, political, and economic spheres. This latter saw the emergence of various types of Feminism, including liberal feminism, socialist feminism, radical feminism, and cultural feminism. (Krolokke and Sorensen 07-08).

However, the previous different types of feminism have a similar goal of achieving equality in different areas. Despite using different ways to approach the issue, they all aim to address women's oppression as a result of men's dominance in society. The activist Kimberlé Crenshaw challenges the idea that all women had the same experiences. As many women from many cultures acknowledge, discrimination is impacted by factors other than gender. She

emphasizes that categorizing all women as a single united group, as some second wave feminists argued, is neither factual nor fair. In 1989, she coined the term, "intersectionality," which acknowledges that several parts of a person's identity, such as race, gender, and class frequently overlap and cannot be separated from one another. These interconnected factors have a major influence on how people are treated and the forms of discrimination they may face. Crenshaw argues that discussions about equality and liberation for certain oppressed groups frequently miss this intersectional viewpoint (Crenshaw).

As a result, an intersectional approach is essential for investigating the intersection of class and gender in Jane Eyre. Because Instead of focusing on those aspects as singular points of analysis, unconnected and detached, an intersectional way of thinking considers how the relationship between one's various identity traits accurately reflects their very own lived experiences "It was not possible, for example, to understand a black woman's experience from previous studies of gender combined with previous studies of race because the former focused on white women and the latter on black men" (McCall 11). As a result, it became apparent that writings on feminism would need to acknowledge the intersections of gender with other significant social identities (Shields 302).

However, Viewing gender from only one side does not provide for a wide view that reflects individuals because it is possible for people to have multiple identities. Understanding and applying intersectionality to a way of thinking provides for the enablement to evaluate how a person's multi-layered self fully impacts his/her experiences. Since intersectionality mirrors real life, qualitative research is the most suitable type of research to conduct as it is required to ask "how" questions.

Chapter Two: Education during the Victorian era

1-Victorian Education:

Education was not accessible to everyone before 1880, and only kids between the ages of 5 and 10 had the chance to attend. And many of them couldn't attend school regularly due to various responsibilities, such as work or caring for younger siblings. Also, families that were struggling financially faced even more significant challenges as they had to pay for their children's education until 1891. As a result, sending a child to school often meant giving up an additional source of income. This situation highlights how financial circumstances could impact a child's ability to attend school regularly. Even if a child was listed as a scholar on admission registers, it did not necessarily mean they went to school consistently. Some families even listed their working children as scholars in census records to avoid breaking child labor laws (Tyler).

Historically, education for boys and girls has always been influenced by gender-based beliefs and societal divisions. There were also gender-based assumptions that literacy skills were less important for girls. Although we cannot be certain whether parents were less inclined to teach their daughters to read, we do know that girls were far less likely to attend school, and endowments for the education of poor children were mostly used to educate boys. Girls' charity schools also prioritized domestic skills over literacy in their curriculum. Overall, gender played a significant role in shaping the education and future roles of boys and girls (Gomersall 93).

During the earlier period in England, there were various types of schools available, but only the wealthy had access to formal education. Working-class families had limited options, including dame schools, private subscription schools, charity schools, and Sunday schools, which focused on Bible reading and evangelical Christianity. Primary education for the poor was neglected. In contrast, secondary education for the wealthy experienced significant growth, with

public schools founded by kings and town corporations. In rural areas, old women taught children the alphabet for a small fee (Ayishashabana).

In conclusion, access to education in England was heavily influenced by societal divisions, gender-based assumptions, and financial circumstances. Before 1880, access to formal education was restricted to a privileged minority, and even for them, regular attendance was not always guaranteed. Those from working-class backgrounds had limited schooling options available to them, as private schools were often unaffordable. Girls, in particular, faced significant barriers to education and were often steered towards domestic skills over literacy.

2-Victorian Boarding Schools:

Victorian boarding schools were educational institutions that were popular in that era. These schools provided lodging for students, who lived on the premises throughout the school year. Students received a classical education that emphasized rigorous discipline, and moral instruction. In Victorian boarding schools, students learned by memorization and repetition. They would copy things onto small boards with chalk or into notebooks with a pen dipped in ink. They spent a lot of time practicing their handwriting. They also read the Bible, said prayers, and sang hymns during the day (Cleary).

In these schools, classrooms were plain and lacking in decorations. There were no colourful illustrations, and desks were arranged in straight rows facing the front, where the teacher's desk and a blackboard were located. Furthermore, Discipline in Victorian classrooms was strict, and corporal punishment was common. Students could receive a hit on the knuckles or palm with a ruler or a swat on the backside with a birch cane. Other punishments included copying lines repeatedly and detention (Cleary).

According to Cleary, boarding schools for Lower-class boys in Victorian times were often advertised in London newspapers as places to send unwanted or illegitimate children. These schools were mainly focused on making profits for their owners and were characterized by harsh discipline, poor diet, and limited learning opportunities. One school owner claimed to provide strict attention to the health, moral conduct, and education of pupils, but in reality, there were no vacations, and little learning took place. However, upper-class boys were sent to boarding schools such as Eton, Harrow, Winchester, and other prestigious schools when they turned 10 years old. The main focus of these schools was on the Classics, which included the languages and literature of ancient Greece and Rome. Boys also played sports such as football and cricket. Although these schools had high standards, they required some improvements at the beginning of the era. Changes were gradually made, such as reducing class sizes, hiring better-qualified teachers, expanding the curriculum, and improving living conditions, which helped to improve the educational standards.

In conclusion, Victorian boarding schools were educational institutions that played a significant role in shaping the lives of students during that era. These schools provided lodging for their students and offered a classical education with a strong emphasis on discipline and moral instruction. Learning methods were centered around memorization and repetition, and students spent considerable time perfecting their handwriting and engaging in religious practices such as reading the Bible and singing hymns. The classrooms themselves were austere and lacked decorations, reflecting the strict and disciplined environment. Corporal punishment was a common form of discipline, and students could face physical chastisement for misbehavior. Boarding schools for lower-class boys were often characterized by harsh conditions and limited learning opportunities, whereas upper-class boys attended prestigious institutions like Eton and

Harrow, where the focus was on the Classics and a more well-rounded education. Over time, improvements were made to Victorian boarding schools, including smaller class sizes, better-qualified teachers, and an expanded curriculum, leading to an overall enhancement of educational standards in these institutions. Despite their flaws, these schools played a crucial role in shaping the educational landscape of the Victorian era.

3-Female Education:

As previously mentioned The Victorian education system was based widely on social class and gender, both of which were very important parameters to decide who had the right to access education and which subjects could be taught and presented. Education for women was so limited and strict that poor girls were not able to attend school because of the high fees and their need for work more than education, and if they were able, they were not expected to get too much knowledge. On the other hand, the rich girls were attending lessons in their houses with private tutors, also known as governesses (Education).

Attending university for women was barely possible until it became a topic of great discussion in the mid-late nineteenth century, when real efforts were taken to make changes and open more opportunities for women by her supporters because they believed in the necessity of her high education to make more aware and effective wives, mothers, and teachers. A report in the Edinburgh Evening Courier newspaper showed an example of support by Mr. J. A. Bevan: when he delivered a lecture at the Hanover Square Rooms on ``woman doctors," he wondered about prohibiting women from practicing as doctors. Although it was a very controversial issue, there were later many women who fought for their right to high education, like Sophia Jex-Blake

and Elizabeth Garrett, who entered the field of medicine after attending lectures at the Edinburgh Medical School (Wilson).

The limited education of women was a result of many beliefs that Victorian society held that women were lacking in physical strength and vitality, which were very important elements to achieving educational pursuits. Politics, mathematics, and the sciences were considered too energetic and dangerous for women's capacities. If a woman were to be educated, she should only acquire some essential skills to support her future social roles and marital prospects. The intelligence of a woman should not be equal to or superior to that of her husband. Generally, women were meant to be sounding boards and passive listeners rather than having an intellectual background, which was not encouraged. In addition to her responsibility to her surroundings, the required time for educational commitments was not available for her because most of her time was devoted to family care, housework, and other activities that were female pursuits (Mumford).

To sum up, the Victorian education system was heavily influenced by social class and gender, leading to stark disparities in access to education and the subjects taught. For women, especially those from lower-class backgrounds, educational opportunities were severely restricted due to financial constraints and societal expectations of their roles as caregivers and homemakers. In contrast, wealthier women received education at home through private tutors or governesses, but their curriculum focused on skills considered essential for supporting their future roles as wives and mothers. The prevailing belief in Victorian society was that women lacked the physical and mental capacity for rigorous intellectual pursuits, resulting in limited exposure to subjects like politics, mathematics, and the sciences. Despite these challenges, some trailblazing women like Sophia Jex-Blake and Elizabeth Garrett bravely fought for their right to

higher education, pushing against societal norms and breaking into traditionally male-dominated fields such as medicine. Although the Victorian era's educational landscape has evolved significantly since then, this historical context reminds us of the ongoing importance of striving for equal educational opportunities for all, irrespective of their gender or social background.

4.The Victorian Governess:

According to Jeanne Peterson's study, during the early nineteenth century, the term "governess" had multiple interpretations. It could denote a woman who worked as a teacher in a school, a woman who resided at her own residence but traveled to the employer's house to provide instruction (known as a "daily governess"), or a woman who lived within the employer's household, teaching the children and fulfilling the role of a companion(08).

However, During the nineteenth century, the financial situation of middle-class families underwent a notable improvement.. As a result, they sought to emulate the aristocratic way of life, as described by Ruth Brandon. This included the practice of hiring governesses to provide education for their children, particularly young girls (01).

Peterson confirms that in the past, having a governess was considered highly prestigious, even though she might not have been treated as an equal. Instead, the family proudly showcased her as a symbol of their economic power, breeding, and social status in the company of wealthy acquaintances (Peterson 9).Hughes further emphasizes that employing a governess was a way for the lady of the house to demonstrate her refinement and gentility, indicating that she was above personally teaching her daughters. It became a status symbol to hire a governess, akin to employing servants to manage household chores, as it signified a certain level of social standing.

Typically, a governess was a young woman from a middle-class background, with at least some education. However, she didn't have the option of relying on a husband's support or having personal wealth, and often lacked male relatives to provide for her. Given her social status, she couldn't work as a maid or in a factory, making governess positions one of the few respectable ways for her to earn a living (Brandon 1)

Governesses needed more than just general knowledge to excel in their profession, as Susan Ridout highlights in her *Letters to a Young Governess*. Ridout emphasizes various qualities essential for governesses, including proper conduct, selflessness, fairness, punctuality, self-assurance, decisiveness, and strong moral principles, in addition to possessing correct knowledge.

Furthermore, Ridout believed that governesses should have a solid foundation in religious principles, an understanding of human emotions and cognitive abilities, a comprehensive perspective on education and its main objectives, empathetic feelings towards children, and a moral strength that would enhance their effectiveness. Lastly, integrity was considered a crucial characteristic for governesses, enabling them to interact with their pupils and parents in a just, truthful, and kind manner.

In conclusion, the role of governesses in the early nineteenth century was multifaceted, encompassing various interpretations that evolved with the changing financial circumstances and social aspirations of middle-class families. As the financial situation of these families improved, they sought to mirror the aristocratic lifestyle, leading to the hiring of governesses as esteemed educators, especially for their daughters. Despite not always being treated as equals, governesses held a prestigious position, symbolizing the family's economic power and social status. Their

employment became a status symbol, showcasing the lady of the house's refinement and the desire to provide a higher level of education for their children. numerous young women from middle-class families found becoming a governess to be a respectable and viable way to support themselves financially, especially in the absence of financial assistance from a husband or male relatives. Over the course of this era, the role of a governess experienced notable transformations, illustrating the intricate dynamics between social class, financial circumstances, and the prevailing educational ideals of that period.

Chapter Three: Double Oppression and Education as Path to Empowerment in Jane Eyre:

1-Biography of Charlotte Bronte:

Charlotte Bronte an English novelist was born on April 21, 1816, in the small town of Haworth in England. Her father, Patrick Bronte, was a clergyman of Irish origin, and her mother's name was Maria Barnwell. In 1820, the family moved to Haworth when Patrick was appointed perpetual curate. Charlotte's mother passed away when she was five years old, leaving five daughters and one son in the care of their father. Consequently, her father sent her, along with her sisters Emily and Anne, to boarding school. The school that the Bronte sisters attended had unsanitary living conditions, which led to frequent illnesses among the students. Maria and Elizabeth Bronte passed away in 1825 while studying at the school. Following this heartbreaking event, Mr. Bronte took on the responsibility of personally educating his remaining children at their home in Haworth.

In 1846, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne, decided to pursue writing as a career. They published a book of poems together under male pseudonyms. After this, each sister wrote her first novel. Emily's *Wuthering Heights* and Anne's novel were published, but Charlotte's *Professor*, which was inspired by her time in Belgium, was not accepted. However, Charlotte's second novel, *Jane Eyre*, was a huge success. It tells the story of a strong and independent governess and was published in 1847.

Charlotte Bronte lost all of her siblings, Branwell, Emily, and Anne, one after another. Because of the success of *Jane Eyre*, her publisher convinced her to visit London. There, she made friends with other famous writers like Elizabeth Gaskell and William Makepeace Thackeray. Even though she continued to write, Charlotte never left her hometown of Haworth. She married Arthur Nicholls, but sadly, their marriage only lasted nine months. Charlotte became

very sick with pneumonia when she was pregnant, and she died just a few weeks later on March 31, 1855.

2- Plot Summary:

Jane Eyre, written by Charlotte Bronte in 1847, tells the story of an orphaned girl named Jane Eyre living with her cruel aunt, Mrs. Reed, Jane endures mistreatment and punishment. Her life takes a pivotal turn when she is locked in the ominous red room, the place where her uncle Mr. Reed had died. Subsequently, Jane is sent to Lowood, a charity school overseen by the harsh Mr. Brocklehurst. Although the conditions are challenging, the compassionate Maria Temple provides solace to the girls. During her time at Lowood, Jane befriends Helen Burns, who becomes a source of support until she succumbs to a typhus epidemic.

After six years, Jane becomes a teacher and seeks employment as a governess. She secures a position at Thornfield Hall, tutoring Adèle Varens, the daughter of Mr. Rochester. Jane's relationship with Mr. Rochester grows when she saves him from a fire in his bedroom. Additionally, she aids him in dealing with a man named Mason, who suffers an injury on the third floor. Jane becomes wary of these peculiar events and questions the truth behind them. During a lavish party at Thornfield Hall, Mr. Rochester rejects the advances of Blanche Ingram and proposes to Jane, an offer she accepts.

However, their wedding ceremony takes a surprising turn when a lawyer reveals Mr. Rochester's existing marriage to Bertha Mason, a mentally ill woman imprisoned on the third floor. Distraught by the revelation, Jane flees Thornfield Hall and endures three difficult days without sustenance or shelter. Fortunately, she finds refuge at Moor House, the residence of Diana and St. John Rivers. St. John offers Jane a teaching position and proposes marriage, urging

her to accompany him to India as a missionary. Though tempted, Jane ultimately rejects his proposal upon hearing Mr. Rochester's voice calling out to her.

Leaving Moor House behind, Jane returns to Thornfield and discovers the ruined estate, destroyed by a fire set by Bertha. Bertha's demise and Mr. Rochester's injuries are revealed—he loses his sight and one hand while attempting to save his servants. Jane locates him at Ferrandean, a woodland retreat, and pledges to care for him. They marry, bringing Adele back from boarding school, and later have a son.

3-Double Oppression:

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, oppression is a form of injustice. In other words, oppression is the unbalanced use or abuse of authority, law, or physical force to prevent others from enjoying their freedom and equality. The main female character in this story, Jane, represents the oppression of women during the Victorian era. She generally suffers from patriarchal and class oppression.

3-1- Jane, the Oppressed Lower Class:

Charlotte Bronte struggled to depict the harsh realities faced by Victorian women who were oppressed by patriarchal structures. As previously mentioned women were limited to domestic duties and under the authority of men - whether fathers, brothers, or husbands. If women step outside of traditional roles, they were often seen as abnormal or mentally unstable and were confined to mental institutions.

In these societies, Women often face oppression and discrimination, both for being female and for being considered second-class citizens. In the novel Jane Eyre, female characters

such as Jane and Bertha Mason reflect the struggles and hardships of Victorian women."Jane Eyre" centers on the topic of class oppression and the challenges confronted by people from lower social classes (Purchase 24). The story starts with the ten-year-old protagonist Jane who lost both her parents at the age of five and did not inherit any cash or property after their deaths. She was then taken in by her wealthy aunt, Mrs. Reed. However, Jane faced oppression due to her social class and was subjected to it at three different stages of her life. In the first stage, while she was living in Gateshead. The Reed family used Jane's low social standing as a justification for mistreating and neglecting her. Despite living under the same roof, Jane is excluded from their social gatherings and is considered a friendless and status-less orphan with no property or wealth. While they gather around the fireside in the drawing room, Jane is left alone.

Jane's social class status was unclear due to her parents' ambiguous backgrounds. her mother belonged to the middle class, while her father came from a poorer class. This uncertainty surrounding her social status was further complicated by her parents' death. Consequently, she was neither regarded as a member of the Reed family nor considered a servant from the working class.

John Reed's treatment of Jane illustrates the dehumanizing attitude towards those of lower social classes. He consistently bullies and mistreats her, Even though Jane behaves appropriately, John continues to oppress her while receiving no punishment for his own cruel and destructive actions. The contrasting treatment of Jane and John based on their social status emphasizes the existence of a social hierarchy where individuals from lower classes are not accorded the same level of respect and consideration as those from higher classes. The unfair and

oppressive treatment that Jane receives from John and his mother raises doubts in her mind about why she is always accused and unable to win anyone's favour, despite her good behavior.

I was a discord in Gateshead Hall: I was like nobody there; I had nothing in harmony with Mrs. Reed or her children, or her chosen vassalage. If they did not love me, in fact, as little did I love them. They were not bound to regard with affection a thing that could not sympathise with one amongst them; a heterogeneous thing, opposed to them in temperament, in capacity, in propensities; a useless thing, incapable of serving their interest, or adding to their pleasure; a noxious thing, cherishing the germs of indignation at their treatment, of contempt of their judgment (Bronte 15).

Jane suffers further oppression at the hands of Mrs. Reed, her aunt, who is supposed to be a maternal figure to her. Mrs. Reed punishes Jane by locking her in the red-room, which is decorated entirely in red with only a small amount of white. In the novel, Jane is interrupted while reading by John, who bullies her and tells her that she has no right to read their books because she is an orphan and dependent on their family.

You have no business to take our books; you are a dependent, mama says; you have no money; your father left you none; you ought to beg, and not to live here with gentlemen's children like us, and eat the same meals we do, and wear clothes at our mama's expense. Now, I'll teach you to rummage my bookshelves: for they are mine; all the house belongs to me, or will do in a few said. "You are like a Caligula, &c. Also I had years. Go and stand by the door, out of the way of the mirror and the windows (7).

John then hits Jane with a book, and she fights back to defend herself, surprising John with her determination. However, he blames Jane for the altercation, and as punishment for her behaviour, Mrs. Reed orders two servants to lock Jane in the "red-room," the same room where Mr. Reed passed away.

Jane becomes terrified when she thinks that her deceased uncle's ghost might be haunting the room. This experience causes Jane extreme emotional trauma, leading to hysteria. Mrs. Reed's punishment has a lasting impact on Jane, leaving her with a strong desire to resist oppression and maintain her dignity. Although the ghostly manifestation in the red-room is only a product of Jane's fearful mind, this memory becomes a defining moment for her.

In Gateshead, Jane Eyre is oppressed not only by the Reed family but also by the household servants who treat her as inferior despite her uncle's wishes. This is evident in a conversation between Jane, Bessie, and Miss Abbot, all servants of the Reed family, where Miss Abbot suggests that Jane should be submissive to the family because she is living with them for free. The servants' words emphasize Jane's marginalized position within the household.

You ought to be aware, Miss, that you are under obligations to Mrs. Reed: she keeps you: if she were to turn you off, you would have to go to the poorhouse. I had nothing to say to these words: they were not new to me: my very first recollections of existence included hints of the same kind. This reproach of my dependence had become a vague sing-song in my ear: very painful and crushing, but only half intelligible. Miss Abbot joined in. And you ought not to think yourself on equality with the Misses Reed and Master Reed, because Missis kindly allows you to be brought up with them. They will have a great deal of

money, and you will have none: it is your place to be humble, and to try to make yourself agreeable to them (10-11).

During the second stage of her life, Jane goes through a significant classist experience at Lowood, the boarding school she was sent to. There, Jane becomes one of many oppressed girls who must obey the hypocritical master, Mr. Brocklehurst. Her early years at Lowood are particularly challenging since she has to endure severe living conditions, strict and brutal teachers, and the tyranny of Mr. Brocklehurst. However, his religious hypocrisy and cruelty are exposed through the poor treatment of the girls and the lack of food at Lowood. He justifies this treatment as a way to enforce modesty, but the stark contrast between the harsh conditions of the school and the luxurious lifestyle of Brocklehurst's own family reveals his hypocrisy.

I had got in hand a nauseous mess; burnt porridge is almost as bad as rotten potatoes; famine itself soon sickens over it. The spoons were moved slowly: I saw each girl taste her food and try to swallow it; but in most cases the effort was soon relinquished. Breakfast was over, and none had breakfasted (67).

Jane's third life stage took place at Thornfield, where she was employed as a governess. Her position as a governess in Thornfield places Jane in an ambiguous social status - she is a servant, but one with education and sophistication. However, despite being supported by Mr. Rochester, Jane is still considered to have a lower social status than him. He emotionally abuses Jane despite being married to Bertha Mason, and manipulates her with Miss Ingram to reveal her true feelings for him. Mr. Rochester uses his power and upper class position to control Jane, causing her to question her own social class, especially when confronted with his guests who

treat her with disdain and cruelty at a party. And insult her by discussing governesses and implying that they are all detestable and ridiculous. This insults Jane as she is a governess herself and is forced to sit and listen to their conversation.

No, you men never do consider economy and common sense. You should hear mama on the chapter of governesses: Mary and I have had, I should think, a dozen at least in our day; half of them detestable and the rest ridiculous, and all incubi - were they not, mama?(284).

3-2-Gender Oppression:

Charlotte Bronte, as a writer, was trying to portray the real situation and the suffering of Victorian women from the patriarchal rule that influenced their natural existence and oppressed them. The Victorian women were living under a strict rule that limited their freedom and made them objects in the hands of men. To maintain women's social status, a patriarchal rule imposed many standards to separate them from the social sphere. Sylvia Walby defines patriarchy as:

I shall define patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women...the use of the term social structures is important here, since it clearly implies rejection both of biological determinism, and the notion that every individual man is in a dominant position and every woman in a subordinate one (20).

In his book, the gender knot Allan Johnson states that a patriarchal society is characterized by the use of force and violence to enforce male control over women. It is also

argued that a society organized around control leverages coercion and violence against women. As the sole male in the Reed family, John assumes a position of authority. His control over the women in his family becomes evident when he mistreats them in both a physical and verbal manner. As well as the household staff, it is also apparent that this behaviour is extended to his cousin Jane; he orders her to comply with his demands and warns her that she will experience mental and physical harm as a result of not doing so. "The volume was flung, it hit me, and I fell, striking my head against the door and cutting it. The cut bled, the pain was sharp; my terror had passed its climax; other feelings succeeded "(07).

Despite escaping the Reed family, Jane Eyre continues to face oppression at Lowood School. In the novel, Mr. Brocklehurst embodies a new form of male authority. She describes him. "I looked up at—a black pillar such, at least, appeared to me, at first sight—the straight, narrow, sable-clad shape standing erect on the rug; the grim face at the top was like a carved mask, placed above the shaft by way of capital" (41).

Mr. Brocklehurst exercises his control aggressively as the head of Lowood Institution. He even informs the teachers of the school to punish her: "Teachers, you must watch her: keep your eyes on her movements, weigh well her words, scrutinise her actions, punish her body to save her soul" (101). Also, his character highlights the deeply rooted nature of patriarchy in societies where religion holds significant influence. Brocklehurst utilizes his position and religious status to exert control over others, particularly evident in his oppressive rule at Lowood School. Charlotte Bronte effectively exposes the negative consequences of patriarchal structures and the misuse of religion for oppressive purposes.

I have a master to serve whose kingdom is not of this world: my mission is to mortify in these girls the lusts of the flesh; to teach them to clothe themselves with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with braided hair and costly apparel; and each of the young persons before us has a string of hair 35 twisted in plaits which vanity itself might have woven: these, I repeat, must be cut off; think of the time wasted of (98).

Moving on to the third male character, St. John, a religious person and just like Mr. Brocklehurst, employs his religious doctrines to wield power over others, particularly Jane. He controls her and acts as if he is her master. " He acquired a certain influence over me that took away my liberty of mind....When he said 'go,' I went; 'come,' I came; 'do this,' I did it. But I did not love my servitude: I wished, many a time, he had continued to neglect me " (661). Despite Jane's lack of love and passion for him, he pressures her to marry him for the sake of duty and missionary work. He disregards her feelings and desires, viewing her as a tool to fulfil his ambitions rather than as an equal partner.

He will never love me...Consent, then, to his demand is possible: but for one item—one dreadful item. It is—that he asks me to be his wife, and has no more of a husband's heart for me than that frowning giant of a rock, down which the stream is foaming in yonder gorge. He prizes me as a soldier would a good weapon; and that is all (673).

The last but not least is Mr. Rochester, the wealthy master of Thornfield Manor, who meets the qualities of a perfect patriarchal Victorian. Rochester attempts to instil fear in her in order to gain her respect and obedience. He firmly believed in his own authority and superiority,

using descriptions such as "aerial figure," "elf," and "angel" to portray Jane as a submissive being. These depictions reflect the oppressive treatment of women as objects rather than equals. Throughout the novel, Rochester is depicted as giving orders and expecting Jane to comply.

Jane, I am not a gentle-tempered man—you forget that: I am not long enduring; I am not cool and dispassionate. Out of pity to me and yourself, put your fingers on my pulse, feel how it throbs, and—beware!’ He bared his wrist, and offered it to me: the blood was forsaking his cheek and lips, they were growing livid; I was distressed on all hands. To agitate him thus deeply, by a resistance he so abhorred, was cruel: to yield was out of the question. I did what human beings do instinctively when they are driven to utter extremity--looked for aid to one higher than man: the words 'God help me!' burst involuntarily from my lips (501-502).

4- Education as a Path to Empowerment:

Charlotte Bronte recognized the oppressive environment that Victorian women lived in and advocated for strategies to stand up to such abuse, with education being a powerful tool. In "Jane Eyre," Bronte depicts her protagonist, Jane Eyre, as being devoted to education, recognizing it as key for her freedom and liberation from social and male oppression. Oprah Winfrey once stated "Education is the key to unlocking the world, a passport to freedom". Jane's educational experiences play a pivotal role in her journey towards autonomy and individual growth.

Each stage of Jane's life corresponds to a sort of limitation she had to endure. She was completely aware of her marginalized position and the lack of interest in her well-being. Jane

expresses her desire to leave Gateshead but acknowledges her lack of choices. She hesitates when the idea of joining her poor relations is presented, reflecting on the negative connotations society attaches to poverty. Jane is uncertain about her family connections and considers poverty synonymous with degradation. She recognizes the challenges it presents, especially for children, and eventually states her hesitance to belong to poor individuals due to the hardships and limitations related to it.

If I had anywhere else to go, I should be glad to leave it; but I can never get away from Gateshead till I am a woman.' 'Perhaps you may—who knows? Have you any relations besides Mrs. Reed?' 'I think not, sir.' 'None belonging to your father?' 'I don't know. I asked Aunt Reed once, and she said possibly I might have some poor, low relations called Eyre, but she knew nothing about them.' 'If you had such, would you like to go to them?' I reflected. Poverty looks grim to grown people; still more so to children: they have not much idea of industrious, working, respectable poverty; they think of the word only as connected with ragged clothes, scanty food, fireless grates, rude manners, and debasing vices: poverty for me was synonymous with degradation. 'No; I should not like to belong to poor people,' was my reply (30).

This realization became the driving force behind her pursuit of comprehensive education to achieve success. Consequently, Jane departs from her aunt's residence and enrolls in Lowood School to overcome the injustice she encountered.

However, Jane Eyre had a strong thirst for knowledge even before she went to Lowood. She was curious and willing to learn, despite facing challenges and lacking educational

opportunities. Jane secretly read books and found comfort in them, always yearning for more knowledge" What were you doing behind the curtain? He asked" "I was reading" " I had read Goldsmith's History of Rome, and had formed my opinion of Nero" (06-07). When she finally arrived at Lowood, a charity school, her thirst for knowledge grew even stronger. She made the most of the educational opportunities at Lowood, excelling in her studies and devouring books from the library.

Her early education at Lowood Institution plays a pivotal role in her journey towards empowerment. At Lowood, Jane is exposed to a structured and disciplined educational environment, which contrasts starkly with her previously neglected and abusive upbringing. The education she receives at Lowood equips her with essential skills, knowledge, and self-confidence, serving as a stepping stone to her empowerment. At Lowood, Jane's intellectual development flourishes as she engages in rigorous academic pursuits. She becomes an excellent student, excelling in various subjects such as literature, history, and languages "I toiled hard, and my success was proportionate to my efforts; my memory, not naturally tenacious, improved with practice: exercise sharpened my wits"(114). Her dedication to learning instils in her a sense of curiosity. This intellectual growth allows Jane to question societal norms and challenge the oppressive circumstances she encounters later in life. As she reflects on her education, Jane states, "I am no bird, and no net ensnares me: I am a free human being with an independent will."

Through her experiences at school, she has learned significant moral and spiritual things. Jane's first spiritual guide is a friend of hers, Helen Burns, a fellow student at Lowood. Helen's acceptance of the hardships that life and Lowood throw at her at such an early age made Jane gradually develops a more Christian Identity similar to Helen's.

Life appears to me too short to be spent in nursing animosity, or registering wrongs. We are, and must be, one and all, burdened with faults in this world: but the time will soon come when, I trust, we shall put them off in putting off our corruptible bodies; when debasement and sin will fall from us with this cumbrous frame of flesh, and only the spark of the spirit will remain (88).

The Lowood School's head teacher Miss Temple becomes Jane's companion, role model, during their time together at Lowood. "To her instruction I owed the best part of my acquirements; her friendship and society had been my continual solace: she had stood me in the stead of mother, governess, and latterly, companion" (130).

In addition to that, Jane's formal education not only boosts her confidence but also opens up opportunities for her to become an educator. This new role not only provides her with a steady job but also brings her a sense of fulfilment throughout most of the novel. "I shall continue to act as Adele's governess; by that I shall earn my board and lodging, and thirty pounds a year besides. I'll furnish my own wardrobe out of that money." It is worth noting that such independence and autonomy in a female character were uncommon for the time.

Although Jane's journey as an educator begins during her time at Lowood and her educational experience helps her move up in social class and improves her financial stability compared to her dependent position at Gateshead.

In a few weeks I was promoted to a higher class; in less than two months I was allowed to commence French and drawing. I learned the first two tenses of the verb être, and sketched my first cottage (whose walls, by-the-bye, outvalled in

slope those of the leaning tower of Pisa), on the same day...I would not now have exchanged Lowood with all its privations, for Gateshead and its daily luxuries (114).

It is when she becomes a governess for Adele Varens at Thornfield Hall and later a schoolmistress for working-class girls in the village of Morton that her independence truly takes hold. These roles not only offer Jane financial stability but also grant her a certain level of social significance.

I now busied myself in preparations. The outfit I bought in Brussels for my own use; ... I had hired in Germany, a woman servant, to assist me in the household work. My ostensible errand on this occasion was to get measured for a pair of shoes; so I discharged that business first, and when it was done, I stepped across the clean and quiet little street from the shoemaker's to the post-office: it was kept by an old dame, who wore horn spectacles on her nose, and black mittens on her hands (139).

Furthermore, Jane's educational experience helped in her emotional and moral growth, especially in her relationship with Mr. Rochester. Through her education, Jane gains the knowledge and self-awareness to challenge societal expectations and assert her worth as an equal. She critically analyzes her relationship with Mr. Rochester, refusing to accept a subservient role. Her education empowers her to recognize the loveless nature of their relationship due to his existing marriage, leading her to make the difficult decision to leave Thornfield. Jane's choice demonstrates her emotional maturity, moral integrity, and prioritization

of self-respect. She confronts Mr. Rochester, asserting, "Do you think I can stay to become nothing to you? Do you think I am an automaton?—a machine without feelings?" (415).

In conclusion, Jane Eyre's empowerment in Charlotte Brontë's novel is intricately tied to her education. Through her educational experiences, Jane undergoes emotional and moral growth, enabling her to challenge societal expectations and assert her worth as an equal. Her relationship with Mr. Rochester plays a significant role in her development, as her education allows her to recognize the limitations placed upon her and make decisions that align with her integrity.

General Conclusion:

During the Victorian era, significant societal changes occurred. These changes significantly affected Victorian society's social structure. Charlotte Bronte, a prominent female writer of the time, depicts this era authentically, with an emphasis on women's rights. In her novel, Bronte reveals the oppression and stereotypes women faced at the time. Women were expected to be submissive and angelic figures in the domestic sphere. As a result, they faced double oppression, both by their class and gender. Despite this, Bronte gave women a strong individualistic view and presented them as independent seekers rather than oppressed slaves. Jane Eyre, as an educated woman, can overcome obstacles rooted in patriarchal oppression and class distinctions by challenging them.

The dissertation consists of three chapters. A general overview of the Victorian era is presented in the first chapter, which includes discussions of society, gender roles, and social class. The second chapter examines Victorian education, specifically boarding schools and the education of women. Lastly, the third chapter examines the interaction of class and gender in Jane Eyre and examines how Jane retains her independence as a result of her education.

Intersectionality was as relevant in the Victorian age as it was in the late 1980s, when Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term. It supports the view that class and gender cannot be separated in Jane Eyre. The novel explores the intersection of gender and class, influencing each other within the narrative. Although Jane Eyre has been extensively studied, the intersection of class and gender in the novel has received less attention. Hence, the intersectional approach taken in this dissertation fills that scholarly gap. The dissertation demonstrates that Jane Eyre depicts societies that are both classist and sexist. Jane Eyre is rich in social commentary on

gender and class. When examining gender roles and social class together, it becomes evident that class and gender are intertwined in *Jane Eyre*. The intersection of these two factors is crucial to understanding the protagonist's experience within her society. However, removing the implications of class would significantly alter the relationship between the protagonist and the men in her life, as gender ideas often stem from class values. For instance, the mistreatment Jane receives at Lowood is influenced by Mr. Brocklehurst's strong belief in the contemporary class hierarchy and the associated gender expectations for the middle class. Edward Rochester's treatment of Jane reflects both class oppression and gender oppression. By continually emphasizing the disparity between their social statuses and reinforcing societal norms that discourage relationships among individuals of different social classes, he repeatedly reminds Jane of her lower social status. Additionally, Rochester exerts dominance and control over Jane, making decisions without her. These actions exemplify how gender norms constrained women to submissive roles.

Particularly, these findings shed light on Victorian society's oppressive nature, with women facing double oppression based on their gender and social class. Through the exploration of the intersection of gender and class in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, the study exposes the specific difficulties women faced during this era. Also, it highlights women's limited education as a result of these constraints, the strict gender roles they were expected to conform to, and the social system that is responsible for their oppression. Additionally, the findings highlight the transformative power of education for the novel's protagonist, Jane, through which she challenges and overcomes these oppressive forces. Furthermore, this research opens up avenues for further exploration in related topics. Scholars could expand the analysis to cover additional aspects such as race or sexuality. Exploring the intersectionality of gender and other social

identities in literature from different time periods or cultural contexts would also be a valuable extension. Additionally, examining the role of education in empowering marginalized individuals in various literary works could provide insightful comparisons and contrasts.

Works Cited

1- Primary Source:

Bronte, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. London: Penguin English Library, 2012.

2- Secondary Sources:

A Quote by Oprah Winfrey. www.goodreads.com/quotes/70547-education-is-the-key-to-unlocking-the-world-a-passport.

Ayishashabana. "DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE VICTORIAN ENGLAND:"
Track2Training, 12 Jan. 2022, track2training.com/2022/01/12/development-of-education-in-the-victorian-england.

Brandon, Ruth. *Governess: The Lives and Times of the Real Jane Eyres*. Hardcover – Bargain Price, 2008.

British Library. *The British Library*, www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/gender-roles-in-the-19th-century.

Cannadian, David. "The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain." *The New Yourk Times*, 1999,
archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/first/c/cannadine-class.html. Accessed 13 June 2023.

Carter, Ronald. *The Routledge History of Literature in English*. 1997.

Chrisp, Peter. *The Victorian Age*. Facts on File, 2005.

Class. www.eng.fju.edu.tw/intro98/ray_student_page/group_2/class-M.htm.

Cleary, Laurel. "Victorian Boarding Schools." *The Classroom | Empowering Students in Their College Journey*, 14 May 2022, www.theclassroom.com/victorian-boarding-schools-12082497.html.

Cody, David. "Social Class." <https://victorianweb.org/history/Class.html>, 1988.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. “Kimberlé Crenshaw: What Is Intersectionality?” *YouTube*, 22 June 2018, www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViDtnfQ9FHc.

Crenshaw, Kimberle. “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color.” *Stanford Law Review*, vol. 43, no. 6, 1991, pp. 1241–99. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>. Accessed 27 May 2023.

Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*. Yale University Press, 2000.

Gomersall, M. *Working-Class Girls in Nineteenth-Century England: Life, Work and Schooling*. Springer, 1997.

Goufu, W. *Lectures on English Novels*. Chengdu: Sichuan Literature and Art Publishing House, 1987.

Heilmann, A. *New Woman Fiction: Women Writing First-Wave Feminism*. Springer, 2000.

Hooks, Bell. “Feminism Is for Everybody.” *Routledge eBooks*, 2014, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315743189>.

Hudson, Pat. “BBC - History - Women’s Work.” *BBC*, 29 Mar. 2011, https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/victorians/womens_work_01.shtml

Hughes, Kathryn. “The Figure of the Governess.” *The British Library*, 15 May 2014, www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/the-figure-of-the-governess.

Krolokke, Charlotte, and Anne Scott Sorensen. *Gender Communication Theories and Analyses: From Silence to Performance*. SAGE, 2006.

McCall, Leslie. “The Complexity of Intersectionality.” *Signs*, vol. 30, no. 3, University of Chicago Press, Mar. 2005, pp. 1771–800. <https://doi.org/10.1086/426800>.

Mitchell, Sally. *Daily Life in Victorian England*. Greenwood, 2009.

Mumford, Louise. “Women and Education in the UK From Victorian Times to the Present Day – a Potted History.” *www.linkedin.com*, *www.linkedin.com/pulse/women-education-uk-from-victorian-times-present-day-potted-mumford*.

Murfin, R., & Ray, S. (2003). *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*. Bedford/St. Martin's.

Oppression Noun - Definition, Pictures, Pronunciation and Usage Notes | Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com.

www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/oppression.

.

Peterson, M. Jeanne. “The Victorian Governess: Status Incongruence in Family and Society.” *Victorian Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1970, pp. 7–26. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3826404>. Accessed 16 July 2023.

Press, Editors of Salem, and Ruth A. Wienclaw. *Gender Roles and Equality*. 2011.

Purchase, Sean. *KEY CONCEPTS IN VICTORIAN LITERATURE*. 2006.

Ridout, Susan. *Letters to a Young Governess on the Principles of Education*. British Library, Historical Print Editions, 1838.

Shields, Stephanie A. “Gender: An Intersectionality Perspective.” *Sex Roles*, vol. 59, no. 5–6, Springer Science+Business Media, July 2008, pp. 301–11.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-008-9501-8>.

TheWorkingClass. www.eng.fju.edu.tw/intro98/ray_student_page/group_2/class-W.htm.

Tosh, John. *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-class Home in Victorian England*. Yale UP, 1999.

Tyler, Helen Anne. *Education and Social Mobility 1870 - 1914: A Study of Four Schools in the Registration District of Hitchin in Hertfordshire*. 26 Aug. 2015, uhra.herts.ac.uk/handle/2299/16367.

Vanity Fair, vanityfairproject.weebly.com/education.html.

Victorian Era. "Victorian Era Upper Class: Men and Women's Life." *Victorian Era*, 7 May 2020, victorian-era.org/victorian-era-upper-class.html.

Wilson, Lynne. *The Higher Education of Women in the Victorian Era*. englishhistoryauthors.blogspot.com/2012/03/higher-education-of-women-in-victorian.html.

Wood, Wendy. "Feminism and the Evolution of Sex Differences and Similarities." *Sex Roles*, vol. 39, no. 1-2, 1998, pp. 89-92.

World Health Organization: WHO. "Gender." www.who.int, June 2019, www.who.int/health-topics/gender#tab=tab_1.

Résumé

Dans *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë dépeint vivement l'oppression des femmes pendant l'époque victorienne, où la plupart des femmes étaient façonnées en créatures dépendantes du foyer. L'objectif principal de cette dissertation est d'explorer l'intersection de la classe sociale et des rôles de genre victoriens. Pour atteindre cet objectif, cette recherche utilise le concept d'intersectionnalité, proposé par le cadre féministe, pour montrer qu'il n'est pas possible de discuter du genre dans *Jane Eyre* sans tenir compte de la classe sociale. Les problèmes de classe sociale ont contribué, tout comme les préjugés de genre victoriens, à l'oppression des femmes au XIXe siècle. De plus, elle explore le parcours de Jane Eyre vers l'autonomie par le biais de l'éducation. En examinant les forces oppressives, la recherche met en évidence les façons dont les femmes font face à une double oppression. Cependant, l'étude présente également une perspective optimiste en illustrant comment les femmes victoriennes instruites représentées par Jane Eyre ont pu surmonter ces défis.

Mots-clés : Charlotte Brontë, Jane Eyre, Intersectionnalité, Ère victorienne, Double oppression, Classe sociale, Rôles de genre, Éducation.

الملخص

تصور شارلوت بروننتي في روايتها جين آير بوضوح اضطهاد النساء في العصر الفيكتوري وكيف أن معظمهن يلقي بهن في حياة منزلية تابعة. الهدف الرئيسي من هذه الورقة هو استكشاف التداخل بين الطبقة الاجتماعية وأدوار الجنسين في العصر الفيكتوري. لتحقيق هذا الهدف تستخدم هذه الدراسة مفهوم التقاطعية الذي اقترحه الإطار النسوي لإظهار أنه لا يمكن مناقشة الجنس في جين آير دون النظر إلى الطبقة الاجتماعية. لأن الطبقة الاجتماعية والطريقة التي كان ينظر بها إلى النوع الاجتماعي في المجتمع الفيكتوري ساهمت في اضطهاد النساء في القرن التاسع عشر. بالإضافة إلى ذلك تستكشف الدراسة رحلة جين آير نحو الاستقلال من خلال التعليم. من خلال فحص قوى الاضطهاد تسلط الدراسة الضوء على الطرق التي تواجه بها المرأة اضطهادا مزدوجا. ومع ذلك تقدم الدراسة أيضا نظرة متفائلة حول كيفية تغلب المرأة الفيكتورية المتعلمة التي تمثلها جين آير على هذه التحديات .

الكلمات المفتاحية: شارلوت بروننتي ،جين آير ،التقاطعية ،العصر الفيكتوري ،الاضطهاد المزدوج ،الطبقة الاجتماعية

ادوار الجنسين ،التعليم.

