

MA ENGLISH

SEMESTER I

Realism and Fiction

ENA 250

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CHARLOTTE BRONTE

an English novelist and poet
the eldest of the three Brontë
sisters, who published works
under their assumed names

Currer bell

Ellis bell

Acton bell

WORKS

Jane Eyre (1847)

Shirley (1849)

Villette (1853)

The Professor (1857)

Unfinished novel of Charlotte
published by Clare Boylan (an
Irish author, journalist & critic)
in 2003, titled ***Emma Brown***

CHARLOTTE BRONTE

**Mrs Gaskell is the
Author of Charlotte Bronte's
Biography, *Life of Charlotte
Bronte***

**Mrs Gaskell (Elizabeth
Gaskell) a Victorian English
novelist and biographer was
a friend of Charlotte
Bronte**

JANE EYRE

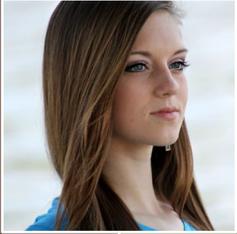
Charlotte Bronte

1847

OVERVIEW OF JANE EYRE

- Coming of age story, combines the elements of romance, melodrama, gothic supernaturalism - visionary, and the horrific
- **Jean Rhys**, Dominican-British author, wrote a prequel about Bertha Mason (Mrs. Rochester) titled ***The Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966)**
- ***Jane Eyre*** portrays realistically the inner life of a woman, Jane, an orphan with a strong sense of self
- Charlotte Brontë's magnum opus, ***Jane Eyre*** questions most of society's major institutions - including education, family, social class, and Christianity

CHARACTERS



Jane Eyre

- Simple & plain
- Emotionally strong
- Narrator
- Lacks interest for tyrannous authority figures



Edward Fairfax Rochester

- **Mysterious, sardonic, hot headed, brash**
- **Despotic, forceful**
- **Seen as 'dark anti-hero'**



Mrs Reed

- Real name- Sarah Reed
- Aunt to Jane

CHARACTERS

John Reed

- spoiled cousin of Jane
- Responsible to send Jane to Red Room
- Addicted to drinking and gambling
- commits suicide at the age of twenty-three

Eliza Reed

- Jane's spoiled cousin
- shows no sympathy for her dying mother
- leaves her money to the church
- eventually becomes the Mother Superior

Georgiana Reed

- **Eliza's and John's sister**
- **shallow and self-centred**
- **beauty of the family**
- **marries a wealthy man**

CHARACTERS



Mr. Lloyd

- apothecary
- Suggests that Jane be sent to school
- Writes a letter to Miss Temple clearing Jane's accusations



Mr. Brocklehurst

- mean-hearted manager of Lowood
- minister of Brocklebridge Church
- represents a negative brand of Christianity



Helen Burns

- Jane's spiritual and intellectual friend at Lowood
- Jane learns tolerance and peace from her
- Dies in Jane's arms of consumption

CHARACTERS

Bertha Mason

Creole woman
Rochester's wife
Symbolised as a foreign "savage"
crazy woman in the attic
sets fire to
Thornfield and
jumps to her death

Blanche Ingram

beautiful and
haughty
a fortune-hunter
materialist model
of femininity

Adèle Varens

Jane's pupil at
Thornfield
initially shows
unpleasantly
French
egocentrism
by the end of the
novel becomes a
docile, pleasant
companion for
Jane

CHARACTERS

Grace Poole

- **Bertha's keeper at Thornfield**
- **accused of perpetrating all of Bertha's sins in the household**

Mother Bunches

- **a gypsy fortune-teller during a house party at Thornfield**
- **Jane identifies the real person as Mr. Rochester**

Mr. Briggs

- **John Eyre's attorney**
- **prevents Jane's bigamous marriage to Rochester**
- **On John Eyre's death, he searches for Jane Eyre so that she can claim her inheritance**

CHARACTERS

John Eyre

- **Jane's uncle**
- **A wine merchant at Madeira, makes good fortune**
- **Plans to adopt Jane, but dies before they meet**
- **Leaves 20,000 pounds on Jane's name**

Richard Mason

- **Bertha's brother**
- **Reaches Thornfield on learning Rochester's wedding to Jane**
- **Thwarts Rochester's bigamous intentions by objecting Jane's wedding with Rochester in Church**

Bessie Lee

- **A maid at Gateshead**
- **Appears to be harsh in presence of Mrs Reed**
- **Sympathetic to Jane in Mrs Reed's absence and narrates stories and consoles Jane**

CHARACTERS

St. John Rivers

Jane's cousin, works as the minister at Morton

wants to become a missionary in India & forces Jane to marry him

spends the rest of his life furthering British colonialism by forcing Christian values on the natives

Symbolises British imperialism

Alice Fairfax

Motherly character

A housekeeper at Thornfield Hall

Helps Jane to feel at home in Thornfield

Céline

Adèle's mother a Parisian opera-singer

once she was Mr Rochester's mistress

Breaks off her relations with Rochester

Negative model of femininity having materialistic aims

PLACES

Gateshead

- Redroom

Lowood

- A charity school at Lowton
- Symbolically shows a “low” point in Jane’s young life

PLACES

Thornfield

- **Mr Edward Rochester's country Estate at Blankshire (Shire)**

Whitcross

- **Moor House far off to Thornfield**
- **Jane receives her inheritance from John Eyre granting her stability**

PLACES

Morton

- a schoolroom cottage given to Jane by wealthy Rosamond Oliver

Ferndean

- Jane & Rochester marry
- Symbolises a new growth and happiness in their life

PREOCCUPATIONS IN *JANE EYRE*

- **Reflects Victorian England and life of different segments of society**

Reflects snobbish society

John Reed is the expression of a class gone sour

He is bloated by the indulgent materialism of the bourgeoisie

Jane's life with the Reeds shows the miserable life of orphans as dependents

- **Mason is the weak and degenerate issue of the colonial system**

In typical Brontean fashion, Richard Mason's life is the result of the power and corruption of money and class consciousness

PREOCCUPATIONS IN *JANE EYRE*

- **greater freedom for women and female experience over time**
 - Shows Jane as a heroine, who refuses to stay in her place and progresses from dependent, oppressed child to independent woman with the historical evolution of greater dignity and freedom for the average man
 - Jane's quest for economic freedom and spiritual independence takes her on a metaphorical journey
 - Jane's development as a liberated Victorian woman, achieves mastery over herself without desiring mastery over others

PREOCCUPATIONS IN *JANE EYRE*

- **slavery and imperialism in the Lowood/Thornfield and the Marsh End sections**
 - young Jane talk about her experiences both at Gateshead and Lowood "appropriating" the language of slavery
 - Brontë's use of the concept of slavery for the helplessness felt by a child has both pedagogical and psychological bases
 - Jane's development as a liberated Victorian woman, achieves mastery over herself without desiring mastery over others

NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES IN *JANE EYRE*

- **Representation of reality**
 - Life-like characters
 - Everyday experiences of the characters, which are relatable in nature
 - Plausible plots
 - No falsification of truth or situation
 - Depiction of frustration in human life
 - Emphasis on appearance of what is reality and true to life