



Jane Eyre: Unfolding the Unbeaten

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Abstract: Many critics feel that Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847) lends a voice to gender equality and liberated femininity. At the same time, they do not perceive Jane in the role of a detective, who through her curiosity, is able to interrogate the patriarchal dominance of Mr. Rochester, and also to design herself as a lady who sees life at Thornfield logically which puts into consideration man's supposed prerogative to dominate truth. Jane discovers male criminality, and parallel to that her curiosity takes her towards knowing her own self. Her flowering personality is molded by an expressive, extrovert and questioning self which seemed against the law to the middle-class concepts of the age. Jane stresses upon her feminine identity via her detective task, making use of her anxiety to authorize her and represent the liberated thinking for which Mr. Rochester loves her. Charlotte Bronte forms a concept of selfhood for her heroine that succeeds in questioning male concepts of standards providing Jane a false-legal power to recognize not only Mr. Rochester's, but even the crime of women. Jane is a victim of her faith in Rochester. The so-called search for the truth is only a search for fulfillment and self discovery, thereafter brought about by overcoming her suppressed anger. Jane's success in unfolding the mystery of Grace and Rochester would have entitled her to be her employer's superior. *Jane Eyre* is a realistic novel with improbable and gothic components, of which the vampire motif is a part. Jane avoids possession by any negative typification. If she is overtaken by an archetype, it is the ideal of love, and this possession empowers her to become her own self--a complete woman. The present study struggles to unfold the unbeaten. In *Jane Eyre*, the experience of a woman's gazing on the freak body is portrayed as no less problematic; staring on is also staring in and being stared upon.

Keywords: challenge, criminal, detective, equality, femininity, fulfillment, gender, identity, liberated, mystery, victim.

INTRODUCTION

Many critics feel that Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847) lends a voice to gender equality and liberated femininity. At the same time, they do not perceive Jane in the role of a detective, who through her curiosity, is able to interrogate the patriarchal dominance of Mr. Rochester, and also to design herself as a lady who sees life at Thornfield logically which puts into consideration man's supposed prerogative to dominate truth. Jane discovers male criminality, and parallel to that her curiosity takes her towards knowing her own self. Her flowering personality is molded by an expressive, extrovert and questioning self which seemed against the law to the middle-class concepts of the age.

Jane stresses upon her feminine identity via her detective task, making use of her anxiety to authorize her and represent the liberated thinking for which Mr. Rochester loves her. Charlotte Bronte forms a concept of selfhood for her heroine that succeeds in questioning male concepts of standards providing Jane a false-legal power to recognize not only Mr. Rochester's, but even the crime of women.

Jane Eyre stands for one kind of this energetic character because even though she is in a subordinate position as a governess, she is so straightforward which does not go along the character of a maid. She renders her opinion and advises her master openly. The vigorous character demonstrated through the heroine's straightforwardness is because of her so-termed "rebellious feminism" (Gilbert, S. M. & Gubar, S. 1984) which sprouts from the life-defining rage that Jane had been experiencing since her stay at Gateshead and Lowood. The Victorian society was shocked by Jane's detective role and regarded it as "dangerous to the order of the society" (Ibid., p.338), an order that stood upon concepts of patriarchal superiority.

In her coming across with patriarchal powers, Jane is compelled to view herself as the exhibit or the spectator, in the image of an anomalous figure. She not only says 'no' to male dominance, but ultimately defies the subjecting authority and gaze. Jane, the orphan who desires to be accepted, both fears and embraces the unruly energy to question her closely defined existence and the traditional matter of course. This energy displays itself already at the beginning of *Jane Eyre*, in the window-seat reading. Jane's reading represents defiance of male dominance, and there is an unconscious desire for authority, to be in a position to control or punish. She believes the possible power lies in the capacity to view without being viewed and judged.

Patriarchal oppression is not only related to gender discipline, but also to the imperial implications of authority and domination. Rochester desires to instruct Jane into submitting to his sexual desires. He wants to peep into her personal life and questions her insensitively, this shattering down of form makes her succeed in being less formal. Concerning that matter, her anxiety—a significant constituent of her strong-willed move—instead of limiting itself to unnecessary talk with the servants, is centered on her employer, hence, trying to dismantle the mystery of unequivalence which inspires rage and frustration lying beneath her.

Jane is in contrast to the character of Mrs. Fairfax and Grace Poole who are spokeswomen for male dominated Victorian society. Her offence of self identity is overruled by her role as a detective owing to whose mediation the truth is known, and happiness can be achieved at length. Grace Poole's mysterious laughter in Chapter II seems to be false and haunting to Jane. Mrs. Fairfax realizes that Jane's anxiety has been aired, and so explains that Grace Poole "is a person we have to sew and assist Leah in her housemaid's work... not altogether unobjectionable in some points, but she does well enough." (Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, Beirut: York Press, 1993, p.99) Mrs. Fairfax does not shed light upon the disagreeable aspects of Grace Poole, but employs her in a good way as a shield behind which the insane wife of Rochester can be hidden. In that way, Grace is the "madwoman's public representative" (Gilbert & Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic*, p.350), and it appears to be part of Grace's contract to be the alter ego—the sane facade—of Bertha. Mrs. Fairfax intentionally plays with Jane's anxiety to divert her from exploring the mystery of Thornfield, and also to shatter her dreams to be a good detective, which would, surely, counteract the gender stereotype of a governess devoid of opinion, and fix her transgressive character as an alive woman.

However, she cannot combine the appearance of Grace with the mysterious display of the laugh, and hence is not convinced with Mrs. Fairfax's explanation that Leah and Grace "are frequently noisy together."

(Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, p.99) Mrs. Fairfax repeats her guidelines to Grace which she comprehends very well.

By this time, Jane is conscious of the common appearance of Grace Poole as "a woman of between thirty and forty; a set, square-made figure, red-haired, and with a hard, plain face: any apparition less romantic or less ghostly could scarcely be conceived." (Ibid., p.99) This appearance, however, is extremely contrary to her viewing the laughter, as "distinct, formal, mirthless and very low" (Ibid., 98); its effect is haunting and after it has ceased briefly, it "passed off in a clamorous peal that seemed to echo in every lonely chamber." (Ibid., p.98) To Jane, "the laugh was as tragic, as preternatural a laugh as any I ever heard (Ibid., p.99)."

Another mystery that Jane sets out to uncover is why Mr. Rochester has just ever lived at Thornfield. Mrs. Fairfax thinks it likely there were a good few misperceptions between the Rochester brothers, and as a consequence he has not been staying at Thornfield for two weeks in conjunction, for as much as the demise of his brother, minus a will, left him master of the holdings. Jane felt that Mrs. Fairfax wished that they should not talk of Mr. Rochester's trials:

I should have liked something clearer; but Mrs. Fairfax either could not, or would not, give me more explicit information on the origin and nature of Mr. Rochester's trials. She averred they were a mystery to herself, and that what she knew was chiefly from conjecture. It was evident, indeed, that she wished me to drop the subject (Ibid., p.119).

As she comes closer to Mr. Rochester, and he displays his trust in her by confiding to her about his love affair with Celine Varens, Jane once again questions herself why, in spite of the joy he obtains from his current stay, he is most often hesitant to visit Thornfield. After coming to know of the love affair between Mr. Rochester and Celine, she cannot sleep and all of a sudden "I started wide awake on hearing a vague murmur, peculiar and lugubrious, which sounded, I thought, just above me (Ibid., p.138)." She is horrified and feels that someone had touched her room door, "as if fingers had swept the panels in groping a way along the dark gallery outside (Ibid., p.138)." The coming silence quietens her, just to make her more sensitive to the chilled to the bone laugh that she will experience soon: "This was a demoniac laugh—low, suppressed, and deep—uttered, as it seemed, at the very keyhole of my chamber-door (Ibid., p.138)." She feels that the laughter has an abnormal reverberate, the same as being bubbled and mourned. She hears staircase retreating, and the door to the third floor opening and shutting, and ultimately believes that Grace Poole is devil in the flesh, and she is behind producing the

laughter. She decides to wake Mrs. Fairfax and narrate the night's incidents. On stepping into the corridor, she sees that Mr. Rochester's room is set ablaze and extinguishes the fire to save him.

On narrating the incidents of the night to Rochester, he "listened very gravely; his face, as I went on, expressed more concern than astonishment: he did not immediately speak when I had concluded (Ibid., p.140)." Jane acutely notices his facial expression and form, and feels that she has not probed mystery which surrounds Grace Poole and Mr. Rochester's so called wish to protect her.

When on the night of the fire—after having talked to Grace—Rochester comes back to his chamber, he is not ready to provide any justification to Jane. Instead, he wants to know if she had seen any object or any person when she peeped into the corridor.

Jane obviously senses that she has gained the trust of Mr. Rochester, particularly so since he notices that, apart from him, she is the only one who is acquainted with the precise details of the night. In fact, anyhow, she only believes and takes for granted what he wishes her to know and ponder over.

The beginning of the second volume shows Leah and Grace in Rochester's chamber, preparing rings to the new curtains. Jane, believing that Grace is behind the fire of the previous night, is surprised at witnessing her, seemingly without tension busy in her task:

There she sat, staid and taciturn-looking, as usual in her brown stuff gown, her check apron, white handkerchief, and cap. She was intent on her work, in which her whole thought seemed absorbed: on her hard forehead, and in her commonplace features, was nothing either of the paleness or desperation one would have expected to see marking the countenance of a woman who had attempted murder; and whose intended victim had followed her last night to her lair, and (as I believed) charged her with the crime she wished to perpetrate. I was amazed --- confounded. She looked up while I gazed at her: no start, no increase or failure of colour betrayed emotion, consciousness of guilt, or fear of detection (Ibid., p.143).

Jane is very confused and thinks of examining her, attempting to discover if she is the one who burnt the bed curtains. To her, Grace stands for out-and-out inaccessibility, hence, through her hidden deed, also disrupting the conventional gender conceptualization of the eighteenth century. Grace Poole behaves as if she is aware of nothing, and narrates a story to Jane that may have been earlier been agreed upon with Mr. Rochester. Jane probes into something of wakefulness in the bearing of Grace's eyes, but fails to go deep into the

latter's flashy freshness. Opposingly, she is aroused, and rejects with some affability Grace's belief that she had been mooning. By this time, she is startled at and convinced of Grace's "miraculous self-possession and most inscrutable hypocrisy" (Ibid., p.145), but parallel to it realizes that Grace may be attempting to discover how much she is aware of the incidents of the last night. Jane curiously meditates: "She appeared to be cross-questioning me; attempting to draw from me information unawares. The idea struck me that if she discovered I knew or suspected her guilt, she would be playing off some of her malignant pranks on me (Ibid., p.144)." Surely, Jane does not just encounter the wicked Grace, but Rochester also plays the role of the detective as he makes sure if she has any knowledge about the secret of the laughter that he---as Jane's confidante --- might misguide or reject to flee away from discovery.

Grace does not disobey Jane actively and advises her to keep a watch on her. Also, to shut her room door, in view of the fact that she regards it finest to be in error in safe hands. Jane's accusation of Grace's guilt changes into a continual search for a cause why Rochester should keep her in his home:

I hardly heard Mrs. Fairfax's account of the curtain conflagration during dinner, so much was I occupied in puzzling my brains over the enigmatical character of Grace Poole, and still more in pondering the problem of her position at Thornfield, and questioning why she had not been given into custody that morning, or, at the very least, dismissed from her master's service. He had almost as much as declared his conviction of her criminality last night: what mysterious cause withheld him from accusing her? Why had he enjoined me, too, to secrecy? It was strange: a bold, vindictive, and haughty gentleman seemed somehow in the power of one of the meanest of his dependants; so much in her power, that even when she lifted her hand against his life, he dared not openly charge her with the attempt, much less punish her for it (Ibid., p.145).

Still, Jane is confused by Rochester's persistent remark that Grace is "close and quiet; any one might repose confidence in her (Ibid., p.186)." Anyhow, she is not gratified with this guarantee and seeks for another reason---till now hidden from her---why Rochester could desire to keep concealed what Jane believes to be Grace's trial on his life.

After meeting Richard Mason, Jane, in the long run, believes that all the residents of Thornfield are captured in a network of dread. Actually, the fury displayed by Bertha mirrors the storm in Jane's own mind which at this juncture is totally under control of unsurety and rage at being unsuccessful in solving the mystery.

The day before her wedding, when Jane describes Bertha as a purple devil, the disgusting German ghost and the bloodsucker, Rochester says that these are creations of mind's eye and outcomes of bad dreams. When he says that he will lift the cover from the complete mystery once they are united, she firmly starts believing that there is a terrible secret.

Eventually, Richard Mason reveals the sickening secret of Rochester at his wedding. Rochester confesses that "I charged them (Mrs. Fairfax and Grace) to conceal from you, before I ever saw you, all knowledge of the curse of the place (Ibid., p.285)."

Mrs. Fairfax increases Jane's confusion by making sure that the guidelines of Rochester concerning his insane wife are put into practice. She does not interfere to prevent the marriage, in spite of her warnings to Jane to be cautious. She is without voice and criminalizes herself on behalf of her employer. Jane is shocked by Rochester's confession that he is married, and given that does not like to stay at Thornfield.

Jane is a victim of her faith in Rochester. The so-called search for the truth is only a search for fulfillment and self discovery, thereafter brought about by overcoming her suppressed anger. Jane's success in unfolding the mystery of Grace and Rochester would have entitled her to be her employer's superior.

Jane fails as a detective on the grounds that she has been very credulous in believing those she trusted. She gets rid of her apprehension through her courage and the trust in her competence to find out the truth. By and by, she gains happiness in view of her failure in her detective task, since she would have left Rochester earlier if she had known of his flowering love and confinement of his wife.

When all is said and done, Jane is able to marry Rochester as his equal for as much as she has almost magically come into her own inheritance from her uncle. She is financially independent and can be united with Rochester on an identical level. She overcomes her social inferiority in all parts of her superior task of a detective. This liberated self makes Rochester love her as well as distinguishes her from the other maid. The earliest critics perceived her as standing "for an equality among men that transcends differences in material possessions and social rank (Richard Benvenuto, 1972)." Her femininity together with love for Rochester have ranked her above men. Moreover, her penetrating mind has assisted her to comprehend the human psyche of those she comes across, at the same time enabling her to comfort and heal her husband's old wounds.

In *Jane Eyre*, Jane accepts an implied challenge to reveal that she is romantically and sexually irresistible to her social superior. Her temptation is grounded in a traditional fantasy of security and social position. She

identifies with the Reeds, regardless of hatred for their thinking plus manners. When presented with a choice -- to go with poor relative, or to go to school --- Jane does not hesitate: "I could not see how poor people had the means of being kind, and then to learn to speak like them, to adopt their manners, to be uneducated, to grow up like one of the poor women I saw sometimes nursing their children or washing their clothes at the cottage doors of the village of Gateshead: no, I was not heroic enough to purchase liberty at the price of caste (Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, p.18)." As Jina Politi notices, Jane is not ready "to exchange material comforts and the possibility of social mobility for family and affection (Jina Politi, "Jane Eyre Class-ified," *Literature and History* 8, 1982, p.57)." She is ambitious to raise her standard, nevertheless identifies with the middle class.

At Thornfield, according to Gayatri Spivak, Jane has an "illicit counter-family" (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 1985) which is more gratifying than the counter-family at Lowood, which is only a community of women. Rochester treats women of his own class---women---very differently from the way he treats Jane. Politi believes that "class difference with Jane ... provides an extra dose of sexual arousal" (Jina Politi, "Jane Eyre Class-ified," p.63).

In Joyce Carol Oates's opinion, *Jane Eyre* is "remarkable for its forthright declaration of its heroine's various passions and appetites." (Joyce Carol Oates, 1985) Jane is attracted towards Rochester's rough appearance. His equally rough looks captivate her: "they were full of an interest, an influence that quite mastered me --- that took my feelings from my own power and fettered them in his." (Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, p.163) She is emotionally hungry, similar to the constant hunger she experienced at Lowood. She is like a captive who loves her keeper.

Jane's intense feeling for Rochester is not in proportion and is spiritually distorted. One of the most seductive temptations encountered by her is the need to be regarded as a moral person. She is also allured by her want for approval. She is scorned by people around her. She is steered to endeavor for not a single thing, deficient of moral excellence. Once she gains love of Rochester, her fear of losing him grows extensively. She is forced to prove that she is good. Her feeling for Rochester comes to take the place of divine worship.

"Jane Eyre is 18 and Edward Rochester in his latter 30s when the two meet. But Jane's hard-won exceptional maturity makes that gap seem significantly less in Charlotte Bronte's novel (www.daveastoronliterature.com)."

Jane's tale is a complex fiction of moral contest. Rochester's cruelty is born of desperation. Already married, he treats Jane like the fallen woman she would

become after their marriage. She is shown felling, but actually does not fell. She suffers a public rite of degradation, in order to obtain repentance, to come back to the world free of sin. She must pass through severe trials before emerging as an active, moral woman. Conclusively, she returns to her love, shining with repentance, family and wealth, along with a new authority. Through public insult, confession and sickness, beggary and contempt—Jane gets redemption. Her felling is perceived in spiritual, and not sexual terms. She restores her own perspective, so that assuredly God is in his heaven and her love in his wing chair. In her spiritual achievement, she becomes a woman of great significance. She displays the ability of Charlotte to create female protagonists who go beyond popular stereotypes while facing the timeless human challenge of worldly temptation.

Readers' hunger for monstrous amazements is satisfied by Charlotte Bronte through scenes such as the attic scene on the third floor of Thornfield in the novel. The amazing power of this scene rests upon more than the images from nineteenth-century freak shows. Like an expert in the rhetoric of a freak show, Rochester introduces Bertha saying: "Bertha Mason ... came from a mad family; idiots and maniacs through three generations! Her mother, the Creole, was both a madwoman and a drunkard!" (Ibid., p.277) He desires the people gathered there to see her as the monstrous: "You shall see what sort of a being I was cheated into espousing, and judge whether or not I had a right to break the compact, and seek sympathy with something at least human." (Ibid., p.278) He wants to gain people's compassion by considering him as a victim. In order to dehumanize Bertha, he points out to the differences in her physical appearances and that of Jane. "Compare these clear eyes with the red balls yonder – this face with that mask – this form with that bulk." (Ibid., p.279) He closes the scene in the words of a ring master in the circus and Bertha as his belonging—"Off with you now. I must shut up my prize (Ibid., p.279)."

The Rochester-Bertha freak show is one of the freak show implied comparisons underlining Jane's struggle, so as to approach a female selfhood which is wished for. Her journey comprises of being treated like an outcast, addressing her as a "bad animal" (Robert Bogdan, 1988) due to a hybrid social union, as she is the orphan daughter of a poor maid and a wealthy man to attaining the position of an English lady. This displays the comparative relationship of the battles of a woman to lay stress upon her self and freakery as a cultural sermon.

From a feminist point of view, Bertha is perceived as the colonial body whose presence is an inseparable part of her inscription of her protagonist's subjectivity which is representative of the age. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak believes that Jane's journey from the "counter-family marginalization to the marital and sexual self-

location in the family – in-law set is formulated by the unquestioned ideology of imperialist axiomatics." (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 1986) She observes that Jane's battle for feministic individualism does not cover the claim for humanity by Bertha, the domestic theme. Susan Meyer argues against Spivak's concept of exclusion and perceives more ambiguity in the manners in which "the ideology of imperialism is interrogated and then re-stressed in Jane's resemblance with and differentiation from Bertha's body of the dark race." (Susan Meyer, 1996) However, the novelist is not just making use of the 'other' to create or define Jane. Relating and unrelating Jane's body with a woman's subjected body, she employs freak shows to stress upon patriarchal oppression, and also to formulate her awareness of how the perception of the freakish bodies gets over determined culturally and politically in the Victorian age, during which the English people saw the most severe phenomena of freak shows. A woman's form displayed as a freak represents patriarchal domination. It reveals women's subordinate social status by relating them intimately to the body and holding them within bodies that are shown as and even formed as dominated and unruly. Charlotte Bronte, here evokes the images, structure and the ideological implications of freak shows, in order to display a gendered dynamic of authority and resistance.

At Lowood, Jane realizes patriarchal oppression. The discipline is imposed on behaviors and activities as well. The manager there declares that his vocation is to subdue the carnal desires in the girls. He uses racial impurity as a representative of Jane's moral impurity. He and the teachers ought to abuse her body to rescue her soul. This is in accordance with Charlotte's own experiences at a missionary school which she attended as a child where children were punished to redeem their souls.

Jane's resistance is formulated by her embracing of the freakish rebellious energy through her denial of the compliant bodies. The subversion of Brocklehurst's dominance is displayed in her bonds with two women viewers of her display, Helen and Miss Temple.

Creation, presentation and analysis of the exhibition of best possible drawings turns into an act of empowerment. Jane looks back at her bygone experiences and the people whose impact was there on her life, and incorporates the pictures of other characters to frame her autobiographical portrait, employing language as a medium to make her reader perceive the characters, nonetheless protects herself against his critical eye.

Susan Meyer thinks, "Bronte's anti-imperialist politics is more self-interested than benevolent. The implicit opposition to imperialism sprouts basically not out of being bothered for the good of the colonized, but for the imperialists in contact with the blacks and in risk

of being infected by such contact (Susan Meyer, *Imperialism at Home: Race and Victorian Women's Fiction*, p.81)."

Bertha's anomalous figure, hence, becomes representative of the tension between the derogatory look of the society that continuously isolates Jane and her battles towards assertion and acceptance.

Bertha's display as freak, encompassing domination and resistance is significantly the object lesson for Jane about the risk she is exposed to as a spectator. It is only through her own sufferings, and perceiving that Rochester's marriage proposal is not genuine and just a sexual game, that Jane starts considering the mistresses as pitiable girls and Bertha as an out of luck woman, with Rochester as self-righteous and unstoppable: "You speak of her (Bertha) with hate – with vindictive antipathy. It is cruel – she cannot help being mad (Ibid., p.286)."

She falls for Rochester, as Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar hint in *The Madwoman in the Attic* as he is "the only qualified critic of her art and soul." (Sandra M. Gilbert & Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*, p.352) The freak image thrust upon Jane at Gateshead and Lowood, and later on rejected by her evolves in a more hideous way in Bertha's body.

Jane encounters the risk of becoming not only a dehumanized show-piece, on top of that, also a subjugated mind. Her fantasy which she has employed for self-assertion, turns at Thornfield into an expression of powerlessness and self-suppression. Her curiosity, defined as a deformed part of her mind she wishes to, but finds it hard to dissociate from, dominates her view of herself.

Bertha's body, enveloping Jane's potential risk and absorbing her curiosity transforms roles, and an inversion of power relations that form the remaining of the novel, concluding in Jane's reunion with Rochester. After all, Rochester is punished as his body becomes deformed and devoid of the rebellious energy. In the coming together of Jane and Rochester, Charlotte reverses the power bond between them by giving her superior status of a host. She returns to Rochester as an absolute lady and her own mistress. He is not her master anymore.

The story comes to an end by ascribing Jane not only visual, but also textual authority as a host. This extends her relation with her reviewer. As a narrator and the author of a work entitled *Jane Eyre*, she also discloses to and guides her avid reader through her remembrances. At the same time, she states: "I am only bound to invoke memory where I know her responses will possess some degree of interest." (Ibid., p.75)

Exhibiting, analyzing and evaluating other characters, Jane the host, on the other side, does not permit her reader to frame her in well-defined portraits. Her self is one of dissatisfaction, a woman speaking against the confined impression of women, involved only in domestic household chores. She says in her autobiography: "I am not writing to flatter parental egotism, to echo cant, or prop up humbug; I am merely telling the truth. ... anybody may blame me who likes ... (Ibid., p.100)."

Jane Eyre is a realistic novel with improbable and gothic components, of which the vampire motif is a part. Jane avoids possession by any negative typification. If she is overtaken by an archetype, it is the ideal of love, and this possession empowers her to become her own self--a complete woman.

Rochester is the older partner, in relation to age and experience; she is the young woman who is stronger in terms of character and values. Jane does not want a vampire, yet Rochester has some shadowy features. Perhaps, Bertha has turned him into a potential vampire. Jane is forced to become his eyes later on, and physically unites with him.

At the conclusion of the story, the narrative inscribes Jane's subject status by putting her into the masculine positions of the host and the gazer. Her merging into English middle-class society is termed ambiguously in her marrying the handicapped Rochester.

"Jane's appeals to the reader directly involve us in this journey of self-knowledge, the reader becomes her accomplice, learning and changing along with the heroine (www.cliffsnotes.com)."

In *Jane Eyre*, the experience of a woman's gazing on the freak body is portrayed as no less problematic; staring on is also staring in and being stared upon.

Notes

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