Femininity in Jane Eyre

By: Rana Youssef, Emilee Reifsteck, Summer Choi, & Sara Youssef
Although *Jane Eyre* might seem to advocate feminism, Bronte presents characters who fit into the conventional archetypes of Victorian femininity.
Rebellious Jane

“Something of vengeance I had tasted for the first time... its after flavor, metallic and corroding, gave me a sensation as if I had been poisoned” (31)

“How the new feeling bore me up! It was as if a martyr, a hero, had passed a slave or victim, and imparted strength in the transit. I mastered the rising hysteria, lifted up my head, and took a firm stand on the stool” (60)
Dutiful Jane

“This my world had for some years been in Lowood; my experience had been of its rules and systems; now I remembered that the real world was wide… awaited those who had courage to go forth into its expanse, to seek real knowledge of life amidst its perils” (77).

“You have nothing to do with the master of Thornfield, further than to receive the salary he gives you for teaching his protegee” (151)

“…so don’t make him the object of your fine feelings…He is not of your order: keep to your caste..” (152)

“But, mother, I did not come to hear Mr. Rochester’s fortune: I came to hear my own; and you have told me nothing of it” (188).
“The ease of his manner freed me from painful restraint...the friendly frankness drew me to him” (137)

“I felt at times as if he were my relation rather than my master...so happy, so gratified did I become with this new interest added to life, that I ceased to pine after kindred...the blanks of existence were filled up” (137)

“...but I could not reach it, even in fancy-a counter-acting breeze blew off the land, and continually drove me back. Sense would resist delirium; judgement would warn passion.” (142).

“...I had learnt to love Mr. Rochester: I could not unlove him now, merely because I had found that he had ceased to notice me.” (174)
Boats n' Equality
A Jane Eyre Exploration
Man must be pleased; but him to please
Is woman's pleasure; down the gulf
Of his condoled necessities
She casts her best, she flings herself.
How often flings for nought, and yokes
Her heart to an icicle or whim,
Whose each impatient word provokes
Another, not from her, but him;
While she, too gentle even to force
His penitence by kind replies,
Waits by, expecting his remorse,
With pardon in her pitying eyes;

Coventry Patmore, 1854
Jane *Eyre* is a feminist novel in that Charlotte Brontë focuses on the comparison between typical Victorian feminine stereotypes and Jane. Jane does not fit into one 19th century category. By placing this juxtaposition, Brontë demonstrates what she thinks women should be like—not quite Jane, but not quite a stereotype.
Religion and Morality in Jane Eyre

Featuring:
Paul Butler
Peter Butler
Lauren Klindworth
Richard Langlois
Thesis:
The text advocates forgiveness, caring, and morality and it also rails against pride and selfishness. These traits contrast with the characters introduced throughout the novel, most of whom are proud and selfish.
The harsh nature of Lowood School was supposedly backed by religious beliefs but only continued selfish goals.

“I have a master to serve whose kingdom is not of this world: my mission is to mortify in these girls the lust of the flesh, to clothe themselves with shamefacedness and sobriety… Mr. Brocklehurst was here interrupted; three other visitors, [Brocklehurst’s family], now entered the room… they were splendidly attired” (57)

The quote above shows how Mr. Brocklehurst presents himself, as a devout and righteous man whose goal is to ensure that others conduct themselves properly. Mr. Brocklehurst is in fact selfish, uncaring and rather harsh. Although on the surface he appears a religious man, the hypocrisy he represents reveals the malignant nature of traditional Christianity in Bronte’s eyes.
Religion and Morality

By Aidan, Alec, Thomas, and Sean
In *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë, Jane encounters characters that embody multiple views on religion. These characters either uphold, disobey, or use religion for their own motives. Through her experiences with these characters both pious and sinful, Jane formulates her own version of morality based on personal accountability.
Helen Burns is a fellow student at Lowood Institute. She is very devout in her faith. Jane views her as a mentor. Helen piously validates the teacher’s punishments. Provides example on trying to live faith. Encourages Jane to forgive teachers and others who do her wrong. Helen’s death fuels Jane for rest of life.
“I am very happy, Jane; and when you hear that I am dead you must be sure and not grieve: there is nothing to grieve about. We all must die one day, and the illness which is removing me is not painful; it is gentle and gradual: my mind is at rest. I leave no one to regret me much: I have only a father; and he is lately married, and will not miss me. By dying young I shall escape great sufferings. I had not qualities or talents to make my way very well in the world: I should have been continually at fault,” (73).