

In Contention 1, I considered the issues of whether Austen described marriage in terms of sexual equality in *Pride and Prejudice* and demonstrated how such characteristics of Austen's writing contains aspects consonant with feminism.

Considering Austen's sense of feminism, one should recall the awful of marriage in Austen time, marriage often amounting to a relationship in which a woman was not free to choose the man with whom she will marry. The arrangements were completely controlled by the woman's parents. In her depiction, of Elizabeth, an unrestrained woman, Austen revolted at this awful situation for women and criticized the patriarchal society that generated such sexual inequality. Austen represented her ideal marriage style by depicting Elizabeth's straightforward behavior in turning down men's proposals. Austen attempted to raise the issue to readers of women's unequal situation in marriages by depicting what marriages really were at that time. Thus, presupposing that Charlotte Bronte insisted on sexual equality by depicting independent women, Austen insisted on sexual equality by depicting intelligent women as they really were, which makes readers be evoked a controversy with. Thus, Austen's engaging feminism can't be detracted by these two problems. Austen does indeed display certain commonalities with feminism.

In Contention 2, I considered if Austen has feminist characteristics considering her criticism of masculine patriarchal society. Unfortunately, there's censorship in England in Austen era. "One pressure is political censorship that intensified from the mid-1790s. Another factor is a certain introverting of British culture, under the impact of the long war with France, which served to defuse some of radical energies." For this reason, Austen couldn't express completely her social commentary. Thus, Austen used indirect methods, for example, humor, satire, irony, and other methods for the sake of express her criticism toward society. In this chapter, I considered Austen's social commentary hidden between lines toward the authoritarian society which generated and vindicated the sexual inequality system such as entail or 'expediential marriage'. Conventional critics have not focused on her social commentary very much on the characteristics of her writing (humor, or irony, or satire, etc.). However, there certainly is criticism toward masculine patriarchal system on the authoritarian society in *Pride and Prejudice*, as Weisensee, and Ray, and Suzuki points out. Thus, Austen indeed has feminist characteristics.

In Contention 3, I examined whether Austen's morality has something to do with feminism or not. Kirkham means that Austen's moral education (enlightenment)

for women in the novel is similar to Wollstonecraft's moral education (enlightenment), so Austen has an essential of feminism. And, Kirkham says that Austen has feminism because she described woman (heroine) as the most intelligent person in her novels. Moreover, Kirkham says: "She [Elizabeth] has judicious critical acumen. [...] she is described as the most intelligent character in the entire novel." (91), that is, Elizabeth is the most intelligent person in *Pride and Prejudice*. In almost all the novels written before Austen's time, the plot of these novels was that almighty great young man who had intelligence would save poor young pretty woman. Intelligence supposed that only men can possess, but Austen overturned this common sense and depicted woman as intelligence existence. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth has so much intelligence and is kind of moral guiding position. Austen didn't write sexist stories in which an almighty prince who was symbolized from men's power and men's superiority to women fell in love and saved a poor young woman who was symbolized from women's weakness and women's inferiority to men like *Cinderella*. On the contrary, Elizabeth is depicted as a woman who has a strong will and significant intelligence. Thus, Austen has the essential of feminism as Kirkham argues.

Upon this; I am desirous to supplement Kirkham's argument with my argument. Surely, Austen requested that women should have modesty and do self-denial, but at the same time, she also requested that men should have modesty and do self-restraint. This is the same conception from the argument of Wollstonecraft: "Modesty.—comprehensively considered, and not as a sexual virtue." (124) and: "True modesty, which at least, should render the self-denial mutual" (128). In this chapter, I researched how Austen's morals are described and what element of feminism in there. Austen opposed the trend of society in which women was supposed to be inferior to man, and depicted Elizabeth as a possessor of intelligence more than men in *Pride and Prejudice*. As Kirkham says, depicting woman as a possessor of intelligence more than men makes Austen be admitted to have a sense of feminism. Moreover, Austen's sense of feminism can be said by her advising modesty to men and women equally, because it is exactly same idea to Wollstonecraft who is said to the pioneer of feminism. Austen showed a norm of behavior to men and women with equal clarity. Thus, it is apparently that Austen's morality has something to do with feminism.

Certainly, Austen may not to be said a feminist in the strict sense of the word. However, Austen always narrates her novels from a woman's point of view, and therefore it can be said that she takes the side of women. The reason that Austen wrote the novels about marriage is not because she was hoping to portray marriage as the sole source of happiness for women. In fact, she had the ulterior motive of subtly criticizing

patriarchal society by depicting what marriage was really like in that era. In representing completely new concept of life for women, Elizabeth serves as a proponent of straightforward communication. In this paper, I considered all of these issues generally, and conclude that Austen does indeed display certain commonalities with feminism.