

Besides, Josephine hates romance in her real life and wants nothing more than to hold her family.

The quotation above shows that according to Jo, falling in love is dangerous because it will split her sisters apart. As each of them finds a

Josephine is independent

Jo speaks these words in Chapter 13 when the March girls and Laurie are discussing their dreams. It can be seen from the quotation below;

[illegible]

“I am glad you are poor. I couldn’t bear a rich husband, said Jo decidedly, adding in a softer tone, Don’t fear poverty. I’ve known it long enough to lose my dread and be happy working for those I love” (862)

“Wealth is certainly a most desirable thing, but poverty has its sunny side, and one of the sweet uses of adversity is the genuine satisfaction which comes from hearty work of head or hand, and to the inspiration of necessity, we owe half the wise, beautiful, and useful blessings of the world. Jo enjoyed a taste of this satisfaction, and ceased to envy richer girls, taking great comfort in the knowledge that she could supply her own wants, and need ask no one for a penny” (472)

Jo is working girl. She has a job, something a bit unusual for a young lady with an upper class background in nineteenth century America. Even when we first meet Jo, aged fifteen, she works as a companion for her Aunt March. Being a "companion" to a rich old lady, or even a rich young lady, was a common form of employment for nineteenth-century girls who came from good families but didn't have much money of their own. Like most companions, Jo spends time with her employer, reads to her, does little tasks for her like winding her yarn, and generally hangs around. This might not sound too hard, but Jo's Aunt March is a tyrannical, selfish old woman whose favorite phrase is "I told

She is very diligent in reading books, it is different with habit of her other sisters in spending their times. It can be seen from the quotation below;

Besides, she also composes plays for her sisters to perform and writes stories that she eventually gets published. She imitates Dickens, Shakespeare and Scott. Whenever she is not doing chores she curls up in her room, in a corner of the attic or outside, completely absorbed in a good book. Jo's excuse for writing is that she is supporting the family while her father is not. "The Duke's Daughter paid the butcher's bill, A

of representation that essentializes others through the operation of power (Barker, 188).

Gender roles are defines by behaviours, but gender stereotypes are beliefs and attitudes about masculinity and feminity. In the book entitled *Gender Stereotypes : Masculinity and Feminity*, Lewin says;

“Before 19th century, most people lived and worked on farms where men and women worked together. The industrial revolution changed the lives majority of people in Europe and North America by moving men outside the home to earn money and leaving women at home to manage household and children” (Joseph 161)

In Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, man was described at the time as powerful, active, brave, worldly, logical, rational, independent, individual, able to resist temptation, tainted, ambitious, and sphere in public. In contrast, woman was described as weak, passive, timid, domestic, illogical, emotional, social or familial, dependent, unable to resist temptation, pure, content, and sphere in private. To be female is not easy as to be a male human during the time because there are some restricting regulations regulating women's behaviour and even in law, women have less power than men do. Women must be dependent on men and what girls should do is to prepare themselves for the marriage since the aim of life for every woman must be to be married.

In the Victorian era women were seen by the middle classes at least, as belonging to the domestic sphere, and this stereotype required them to provide their husbands with clean home, food on the table and raise their children. Women's rights were extremely limited in this era,

may be fit for homes of your own, if they are offered you, and contented here if they are not. One thing remember, my girls. Mother is always ready to be your confidante, Father to be your friend, and both of hope and trust that our daughters, whether married or single, will be the pride and comfort of our lives.” (171)

At the time, marriage signified a woman's maturity and respectability, but motherhood was confirmation that she had entered the world of womanly virtue and female fulfilment. For woman not to become a mother meant she was liable to be labelled inadequate, a failure or in some way abnormal. Motherhood was expected of a married woman and the childless single woman was a figure to be pitied.

Josephine wanted to be as equal as men at the time, who were considered as independent. Jo wants to enter a man's profession and be adventurous and wild. In fact, she says "It's bad enough to be a girl, anyway, when I like boy's game and work and manners! I can't get over my disappointment in not being a boy" (13). She is a tomboy, and reacts with impatience to the many limitations placed on women and girls. To be a female is not easy as to be a male human during that period because there are some restricting regulations regulating women's behaviour and even in law, women have less power than men do. Women must be dependent on men and what girls should do is to prepare themselves for the marriage since the aim of life for every woman must be married.

Jo is conscious about those facts and thus she decides to be masculine as her way to show her disappointment on the discrimination and to show that she, as a girl who turns into a woman is not weaker than

he uses in favor of his much more masculine given name, Theodore, suggests his feminine side. It can be seen from the quotation below;

“Nicely, thank you, Mr. Laurence. But I am not Miss March, I’m only Jo,” returned the young lady. “I’m not Mr. Laurence, I’m only Laurie. ‘Laurie Laurence, what an odd name. ‘My first name is theodore, but I don’t like it, for the fellows called me Dora, so I made the say Laurie instead. ‘I hate my name, too, so sentimental! I wish every one would say Jo instead of Josephine. How did you make the boys stop calling you Dora?’” (47)

In *Little Women*, music has an interesting relationship to a character's degree of conformity. For the March girls, the more musically inclined a sister is, the more traditionally feminine and adherent to feminine duty she is. Marmee sings to the girls all the time and she embodies the ideal dutiful and domestic mother. Beth, similarly is both very musical and very passive. In contrast, Amy has a bad voice and Jo has the worst voice of all, both girls are independent and important with the limitations placed on women. Interestingly, Laurie also likes music and wants to be a professional musician, but this interest makes him ill-adapted to the role expected of him as a man. It can be seen from the quotation below;

“After I’d seen as much of the world as I want to, I’d like to settle in Germany and have just as much music as I choose. I’m to be a famous musician myself, and all creation is to rush to hear me. And I’m never to be bothered about money or business, but just enjoy myself and live for what I like.” (253)

Then, prior to hearing father's letter, Jo announces her wish to join the army and fight with her father in the Civil War. She dreams of doing

something splendid and traveling abroad, and she tempt to run away with Laurie when he proposes. It can be seen from the quotation in chapter 2;

“We all will,” cried Meg. “I think too much of my looks and hate to work, but won’t any more, if I can help it. ‘I’ll try and be what he loves to call me, ‘a little woman’ and not be rough and wild, but do my duty here instead of wanting to be somewhere else,” said Jo, thinking that keeping her temper at home was a much harder task than facing a rebel or two down South.” (16)

According to the quotation above, join the fight was on contrast with the society at the time. Jo says that she would like to be doing something exciting, such as being in the Civil War like her father, instead of sitting at home. Jo points out that women cannot fight in the Civil War, and generally lead less adventurous lives than do men. In this statement, Jo also demonstrates a wish to make her father happy by acting stereotypically female. Jo struggles throughout the novel because she wants both to lead an adventurous, independent life and to help and please her family. In other words, the struggle for individual success conflicts with the duty and affection she feels for her family and with the domestic sphere that most women of the time accept.

At the time, woman must be dependent on men and girls should prepare themselves for the marriage since the aim of life for every woman must be married. Woman in the Victorian society had one main role in life, which was to marry and take part in their husband's interests and business. Before marriage, they would learn housewife skills such as weaving, cooking, washing, and cleaning, unless they were of a wealthy family. In contrast, Jo wants to be independent woman. She does not like

“Don’t try too many messes, Jo, for you can’t make anything but gingerbread and molasses candy fit to eat. I wash my hands of the dinner party, and since you have asked Laurie on your own responsibility, you may just take care of him.” (200)

[illegible]

Jo is constantly writing wild stories, plays and poetry. It can be seen from the quotation below;

“Well, I’ve left two stories with a newspaperman, and he’s to give his answer next week,” whispered Jo, in her confidant’s ear. ‘Hurrah for Miss March, the celebrated American authoress!’ cried Laurie, throwing up his hat and catching it again, to the great delight of two ducks, four cats, five hens, and half a dozen Irish children, for they were out of the city now. ‘Hush! It won’t come to anything, I dare say, but I couldn’t rest till I had tried, and I said nothing about it because I didn’t want anyone else to be disappointed. ‘It won’t fail. Why, Jo, your stories are works of Shakespeare compared to half the rubbish that is published every day. Won’t it be fun to see them in print, and shan’t we feel proud of our authoress?’” (269)

Moreover, what attracts her most in Aunt March's mansion is the large library, where she devoured poetry, romance, history, travels and pictures, like a regular bookworm. Yet, Jo realises that as a woman she can never achieve true authorship, equal to male authorship. Patriarchal society did not allow women to have the same privileges as men. Consequently, women were ascribed the more feminine duties of caring for the home and pursuing the outlets of feminine creativity. In the first part of the novel Amy has deluded and silly ideas about society and seems as Foote says "happily enslaved by it" (74). However, through pain and humiliation, Amy will learn how to adjust and behave within this society and still be independent, true to oneself and respected. As Foote points out, Amy's understanding of the complex working of society and her acceptance of that society, will be rewarded (78).