

*Pride And Prejudice*Pointers for Beginners

-Austen's language is neat, her sentences are short and to the point. This is a parodic engagement with 18<sup>th</sup> century conduct literature, which was written primarily by men for women, and which used long, convoluted language, and asked women to stay away from novels like Austen's. Mary, the third sister, is the character in the novel who follows and takes seriously the directives of such 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> conduct literature seriously. Not being handsome, she develops skills such as playing the piano and puts genuine labour into learning, as was expected from women by the authors of conduct literatures. However, she does not possess the consumptive capital that Elizabeth or Jane does, being neither beautiful nor spontaneous or witty.

-Elizabeth is shown instead to be the voracious reader, whose entire subjectivity is built around her reading activity. Instead of viewing her as the perfect, deserving heroine, we must learn to critique the very construction of a perfect and likeable heroine. She is endowed with the apt amount of spontaneity, intellect, and beauty, to make her marketable as a product for marriage in a patriarchal economy.

-The idea of being marketable becomes extremely important. Nineteenth-century becomes the temporal space during which a change in values from aristocratic to mercantile comes in. Thus, the emphasis is upon cultivating marketability in each of the five women, to get them married well. Even with respect to Darcy, his fault in the beginning becomes his disdain of the need for cultivation of marketability in self. Eventually, he understands the requirement of adapting to bourgeois values. Just the presence of an aristocratic mien (his physical appearance is described from the get go, with respect to his aristocratic status) will not allow