30 درصد تخفیف نوروزی ویژه کارگاه‌ها و فیلم‌های آموزشی

اصول تنظیم قراردادها
برویوزال نویسی
آموزش مهارت های کاربردی در ندوین و چاپ مقاله
The Evolution of Women: from Andrew Marvell to Jonathan Swift

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Abstract
The condition of women in England has changed over centuries and it is possible to say that their situation has become better. This paper aims to demonstrate how women are viewed in the 17th and 18th century based on a poem by Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress", and Jonathan Swift's "The Lady’s Dressing Room". In the 17th century, women did not have the liberty to live the life they want and had little freedom over their lives. The view toward them is shown in Marvell's poem: they are seen as mere objects over which men have complete power and are allowed to treat them as they please. Whereas, in the 18th century, as there is a rise of individualism, they gain more freedom, as is illustrated by Swift's poem that a woman is seen as a human being, not as mere saints or sinners. It is thus concluded that the conditions of women and how they are portrayed have evolved from the 17th century to the 18th century.

Keywords: Andrew Marvell, Jonathan Swift, “To His Coy Mistress”, “The Lady’s Dressing Room”, Women, 17th century, 18th century.
Introduction
The conditions of women during England’s history have been a field of struggle. They have been seen as mere means of production or joy; they were either angels or devils. Nonetheless, there has been a progression in the way they are viewed from the 17th century to the 18th century. This article tries to show how the position of women has developed in the two centuries, referring to Andrew Marvell’s “To His Coy Mistress” and Jonathan Swift’s “The Lady’s Dressing Room”.

Marvell's love poems and pastorals dispose of old ideals of harmony by positing wittily unresolved or unresolvable oppositions, some playful, some painful, and “To His Coy Mistress” is one of the painful ones based on many feministic points of view (“The Early Seventeenth Century” 1256). For example, “The Definition of Love” or "To His Coy Mistress" often describe the relationship between flesh and spirit, physical sex and platonic love, or the idealizing of courtship and the ravages of time (“Andrew Marvell” 1696). The most famous of the century's carpe diem poems is perhaps "To His Coy Mistress,” a balance of witty and artful couplets that is voiced by an urban and witty speaker. The quick switches from fantasy to reality raise questions as to whether this is a clever seduction poem or a probing of existential angst, as well as whether Marvell intends to endorse or critique this speaker’s views on sex, love, and passion (ibid).

Jonathan Swift was also a great satirist, but it did not last long. Swift read widely, reluctantly chose the church as a career, and took orders; this is when he discovered his astonishing talent as a satirist (“Jonathan Swift” 2301). “A Tale of a Tub” and “The Battle of the Books”, his powerful satires on corruption in learning and religion that were published in 1704 but reached their full expression only in their fifth edition in 1710, were written between 1696 and 1697 (ibid). Swift, however, devoted most of his time to politics and religion in later life, and his prose was generally geared toward furthering a particular cause. One of his great satires, “The Lady’s Dressing Room”, focuses on the difference between women’s interior and exterior self. It is a discovery about women being human beings rather than simple objects of desire.

Women in 17th Century
In the early seventeenth century, women’s position was viewed as the second to men. They had to struggle for their freedom and therefore, had problems in many fields such as work and education. Marriage was one of the aspects in women’s lives in which they experienced many inequities. They had to rely on their husbands or fathers and remain silent in public spheres. It was thought that God and nature provided both the gender hierarchy, with the man at the top, and the patriarchal role of the husband as the head of the family (“The Early Seventeenth Century: Topics”). As for virgins and wives, they were to keep their silence in public and follow their father and husband unwaveringly, though widows had the freedom to make their own decisions (ibid). However, tensions developed when these norms met with lived experience, including domestic records as well as literary treatments of love, courtship, marriage, and family relationships that revealed complexities and ambiguities from Shakespeare's King Lear (NAEL 8, 1.1139), to Webster's Duchess of Malfi (NAEL 8, 1.1462), to Milton's Paradise Lost (NAEL 8, 1.1830), and more (ibid).

The husband of the family was like the king and he ruled over his properties such as his wife and children. Because of the fact that women were considered inferior to men in many respects, men had the right to dominate them (Brabcová 21). Young women who wanted to get married had to consult their relatives for the choice of their partner, especially the ones who had property. But the girls from lower-class society had much freedom in their choices. It was the general understanding that love comes after marriage (ibid). However, there were documents of some marriages, especially the marriages which were concluded secretly, that had vocabularies such as love, flirtation, and attraction for describing them (22). Marriage was legally the only place women could express their sexuality without limitations. Infidelity and adultery for men were considered less inappropriate than for women (ibid). Girls had to keep their virginity until they get married, and afterward, it was the husband's duty to watch over them and keep them under control. Nonetheless, this was in theory. In practice, 25 percent of the girls were pregnant at the time of their
marriage (23). The most important aim of marriage was to have children. The kingdom of the husband was not formed completely without children (ibid). Therefore, there was great pressure for women to get pregnant as soon as marrying. The only time women could experience social independence is when their partner dies and they become a widow (ibid).

**Women in 18th Century**

The conditions of women in the 18th century in England became a little better than the previous century, especially regarding the way women were viewed in an institution such as marriage. Lawrence Stone has explained four reasons people got married in the 18th century: "the economic or social or political consolidation … personal affection, companionship, and friendship based on the moral, intellectual and psychological qualities of the prospective spouse … physical attraction … romantic love" (qt. in Dobošiová 8). However, it is important to notice that the 18th century was the rise of individualism, and therefore people could choose their mate with more liberation. According to Stone, three factors caused such freedom: the nuclear families became more independent, the relationship quality between parents and children become higher and parents encouraged more neutral meetings between the two sexes (8,9). A matchmaker had four different options available to him or her in eighteenth-century society (23). In the first place, all choices were made by parents, relatives, and friends of the bride and groom without their consent (ibid). The second option was to choose the spouse based on the parents' choices, but then grant the children a right of veto based on one or more formal interviews after the two sets of parents had decided on a match (ibid). The bride was normally less likely to exercise this right than the groom, and could only do so once or twice. Lastly, due to individualism, the third option was that children were required to make their own choices, with the understanding that the parent had veto power over the decision, and that the child would come from a relatively equal family (ibid). It was also a rare option in the eighteenth century, especially among the upper classes, for the children to make their own choices and inform their parents merely of those choices (ibid). Therefore, there were more opportunities for men and women to know each other better. Women had more chances to express themselves more freely than 17th century. Although they were still considered second to men, they could seek more in their lives and their marriages.

**Andrew Marvell's “To His Coy Mistress”**

Andrew Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress" is an example of how women are seen and treated in 17th-century society: solely objects of desire. Kamda Singh Deo in “A Feminist Reading of Andrew Marvell’s ‘To His Coy Mistress’”, has mentioned that this is a poem that is written by a man for men, and for women who give in to patriarchy (45). The poem tries to impose gender rules, and a lady being coy is an example that is wrongly always attributed to feminine nature (ibid). The usage of the word “His” in the title shows that he is seeing her as not any person, but his property. Even the meaning of mistress according to Samuel Johnson’s dictionary is whore or concubine (ibid). She also pays close attention to the words used in the poem, which may refer to something more patriarchal than they may seem at the first glance, saying that “there is a latent sense of the woman being ‘doubly colonised’ in the first few lines of the poem when Marvell relates his woman to the ‘Indian Gange’s side’ and himself to the ‘Humber’ river. One can sense the eternal relationship that is established between colonised countries of the East and women, both perceived as the land of opportunities- an idea later developed into the concept of eastern bride. by Conrad in his novel Lord Jim” (46).

Marvell is portraying the existence of the woman for sexually satisfying himself and nothing more. Moreover, in the 17th century, the virginity of women was a very important issue that brought dignity and respect; here, however, the speaker in Marvell's poem tries to take it away from her, without any promise of marriage; thus, the mistress, by being coy is being in fact very clever, not rejecting nor accepting him completely (ibid). As a matter of fact, the best weapon of a female is assumed to be silence (ibid). As the woman in the poem knows her situation well, she resorts to silence to frustrate her predator. There is no
mention, in the poem itself, that she succumbs to his demands, and a feminist critic would find this to be an accolade for women and an argument for self-assertion (ibid).

Marvell starts the first of three parts of the poem in a respecting, courtly manner. However, in the second part, when he sees no acceptance from her, he becomes philosophical, meditating on time and life. In the third part, he uses words that show rape thread:

This poem is not an expression of fervent love but of extreme lust which blinds the poet. Towards the end, he rejects all ethics and chivalry, and orally assaults the women by giving an elaborate account of inappropriate feelings-

"... then worms shall try
That long-preserved virginity...
Now let us sport us while we may
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour..." (436)

This is no less than a rape threat in disguise of a glorified verse. “The juxtaposition of tear and rough strife with the image of the iron gates pertains to time, but beneath there is a deeper and more unsettling suggestion of violation, even of rape.” (Hirst and Zwicke, 72) Marvell tries to strip her of her morality by forcing her mentally, if not physically, to indulge in sex with him. “Rough strife” is used interchangeably with rape. He attacks her “marble vault” (vagina) and gets past “the iron gates of life” (hymen) with his piercing words (47).

Time in this poem has a masculine depiction as well and it seems like it just affects the mistress and not the speaker himself. So to shield her from the horrible hurrying chariot of time, he has to eternize her by having intercourse (ibid).

Jonathan Swift’s “The Lady’s Dressing Room”

Swift’s poem “The Lady’s Dressing Room”, is one of the important works in the 18th century. It is about a man named Strephon who explores his mistress's dressing room in her absence and finds disgusting things such as sweaty smocks, dirt-filled combs, oily cloths, grimy towels, snot-encrusted handkerchiefs, jars of spit, cosmetics derived from dog intestines, and a mucky, rancid clothes chest. It is like a slap in the face because he always looked at Celia as a heavenly creature, but now he discovers that she is a human being just as he is. Chico in a book called Designing Women mentions “Strephon, in “The Lady’s Dressing Room,” plunges his hand into his beloved’s chamber pot, only to be trapped into thinking that women’s beauty covers excrement” (132). She also believes that Swift in this poem tries to unravel the dark, unwanted truth, ridding it of the seemingly beautiful appearance and show the reality of civilization. Chico says the satires of Swift, especially "The Lady’s Dressing Room", have long been associated with the production of bodily disorder, whether the satiric objects leave their waste behind or readers or spectators consume these poetic bits and feel nauseous afterward (134). He attempts to see straight, go beyond the rosy exterior, and his satire tries to show intensely the gap between “a woman’s body and her public image” (133, 135).

Swift admits that there was an epistemological inquiry at the core of the dressing room: when a woman’s exterior is cosmetic and fake, how can one identify and judge her correctly? (137) Strephon’s actions propose a pervading key examine the dressing room as a replacement for the woman herself (ibid). For Swift and his eighteenth-century readers, the dressing room offers an realist design for the alteration of the observed particulars of the female body into the creation of general knowledge about women … Swift’s critique of female embodiment—whether focused on attacking the privacy of the dressing room or on deconstructing a body made-up of prosthetics—is corroborated by an authoritarian hierarchy that imubes the poem’s methodology and its conclusions about epistemology (ibid). Gender difference and the everyday actions of the female body function as a vehicle for the articulation of order in early-eighteenth-century Britain, even as these same satires belie the contradictions of empiricism (ibid).
Conclusion

The women who were portrayed in Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress" have changed a great deal comparing to the woman in Swift’s “The Lady’s Dressing Room”. Marvell has shown a woman nearly as an object who does not have a voice of her own. Her only function seems to be sexually pleasing the speaker. Although her silence can be interpreted as wise, she still does not have a voice and is also being threatened that if she does not give in to him, he will rape her. The point of view Marvell presents in his poem, suits the mindset of the 17th century. Women were viewed as things to produce children and do the housework, and some of them are not even desired for such duties and are treated like the woman in his poem.

However, even though the woman in Swift's poem does not have a voice of her own, she is seen as a human being in the end. Women were viewed as sinners or saints. Marvell showed the first one. Swift in his poem on the other hand, firstly presented them as saints. But as the protagonist gets to the lady’s room, he sees that she is neither a saint or a sinner, but a human being who can be dirty and messy. The condition of women in the 18th century has improved generally, and Swift’s poem is demonstrating this fact as well.
Bibliography


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