

**THE STRUGGLE OF THE MIDDLE CLASS WOMAN AS BEING  
A GOVERNESS REFLECTED IN ANNE BRONTE’S *AGNES GREY***

**A. The Life Of Middle Class Women In 19<sup>th</sup> Century Era As Reflected In Anne Bronte’s *Agnes Grey***

No	Quotes	Forms	Pages	References	Comment
1.	Mary and I were brought up in the strictest seclusion. My mother, being at once highly accomplished, well informed, and fond of employment, took the whole charge of our education on herself, with the exception of Latin—which my father undertook to teach us—so that we never	Monologue	17	“Many girls of the middle classes (and almost all from the lower classes) received no formal education at all. Those who were lucky enough to be educated were taught by governesses or by their parents.” (Snodgrass 27)	As the result of that separating, many middle class girls did not go to formal school like boys did. During the 19 <sup>th</sup> century era in England, girls were not proper to go to formal school like the boys did. It also happens toward Agnes and Marry. Marry and Agnes who are from middle class family do not go to school in that time because it is not common for girls to go to formal school. They only get education from their parents in home. Their mother

	even went to school.				teaches them the whole things that usually teach in formal education. Moreover, their father teaches them Latin language. Mary and Agnes spend their lives only around their home without knowing the social condition outside.
2.	there was no society in the neighbourhood, our only intercourse with the world consisted in a stately tea-party, now and then, with the principal farmers and tradespeople of the vicinity, just to avoid being stigmatized as too proud to consort with our neighbors, and an annual	Monologue	17-18	Mitchell states that “In addition, girls were thought to need more social and moral protection than boys. Parents disliked having them away from home or at large schools” (qtd in Pintili 224).	In 19 <sup>th</sup> century era, parents gave more attention and protection to their daughters than their sons. That condition is also shown in the novel <i>Agnes Grey</i> . Agnes and her sister, Marry, who are a daughter of middle class family get stiff protection from their parents. Their parents really care about their social interaction in outside. Agnes and Marry’s parents give more protection to them. Girls do

	visit to our paternal grandfather's, where himself, our kind grandmamma, a maiden aunt, and two or three elderly ladies and gentlemen, were the only persons we ever saw				not go far away from their houses. Like Agnes and Marry who only know the life in their home and only little around home. As Agnes says that they live in strict seclusion, Agnes and Mary do not go away from home. Their parents limit their social intercourse. They usually only have tea party with principal farmer and some people around them. Agnes and Mary are only go out when they visit their relatives family once a year. This treat appears as the result of idea of separating sphere because women are weaker than men, so it makes parents give more attention to their daughter.
3.	"transformed into an active managing housewife, with	Monologue	22	Wilhelm pointed out that "and women were to	About the role of married women of middle class family, women

	<p>hands and head continually occupied with household labours and household economy. The very willingness with which she bore her reserves,”.</p>			<p>organize the household, oversee their children’s education and provide a tranquil and peaceful environment at home. Women should also teach their children and male relatives moral values and good virtues.” ( qtd in Carlsson 6).</p>	<p>become the center of the house. Like Agnes’s mother who become the centre in the house. When a single woman becomes a married woman, she would be able to change herself be a good wife. For married women of middle class, their centre lives is in the house. Their main duty is household duties and takes care of the family. The middle class usually families do not have servants like upper class families to take care anything in the house, so the wives must manage many things. Agnes’s mother is a wife of clergyman, she must perform herself as a wife for manage household duties and manage the economy of the family. As a wife, she must takes care her husband and her</p>
--	---	--	--	--	--

					daughters. She pays attention of what her husband and her daughters needs. It also happens to Agnes' mother. Agnes' mother is representation of married woman of middle class woman in that time.
4.	<p>'You cannot, indeed, dear child. Go and practise your music, or play with the kitten.'</p> <p>There was always plenty of sewing on hand ;but I had not been taught to cut out a single garment</p>	Dialogue - Monologue	24	Lundén et al : "The education of women consisted of learning to sing, dance, and play the piano, to draw, read, write, some arithmetic and French and to do embroidery" (qtd in Andersson 2)	The kinds of education that middle class women received are different from the men. Women at that time usually learn about dancing, singing, and drawing to attract men, so they can be married. Agnes as middle class women also learns about music and sewing. Her mother teaches her about music and how to sewing. This is a usual thing to do by middle class women in that time. Women at that time could do embroidery that would

					be useful to take care of their husbands and families. That is why Agnes' mother asks her to practice those things rather than helping her mother. Even though Agnes is not really interested in sewing, she must practice it every day because it might be useful for her future.
5.	“while he had money he must spend it: he liked to see his house comfortable, and his wife and daughters well clothed, and well attended”	Monologue	18	“Since women of this period had no claim to ownership of property, so they were financially dependent on their parents and after marriage on their husbands.” (Nagar 122)	Dealing with the financial security of middle class women, it was maintained by their husbands and by their fathers, if they were not married yet. Women were not proper to work in that time. Mr. Grey as a father and husband must maintain the finance to her daughter, Agnes and Mary, also her wife. As a Husband and a father, Mr. Grey should be responsible to fulfill the needs of women in his

					<p>family. Mr. Grey as father and husband from middle class family gets responsibility to charge the financial security for his wife and his daughters. In 19<sup>th</sup> century era women had no claim of owning property and they did not work so they charged their financial stability to their parents and husbands. Since Agnes and Mary do no work, they are burdening their finance to their fathers, the only man who has a job in the family.</p>
6.	How delightful it would be to be a governess! To go out into the world; to enter into a new life; to act for myself; to exercise my unused faculties; to try	Monologue	27	<p>“If their family encountered a sudden economic downfall, unmarried women had to fend for themselves. In this case, it was regarded as a solerespectable</p>	<p>Women in Victorian England had difficult and unfortunate position on society. After Agnes’s father is ill, their financial becomes downfall because her father is the only person who works. That is why Agnes</p>

	<p>know my unknown powers; to earn my own maintenance, and something to comfort and help my father, mother, and sister, besides exonerating them from the provision of my food and clothing...</p>			<p>occupation for a lady to work as a governess.” (Nao 9)</p>	<p>decides to be a governess, because in that time being a governess is a prospect job for middle class woman to maintain her finance. In 19<sup>th</sup> century era, when middle class women had no one who could respectably about her finance then governess became the best choice to earn money. Agnes thinks that being governess would be delightful because Agnes can also help her family to pay their debt after their finance downfall.</p>
7.	<p>“Mary, you are a beautiful drawer. What do you say to doing a few more pictures in your best style, and getting them framed, with the water-coloured drawings you have already</p>	Dialogue	25	<p>“As to the painting, women were considered as not so skillful and well educated to make their living by painting or by other artistic work. Painting was considered to be a favourite</p>	<p>Besides being a governess, some women of middle class use their skill of painting to earn money for their living. In 19<sup>th</sup> century era women of middle class were actually educated even though they were limited in formal education than men. Since</p>

	<p>done, and trying to dispose of them to some liberal picture-dealer, who has the sense to discern their merits?”</p> <p>“Mamma, I should be delighted if you think they could be sold; and for anything worthwhile.” ()</p>			<p>pastime of women.” (Vlková 15)</p>	<p>middle class women had some skill such as singing, playing piano and drawing, the skill of painting can be useful for women get their own money. In the novel shows that Mary who is Agnes’s sister use her skill of painting to earn money to help her family. Mrs. Grey says that Mary is a beautiful drawer, and she hopes that Mary can sell some of her pictures in dealer. Mary feels delight that she could help her family to pay their debt. Besides that, same as Agnes she can maintain her own finance and help her family.</p>
8.				<p>Unfortunately for middle-class women, the demographics and overall</p>	<p>The reality in 19<sup>th</sup> century era utterly forced women of middle class family to choose between being married or</p>

			<p>structure of Victorian culture did very little to make the “work” of getting married easy... Even if the woman’s family were able to accumulate an appropriate dowry—a formidable task in itself, especially if the family was not wealthy or there were several daughters, the man’s family might choose not to accept the dowry or might require a “better” offer that was beyond the means of the woman’s family. (Snodgrass 17)</p>	<p>being single women and became the part of outsider of society. Though marriage was preferred for middle class woman, unluckily for middle class women, marriage was not working easily for middle class women. In the novel also shows the reality. Mr. Grey hesitated his daughters could marry someday because they are only middle class family with a debt that must be pay. Mr. Grey hesitated that someday his daughters could marry, because there are man’s families would not accept marriage if the woman’s family do not have such a good wealth and money. Marriage in that time always consist the deal of two families to match their children. When a woman wants to</p>
--	--	--	--	--

					marry, the woman must consider about the money or the wealth that the parents have. As Agnes's father hesitates that there is a man would marry their daughters when their financial was downfall.
--	--	--	--	--	--

**B. The Struggle Of Agnes Grey As Being A Governess In 19<sup>th</sup> Century Era As Reflected In Anne Bronte's *Agnes Grey***

No	Quotes	Forms	Pages	References	Comment
1.	“...I have ordered her crib to be placed in your room, and if you will be so kind as to overlook her washing and dressing, and take charge of her clothes, she need have nothing further to do with the nursery maid.”	Dialogue	37	“they might also be asked to assume the duties of nursery maids or lady's maids. An oversupply of job seekers led governesses to accept such working conditions. At the same time, these norms reflected poorly on the employers who took advantage of the surplus of governesses seeking employment.” (Knight 4)	In 19 <sup>th</sup> century era, being governess is the only job for middle class women could do. There were many women applying to be governess and it became competitive. This condition made some employers took advantages from governesses. Even though the main job of a governess was teaching, a governess also accepted to do the duties as nursery for the pupils. In one side is not fair for Agnes because it is not her duties, but in the other side Agnes must accept the condition because she needs the job to get her finance. During Agnes works as a governess

					in the Bloomfield family she must face some difficulties. Mrs. Bloomfield as her employer asks more services from her, not only being a private tutor for her children, Agnes is also wanted to do nursery duties. Agnes Grey must do nursery duties to her pupils. Mrs. Bloomfield as her employer takes advantages of Agnes to do nursery duty. Agnes must washing, dressing, and takes charge of the pupil's clothes.
2.	“ This was Mr. Bloomfield. I was surprised that he should nominate his children Master and Miss Bloomfield, and still more	Monologue	46	“The middle and upper classes were willing to entrust her with their children while claiming she was immoral. They demanded that she have a	The other difficulties faced by governesses are bad treatments from their employers. Middle class women must struggle for their job. Sometimes they treated bad and impolitely. The background of

	so, that he should speak so uncivilly to me, their governess, and a perfect stranger to himself ”			middle class background while treating her as an inferior.” (Knight 9)	governess makes the employers feels superior to governesses. In the case of Agnes, she gets bad and impolite treatment from her employer. Mr. Bloomfield feels superior to Agnes. The quotation describes how arrogant Mr. Bloomfield is. He speaks uncivilly to Agnes when he is blaming something to Agnes. Although Agnes is the educator of his children, Mr. Bloomfield treats Agnes as an inferior because of her background.
3.	My task of instruction and surveillance, instead of becoming easier as my charges and I got better accustomed to each other,	Monologue	49	“Masters considered them to be of an inferior social class and did not accept them as an equal member of their family.” (Vlková 22)	Besides bad treatment Agnes gets from her employer, she also gets difficulties from her pupils. The different character of her pupils made it not easy for Agnes. The job of

	<p>became more arduous as their characters unfolded. The name of governess, I soon found, was a mere mockery as applied to me: my pupils had no more notion of obedience than a wild, unbroken colt.</p>				<p>governess is teaching, but some pupils do not respect to their governess as their teacher. She found that the name of governess is only mockery for the pupils. The pupils do not know how to treat their governess, she is their educator but they just treat governess like their nurse. This is because the position of a governess is lower than lady but upper than servant.</p>
4.	<p>“Often he would positively refuse to learn, or to repeat his lessons, or even to look at his book. Here, again, a good birch rod might have been serviceable; but, as my powers were so</p>	Monologue	50	<p>“the mistreatment and disrespect directed toward the governess by children, and her lack of authority over them and the failure of the mother to cooperate in discipline” (Peterson 8-9).</p>	<p>Furthermore, governesses must do the best in limit authorities. In the novel shows the struggle of Agnes to control the pupil with her limit authority. Agnes explains that when Agnes works in the Bloomfield’s, she must face the naughty and arrogant</p>

	limited, I must make the best use of what I had.”				pupils. Sometimes they refuse to study. Since the power of governess is limited, Agnes cannot do many things. Agnes does not force the pupils bad. Agnes still considers their position as the children of her employer. She just tries to persuade her pupils to study. Agnes as a governess must struggle to make her pupils respect and obedient to her.
5.	“I flattered myself I was benefiting my parents and sister by my continuance here; for small as the salary was, I still was earning something, and with strict economy I could easily manage to	Monologue	59-60	On the whole, governesses were unhappy and underpaid, with no prospect of job security. (Frishtick 13)	Governesses do not only get bad treatment from their employer and feel lonely but they are also underpaid. Governesses in that time had terrible condition. Over all, working as a governess had unsteady and horrible condition. In the novel <i>Agnes Grey</i> portrait the condition of

	have something to spare for them”				Agnes who is underpaid. With the small salary she gets, she tries to hold out working on there. She is continuing being a governess in with some pressure from her master, bad behavior of the pupils, and small salary. Agnes thinks by keeping working in Bloomfield. Although her condition in Bloomfield is unhappy, at least she can earn money for herself and for her family. So many of governesses in 19 <sup>th</sup> century era keep employ as a governess even though they were unhappy and underpaid because they need money for living.
6.	“she never once mentioned mine; though they were at home, surrounded by	Monologue	103	“As a result of her background, the governess was in the precarious	Agnes tries again and she becomes governess in Murray’s family. Even though in the Murray family Agnes

	friends, and I an alien among strangers; and I did not yet know enough of the world,”			position of being neither a friend with the servants nor with her employers. She was too educated for one group and too poor for the other.” (Knight 5)	gets better treatment, Agnes must deal with selfish girls as her pupils and other difficulties as a governess. If in the Bloomfield Agnes is treated as inferior, in the Murray family she is treated as a stranger. This treatment is the result of the background of governess. Agnes experiences in the Murray’s family that Mrs. Murray treats Agnes as a stranger in their family. Agnes cannot be friend with Murray or be a friend with the servants because she is an educated woman. Mrs. Murray feels superior to Agnes and makes Agnes that she is not the part of the family. She is only a governess
7.	“I came it was the same: everything was neglected	Monologue	105	Thormahlen (81) wrote that governesses taught their	Dealing with the subject of lesson, there are many subject taught by

	but French, German, music, singing, dancing, fancy-work, and a little drawing—such drawing as might produce the greatest show with the smallest labour, and the principal parts of which were generally done by me.”			pupils English grammar and literature, geography, history and a little arithmetic. In addition, they also taught accomplishments for women, music, drawing, dancing and modern languages. (qtd, in Nao 13)	governess. In 19 <sup>th</sup> century era governess must have capability to do various subject of education such as language, literature, music, and art. That makes governess is demanded to have good knowledge and good skill for teaching her pupils. Agnes as a governess is also demanded to have good knowledge and good skill of singing, dancing and drawing. Agnes who is a governess must be able to teach foreign language, German and French. Beside that she teaches singing, dancing, and drawing.
8.	At length, she advised me to put an advertisement, myself, in the paper, stating my qualifications,	Monologue- Dialogue	89-90	“A lot of women wishing to be governesses usually advertised for their positions in newspapers. In some	Before being employed as a governess, a woman must look for an employer that needs a governess. As in that time there were many women

	<p>etc. “Music, singing, drawing, French, Latin, and German are no mean assemblage: many will be glad to have so much in one instructor.”</p>			<p>cases, they sought after the assistance of mediating agents to find possible employers.” ( Nao 12 )</p>	<p>who wanted to be a governess, so it made being a governess became a job which was competitive. Agnes is the main character in <i>Agnes Grey</i> decides to be a governess, and it makes her need an employer. Agnes put an advertisement in the newspaper to get employer. One of the ways to get employer is by putting advertisement in paper. The advertisement should include the service that governess can provide for the pupil. Agnes who tries again as being a governess put advertisement in paper. In the paper she writes the qualifications that she can do as a governess. She must be qualified in many terms such as music, singing, drawing, and some foreign languages. It would attract</p>
--	---	--	--	--	--

					some employers to employ Agnes as a governess for their children. But still Agnes should wait for the reply from the people who wants to employ her. Some women they used agent to find an employer beside using advertisements in the paper.
9.	“I must have decent clothes becoming my station; I must, it seemed, put out my washing, and also pay for my four annual journeys between Horton Lodge and home; but with strict attention to economy, surely twenty pounds, or little more, would cover those	Monologue	93		Beside a governess must work hard with low wage, governess still has to divide her salary to the needs of laundry and travel. In the novel also shows that during Agnes work in the Murray family, Agnes should manage her salary for her family and her needs. Agnes is employing in Murray’s family in Horton Lodge. Even though Agnes is housed and fed on there, Agnes who get salary fifty

	expenses”				pound should put apart twenty pounds for her needs of laundry and her annual journey from Horton Lodge to her home. This is becoming the challenge for governess that they must be struggling with their low wage to maintain their finance for family and their own needs.
10.	Mrs. Bloomfield sent for me, and calmly told me that after Midsummer my services would be no longer required. She assured me that my character and general conduct were unexceptionable; but the children had made so little	Monologue	83	“Occupational problems did not end with finding a position and coming to terms with the duties and the children. A governess always faced the danger of unemployment, either because her work with the children was finished or because her employers were	Among the difficulties that governesses faced, the other problems such as unemployment could appear any time. That problem also comes to Agnes when she worked in the Bloomfield family. Mrs. Bloomfield decides to discharge Agnes from her position as a governess. A year becoming a governess for her children, Mrs. Bloomfield discharged

	improvement since my arrival that Mr. Bloomfield and she felt it their duty to seek some other mode of instruction.			dissatisfied with her.” (13)	Agnes as a governess. Mrs. Bloomfield is not satisfied with the work of Agnes because of very little improvement made by the children. In that time governess must be ready for the possibility of unemployment.
11.	As none of the before-mentioned ladies and gentlemen ever noticed me, it was disagreeable to walk beside them, as if listening to what they said, or wishing to be thought one of them, while they talked over me, or across; and if their eyes, in speaking, chanced to fall on me, it seemed as if they looked	Monologue	167	Hughes : "In the same way, the situation became worse when she had to accompany her employers into society. As an employee with no defined social status, she remained as an invisible woman because of her lack of experience in the situation”. (qtd. in Granell 6).	Moreover Agnes also gets poor treatment from her pupils in the Murray family. In the novel shows that the Murray’s daughters didn’t know how treat their governess and consider Agnes as stranger. The quotation explains that in the outside, when Murray’ daughters with their companion, they treat like Agnes is a servant, they act like Agnes is an invisible person among the companion. They act that Agnes is

	on vacancy—as if they either did not see me, or were very desirous to make it appear so.				not part of them and ignore her, but when they are with Agnes in private, they treat Agnes like a friend. It indicates that they actually didn't know treat their governess; sometimes a servant and sometimes a friend.
12.	“The servants, seeing in what little estimation the governess was held by both parents and children, regulated their behaviour by the same standard. I have frequently stood up for them, at the risk of some injury to myself, ... but they entirely neglected my comfort, despised my	Monologue	115	“Also, servants often looked down upon governesses, because they had to do household chores, even though they were from middle-class families.” (Nao 18-19)	Being governess was not only looked down by their employers and the pupils, but sometimes the servants also looked down toward governesses. This is because the background of governesses as middle class women. Governess position is undivided, she is poorer than her employer but educated than servants. Although governesses are educated, they are still doing house duties like

	requests, and slighted my directions.”				servants, that’s why sometimes servants look down to governess. Agnes also experiences that condition in the Bloomfield. Sometimes the servants of Bloomfield look down to Agnes. Agnes explains that the servants of Bloomfield usually take lightly toward Agnes, although sometimes Agnes helps them when they get difficulties from their employers. Even though the main job of governesses is teaching, they usually also do house duty and nursery duties like servants. This is the reason why servants usually ignore governess because they think that Agnes is only from middle class and she does nursery duties like them.
--	--	--	--	--	---

					The servants do not care with Agnes.
13.	“...for I was lonely. Never, from month to month, from year to year, except during my brief intervals of rest at home, did I see one creature to whom I could open my heart, or freely speak my thoughts with any hope of sympathy, or even comprehension...”	Monologue	155	“In addition to these conditions, many of them suffered from loneliness. They were not regarded as family members, they must hear alone cheerful confabulations exchanged between the members of their employers' families.” (Nao 18).	Since the lives of governesses are not easy, they usually are not happy. The governesses are usually lonely. Governesses do not have friends because their uncertain positions in the society. Governesses cannot be the part of employer's family or the part of servants. Being governesses mean that they must deal with the loneliness; they can only cheer themselves to stay happy. In the novel, Agnes also feels lonely during being a governess. Agnes can be happy when she comes back to her home. As governess, Agnes has no friends to share her feeling or free to

					say something.
14.	“But either the children were so incorrigible, the parents so unreasonable, or myself so mistaken in my views, or so unable to carry them out, that my best intentions and most strenuous efforts seemed productive of no better result than sport to the children, dissatisfaction to their parents, and torment to myself.”	Monologue	52	Hughes : “The mothers transfer the care of their daughters to the governess, but are rarely satisfied with the results. ...the ambiguity of the governess’ role in other people’s households. They wanted her there to take charge of their daughters’ education, yet distrusted her abilities and character.” (qtd. in Mehla 47).	Besides the limit authority, the task of governesses becomes harder when their employer complaint and dissatisfy with governesses’ working. In Victorian era, there were many mothers of upper class family employ governess take care of their children and their education, but they were usually doubt about the abilities of governess. In the novel, Agnes experiences that Bloomfield’s frequently blame Agnes for every fault that made by their children. The task of Agnes becomes harder when Bloomfield’s parents don’t satisfy with Agnes’s job. Agnes must face multiple problems at once. Agnes

					must thinking about to control her pupils and also the discontent of the parents. Even though Agnes tries to do the best with her limit power, Mrs. Bloomfield are often censure Agnes skill as governess.
--	--	--	--	--	--