

# Illumination of feminine on the misery of women in Elfriede Jelinek's Lust

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## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the sufferings of women in the post-modern era in general and Austrian women in particular. It deals with the efforts of Feminism to alter the women oppression in the entire world and to ask for her equal rights in all the domains. Feminism has generated an ongoing debate all over the world. It attempts to give a solution to the sufferings of women and to put an end to the injustice against women. It was the voice of women at times they could not speak or to express their feelings and wishes. Women activists were able to make woman believe her as an important creature the same as man. The society is equal to woman throughout her role in all fields as well as at home like economy, society, politics and Education. Because, she is a human being who has the right to live, to think, to marry, to vote, to say no when she wants. Her blood is red and her sweat tastes salty as man. The Austrian feminist and writer Elfriede Jelinek has been a controversial in her home country. Having the 'extraordinary linguistic zeal' of her novel 'Lust' reveals the absurdity of the society's clichés and its subjugating power. Writing in a powerful, imagistic, shocking voice Elfriede is a polemicist in the style of compatriots. She has been condemned for her relentlessly critical stance toward Austria's postwar politics and the mentality of its people. As a member of the Austrian Communist Party for about 15 years, she has tirelessly demonstrated how the realms of economy, sexuality and racism form a brutal patriarchal whole. Hence, the novelist insists on the active consent and toxic masculinity. It can be reinstated that men and women are always equal.

**Keywords:** Women work, Equality, sufferings, Feminist perspectives.

In 1989 Jelinek wrote her second best-selling novel 'Lust' (Eng.1993). In her style of writing, Jelinek portrayed marriage as legalized whoredom and depicts the city and its inhabitants as covetous and crooked. The protagonist in the novel is incapable of liberation as they driven by the socio-economic forces. Main issue of modern Feminism facing is men. Most of the men are having an idea that house hold works and child care

are women's work and also women are paid less than men in places. Due to which their hands are forced financially and socially to men.

The main characters in Elfriede Jelinek's novel *Lust* are the managing director of an Austrian paper-mill and his much-abused wife Gerti. The man is referred to as "der Direktor", much as one might refer to "der Führer"; his attitude to women matches that expressed in Hitler's table talk. Hermann is Schiller's "Ewig-Gestrige" with a vengeance, a man whose life is spent in the pursuit of power. His exploitation of Gerti's body is rendered in formidably horrible terms. In the age of AIDS, the Direktor has reluctantly decided that gratification begins at home, and he uses his passive wife to satisfy his needs. There is nothing mutual about this satisfaction: Gerti is merely a machine for fornication, and she no longer even attempts to express her wishes. Deploying a repertoire of familiar images for the genitals and the sexual act, Jelinek gives us many that are singularly degrading.

The boss of a paper factory, cornered by the fear of AIDS, turns to his wife to use her as he used to do with prostitutes. In a couple's comfortable villa, scenes of rare obscenity and hallucinatory violence follow one another even before the child's eyes. And when the desperate woman takes on a younger lover she's to find a new executioner. The dreadful drama on which the book ends belongs, with Jelinek, as always to a news item. Once again, it settles its account with the deep Austria, the quietude of the hearth, the bourgeois respectability and the so-called sexual liberation.

Gerti, who has taken to drink, wanders out for a winter stroll, where she has a brute encounter with a self-centered student who then discards her for the younger women he routinely seduces. Gerti, however, mistakes this for love, has her hair done, and goes to find Michael on the ski-slopes he frequents; there he abuses her physically before a giggling crowd of youngsters. If the lonely middle-aged wife thought she had found the archangel to deliver her from her sorrows, she was pathetically wrong. The novel ends on a despairing note reminiscent of the infanticide dramas (written by men) of the *Sturm und Drang*: Gerti suffocates her son, already grasping and domineering, and sinks the child's corpse in the stream. The killing is the inevitable outcome of a growing abhorrence of the self-perpetuating male principle. There are no new insights into sexuality, language and power in *Lust*. Jelinek avoids originality and achieves her satiric effects through pastiche and misprision.

Women are used as sex toys for advertising in media and most of the care takers are females. According to the office of the National Statistics that the Sexism remains at working environment since 2013. Women and Men are fundamentally different. It is also not true that women are the weaker sex physically and psychologically. Women require greater medical and psycatric care than Men. It is accepted that men have more physical power than women but not in money, politics and prestige. Mostly men have all these qualities in order to impress women but always women are women in all circumstances. It is not emphasized that

women should behave like men and makes as much money as normally men do. If happens that each and every thing then consequences must be greater incidence of divorce and single motherhood. Actually, feminist theory giving a voice to women that remains as the greatest contribution. Most feminists believe that free thinking is more important. These feminist focuses on equality that divides more than anything.

Above all, Jelinek's obsessive subtext is the history and teachings of Christ, for her apparently the archetype of male domination.

Feminism originates from the Latin word 'femina' that describes women's issues. Feminism is concerned with females not just as a biological category, but the female gender as a social category, and therefore feminists shared the view that women's oppression tied to their sexuality. This was so because women and men's biological differences reflected in the organization of society, and based on these differences, women have treated as inferior to men.

In the Novel, Lust, Elfriede describes the un-protective sexuality

“She felt replete with the dear image of her child, her one protective casing to guard against the groping Man, who holds her tighter than a customer holds the drink of his choice. He needs no protection for sex, and his torrent pours down the nearest channel. The child knows a good deal about all this. (Lust 25)

There are some equality type of feminism which helps to break the inequality between men and women. They are Liberal, cultural, Radical, Socialist, Eco feminism, Black and Separatist.

In the novel, Lust, she adds

“women realizes that there is no stable centre in her life, not even a recreation center where a life of recreation might be waiting” (Lust 11)

Each type of feminism would explain the liberty and freedom from men. Feminist are concerned about position that women are not allowed to hold anything but men can hold conveniently.

As Elfriede puts it

“The woman opens her mouth to cancel this appointment, but she thinks of his strength and shuts her mouth again” (Lust 14)

Men can perform anything that women are not allowed to perform. The most political, traditional and social positions in the society are only held by men (argument arose that women donot have interest in politics

rather they spend most of their valuable time taking care of their families and children and also women cannot hold traditional position because of their solemnity).

Traditionally man believes that man as the head of high position and the women are left for worthless positions because they think that women are not capable of those positions. Even most religions have directly or indirectly put men ahead of women for their growth of their family so that they are not giving importance to the education of women. Educated or feminists are helping to overcome this issues but they suffer from broken marriages, failed relationships or even separation.

Feminists are fighting for equality in the male dominated society whereas the parents bringing up their child cowardly. Many parents are not educated so that they teach their children about tolerance. Most parents are careless about their children's ambition.

“the child knows a good about all this. The boy cops a sly, audacious eyeful of Mother's body, having come in from the wilderness out there, the wilderness his comics call the Wonderland of Childhood.” (Lust 25)

The dream of an average woman is to get a degree, get married and have children. If women can continue in their ambition even after marriage, they could gain much respect but Society would change with its strict view on women.

Woman passes through many problems, obstacles and barriers to become an important member in the society. In the past, woman did not have any kind of right so she was isolated, neglected and mistreated by men.

In the Novel, Lust, Elfriede adds

“Essentially the Man is a big creature of pleasure, a bankable piggy, a citizen signing and gaming. So that his wife's body will be in a state to report for its daily duty.” (Lust 30)

Women have been struggling every moment and they are still looking for their rights. Because

“The women of the village are merely side dishes to go with their husbands' meat”. (Lust 77)

Feminism has initiated an effort all over the world and it came to solve the sufferings of women and to give an end to the injustice which has been done to them. It was the voice of women in times they could not speak or to express their feelings and wishes.

During a long period in history, woman was not considered as equal citizens so they suffered from bad treatments, discrimination and racism under man domination and rules. In spite of these problems, they could challenge them and prove themselves over the society. Woman in the past was living unequal and unfair life. As in 'Lust' she reveals

“Off his wife, to whom he is a lord, by whom he is restored, he expects that she will be naked beneath the gown of her house when he specially lays back the twenty kilometers from office to the house” (Lust 37)

She was prevented from doing any political, social and economical activities and her only job is being a housewife who takes care of home and children. Elfride describes the condition of woman in 'Lust' as

“She can't grasp it, The Direktor's cumbrous cranium worries amongst pubic hair, he bites, his desire is always at the ready, ready to desire something of her.” (Lust 16)

At that time, woman was under the control of man who dominates all the fields in which he represents the symbol of power.

As Elfride relates

“And Father is as puffed-up as a pig's bladder, he sings, plays, yells, fu..ks”. (Lust 10)

After all those problems, suffering and misery woman in the entire world started to find ways to improve herself and to change her position in life. They tried also to join their efforts, dreams and wishes to form a universal idea that speaks about all women in any place in the world this leads to the appearance of Feminism. By the coming of Feminism, woman was able take back her rights in addition to changing her negative image. Feminism proves that woman is capable to play important roles the same as man. Moreover, the most important goals of Feminism were giving woman her total freedom in addition to equal opportunities in the representation of the political and social events.

“Forwards, ever forwards. We don't want to look back, after all we haven't got eyes in the back of our head. The woman's high and mighty heels dig a hole in the ground.” (Lust 147 )



Feminist movements aim at achieving and establishing equality between women and men. People may misunderstand Feminism because feminism is not the belief that women are superior, on the other hand, Feminism does not hate men entirely and Feminism is not male oppression. Hence, Prevention should commence from schools.

"We need educational institutions to introduce some form of comprehensive sexuality education. It's crucial that there's more awareness regarding sexual violence. We need to be telling people about active consent, about toxic masculinity and the younger we get to people, the better it is." (this is our idea sir)

In the conclusion, every individual of the society yearns for equal rights, status and opportunity. "Men and women are equal because she is a human being who has the right to live, to think, to marry, to vote, to say no when she wants. Her blood is red and her sweat tastes salty as man. We need educational institutions to introduce some form of comprehensive sexuality. Every parent must educate their boy about equality and gender from his childhood would bring a change in the modern society. Therefore, men and women are always equal.

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