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**Web Page Contribution**

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Presented to Roxanne Rimstead

Women Writer

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## Poor Women in Literature

The main issue that women face is their desire to be equal to men. "There have been calls for separation as well as calls for inclusion, but the common denominator in most of the manifestations of feminism is the call for the social, political, and economic equality of women."(Whitson, p.x) We can't expect women to be in the average economically when their call for equality is not taken seriously. In fact, this webpage contribution explains why there are so many poor women in literature.

First, women are poor because they are fighting for their social, political, and economical rights. As we all know, in recent history, women were not allowed to express their ideas through literature. However, some of them did by writing stories, poems that reflected their thoughts and their personalities. Therefore, they showed their readers that women were also part of society. In fact, writing literature was not a job that put food easily on the table. Women were not allowed to work, to vote, and to say aloud what they thought. In my opinion, women were poor in many spheres. They were poor in the way they lived, in society under the patriarchy, and even women in literature were often represented as poor. However, I think that women writers expressed their status of poverty in society by writing with richness. In fact, as we can see in this research, women were necessarily poor because they remained silent: "In psychological research, poor women have been shut out and also shut up, that is, effectively silenced."(Reid, p.143) Moreover, this other citation explains clearly that women did not have the choice to be silent:" Silencing of women in society was originally achieved by men."(Reid, p. 145)

Secondly, I think women often used poverty to denote their status. Since they were not allowed to express themselves socially, politically, and economically, women writers

decided to represent women in books the same way they live in reality. Expressing what they have to say through published books is expensive, but for women who had no real job, no real income, it can be difficult to stay above the level of poverty. Even though women writers and women in books are represented as poor women, we can still see that they were able to live and to express themselves with a high level of performance. Therefore, we can conclude that some of them went to University and that they were able to pay for it. However, since they were rejected from the public spheres by men, it was more difficult for them to express their feelings, emotions, and conceptions of the world unless they were part of the higher class.

Thirdly, we cannot expect women to be in the middle class when they are not involved economically. Men were in charge of making sure the economy kept rolling in while women did not participate as much as they wanted in it. Moreover, poor women in literature wanted to declare their identity by answering to men's authority. Literature was a way to express what most women were not able to do. As we have seen, in *Jane Eyre*, in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, and in many poems, women expressed a strong desire to be free. This reference to women having power over men is taken from reality, where men used their influence and gender superiority over women. Poor women did not have the opportunity to become as powerful as men because there was no possibility for them to live without a man since he managed everything, except for some women who decided to write even though they were not allowed to, and poor.

Finally, poor women in literature is a subject that reflectes women's condition when they were powerless. Of course, their situation has changed throughout the years, but we can easily realise that they fought for their rights in order to be equal and to be listened to.

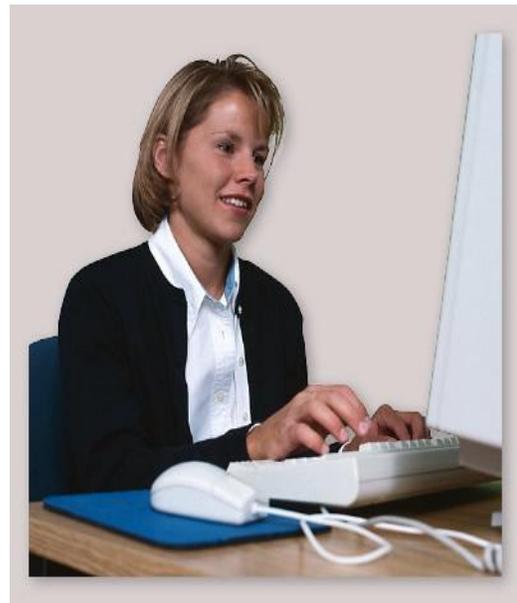
-Medium or high class woman (dactylo)



-poor woman writing with a pencil



Today's women well-being



## Bibliography

J. Whitson, Kathy. *Encyclopedia of Feminist Literature*. Greenwood Press. p.300 (2004)

Trotman Reid, Pamela. *Poor Women in Psychological Research*. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 17 (1993), 133-150. Printed in the United States of America.

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