

## Philip's essay

### On the Town. "Woman in Augustan England" 1680–1820

Joyce Ellis presents to us a portrayal of woman living around the eighteenth century. The women who lived a fairly comfortable style of life belonged to a class of society where the father or husband would be a landowner, these males were orientated to country life and all it entailed so they expected their wives or daughters to fit in to a standard of life they felt gave a certain status to the country way of life. These were under-privileged women as the boredom of country life could become frustrating to them, does it not make you see a resemblance to the modern day young woman, she can combine marriage, raising children, and holding on to a career as well.

With society becoming more wealthy it was possible for the fathers and husbands to provide an even better standard of life for their wives and daughters, more servants could be provided to do the work and this left the woman more time than ever to develop the social skills of the era, but this in turn led to extreme frustration among woman of that class. The country was no place now to exercise these new skills they had been taught, for one thing females outnumbered males at that time, also few chances arose to meet and mingle with crowds of people, but most importantly the demands of propriety meant that their conduct should be impeccable at all times any error would be seen in such a limited environment so therefore woman began to long for the urban or city way of living, if even for a short period so that they could deploy the art of socializing and mingling with a greater amount of society

Towns offered woman a great variation of respectable ways in which to carry out the social skills, indeed many women have gone down in history as being great experts as organizers of social events thus enhancing their husbands standing. In a town or city, women could meet with many more of the female sex than they did in the country, they could exchange views and learn new ideas from each other, also they could meet with more of the male population as the cities had theatres concert halls, and many places where both sexes could mingle together respectably. In many ways going into urban life from the countryside was beneficial to woman of the upperclass.

This transition was not without a certain amount of jibes from the male population against the women of that time, who looked on them as being inferior in many ways, and considered those who chose to get away from boredom of the country as being improper in outlook.

Nevertheless woman, whether wealthy or poor need the stimulus of company and the need to escape from routine and boredom and so will continue to seek for the things that will be in their favour.