LITTLE WOMEN

Summer 2020

Fourth Class: July 30

Theme: “Reaching their Potential While Accepting their Limitations”

Agenda:

1. Assignment for next week
2. Group Discussion: Unfinished Issues from last week and awareness of “living in the swirl”
3. Brief Presentation: Language and “Young Adult Reader”
4. General Discussion: Opening of Book 2: Where is everyone?
5. General Discussion: Potential and Limitations: Interior and Exterior: Jo and Amy; Close look at passages
6. Small Groups: The Experience of Invited Criticism—Jo’s about her writing; any experience to share?
7. General Discussion: New York, Writing, Prof. Bhaer – In what ways does Jo grow? Change?
8. General Discussion: If you had not seen the film, what would you think would happen next?

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1. Assignment: Part II—Read Little Women, to the end. Consider what the film has contributed to your appreciation of the book, and think about what book has meant and what it might mean moving forward, in context of some quotes I will provide at the end of today’s class.
2. Unfinished Business.
   1. Note: Ok to live in the swirl of forward and backward, not known but known.
   2. What did we conclude last week about “Money, women, power, autonomy, imagination, and aesthetic?” (Note: This week’s reading will influence that further, as will next week’s.)
   3. How did watching the film influence our thinking about the issues and about the characters?
   4. Film segments we need to SEE
3. Figurative Language and General Sentence Structure.
4. Opening of Book II. What is timeframe and what changes have occurred? What is the general mood of the group and the individuals? What potential seems to be on the horizon?
5. Potential and Limitations: What questions about the culture and their own characters surface as Amy and Jo move through “Artistic Attempts” and “Calls.”
6. Small Groups: Value and Limits of Criticism: What is impact of the multiple voices Jo hears as she makes choices about what to write. Have you had similar experiences? Have the results been similar?
7. Jo Writing from New York: What do you learn about her? What do you learn about life outside Concord? What do you learn about Prof. Bhaer? What is your response to him?
   1. If you have looked forward and learned what Jo is writing and what she does to “feed her imagination,” do you have a response?
   2. What do you think about the scene Gerwig inserted--Writing makes meaning?
8. Are you going to be ready for Professor Bhaer’s response?

Thoughts for Next Week:

* 1. Do you accept the description of Joe Morgenstern, “The adaptation is faithful to its historical roots, yet it runs on contemporary energy.”?
  2. Do you think book was ahead of its time? Is about to be overtaken by contemporary events?
  3. What do you think about the overview by Foster / Simons (TBA)?
  4. Was / Is the “James Joyce option” (TBA) viable?