

**Child Abuse in The Victorian Novel: A Critical Analysis of Heathcliff's
Character as a Victim or Perpetrator in Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights**

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Abstract

Wuthering Heights gives readers a good idea of what it must have been like to be an orphan in Victorian society. Readers' sympathies go naturally to Heathcliff at the outset because he is seen only as a victim of ill-treatment by Hindley Earnshaw. When Heathcliff is brought as a boy to the Earnshaw's home, Mrs. Earnshaw's first reaction is to fling the child out of doors. That night even the kind-hearted Nelly puts the child on the landing in the hope that it might be gone by the next morning. Later, old Mr. Linton finds Heathcliff prowling about with Cathy near Thrushcross Grange and immediately says, "It is, but a boy. Would it not be a kindness to the country to hang him at once?" When Hindley becomes the master of Wuthering Heights, he ill-treats and degrades Heathcliff forcing him to work as a drudge on the farm. This treatment forms the basis of Heathcliff's resolve afterwards to take revenge upon Hindley and Edgar.

Heathcliff is the main character in Emily Brontë's classic novel Wuthering Heights, and the whole plot revolves around this strange man from the time when he arrives at Wuthering Heights as a dark and dirty foundling and until he ends his days as a powerful landlord of both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. This evolution of the character makes him one of the most fascinating characters in English literature.

The study will try to elucidate Brontë's depiction of the theme of victimization represented by the main character, Heathcliff, who has been abused and victimized and turned to be a victimizer. It is expected to find out that the hero could be a victim or a perpetrator or both, and how does abuse affect his personality and attitudes towards himself and the society he lives in. Besides, the victim may develop anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder, and may suffer permanent

physical or emotional damage and that of course will make a deep scar in the hero's psyche which will turn him into either an angel or a devil.

Introduction

Child abuse as a serious problem was manipulated by writers such as Hans Christian Andersen, Mark Twain, Lewis Carroll, Charles Dickens, Fyodor Dostoevsky and Le Guin. (Fiedler, 1980) These writers have depicted the abuse issue in their works which were full of "harrowing scenes of suffering children." (Langbauer, 2008, p.89) Langbauer (2008) argued that the works of some of the writers such as Charles Dickens, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Le Guin were biographies of their own childhood in which they suffered a lot under severe circumstances:

We can certainly read all the painful scenes of suffering children in Dickens, Dostoevsky, and Le Guin biographically (...); they are anguished internal wounds made literal, glosses on traumas within authors' own Childhood rather than merely sadistic scapegoating. (Langbauer, 2008, p.90)

Dostoevsky here wanted his readers to recognize an important harsh fact that children do suffer terribly in this world. Le Guin, also, emphasized this problem in her works and she mentioned frequently that people should not use others especially children for their own special purposes. (Langbauer, 2008, p.103)

Wuthering Heights was published in 1847, ten years after the beginning of queen Victoria's reign. Although the events of the novel are set at a slightly earlier date, it is generally classed as Victorian because it deals with themes that were predominant at this time. In common with other Victorian novelists, such as

Charles Dickens, Emily Bronte uses her fiction to highlight and attack the social injustice of this period.

She feeds her reader's growing concern for the ills of their society especially child abuse.

The very first time we meet Heathcliff in the novel is through his tenant's narrative, where the character is established in the very first sentence of the novel. His tenant has just returned from a visit, and he describes him as a "*solitary neighbour that I shall be troubled with*" and hints about him being a misanthropist. This is all fairly vague in comparison to the much stronger statement: "*A capital fellow!*" and the fact that the tenant's heart warmed towards him, leaving us with the impression of a strong, but just man although we sense that there are some hidden menace lurking in the background.

This menace is also emphasized by the manner his dialogs and actions are described throughout the novel. Heathcliff does not speak – he growls. He does not smile – he grins, and even sneers on occasion. In the tenants narrative the uses of adjectives like "diabolical" certainly gives an extra flavour to the reader's interpretation of the character. The effect of the choice of words is further enhanced by putting his dogs in the scene with him early in the novel, and thereby creating a link between the dogs and himself, and an image of him not being man-like. And indeed, dogs are just the thing for portraying a man like this, as dogs can be both dirty and pitiful, and strong, powerful sentinels or even predators at the same time – mirroring the general development of the character.

With this image firmly planted in the reader's mind, the narrative changes to that of Mrs. Dean, the housewife of both Wuthering Heights and the Grange, who takes us back to when Heathcliff arrives at Wuthering Heights as a foundling. The diabolic image is further enhanced by remarks such as "*...it's as dark almost as if*

it came from the devil” and the fact that Mrs. Earnshaw “*was ready to fling it outdoors*” upon his arrival. Even the housekeeper is afraid of him, but when everybody calms down, the child is washed and tucked into bed along with Hindley and Catherine, the Earnshaw children. The diabolic image is later modified somewhat with the way Heathcliff responds to the ill-treatment from Hindley, as he would not cry or speak up when harassed. This, however, does not necessarily make him seem more human to the reader. It might just be that this contributes to the aura of unearthliness that follows him throughout the text. The world of this novel is a world of abuse, violence and cruelty. This is a world in which children without the protection of their mothers have to fight for life against adults who show almost no tenderness, love or mercy. Normal emotions are almost completely inverted. Survival depends on one's ability to be tough, brutal and rebellious. But to understand the character's motives and psyche, one should comprehend first the reasons that shaped that psyche and child abuse is one of these reasons.

Types and Effects of Child Abuse

In 1999, the WHO Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention drafted the following definition:

Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. (As cited in Krug et al, 2002, p.59)

Physical abuse of a child is defined as those acts of commission by a caregiver that cause actual physical harm or have the potential for harm. Emotional abuse

includes the failure of a caregiver to provide an appropriate and supportive environment, and includes acts that have an adverse effect on the emotional health and development of a child. Such acts include restricting a child's movements, denigration, ridicule, threats and intimidation, discrimination, rejection and other nonphysical forms of hostile treatment. Neglect refers to the failure of a parent to provide for the development of the child.

The most important type of abuse is psychological abuse which is also called emotional abuse. It has eight types: (Tower, 2002, p.210; Briere, 1992, pp.9–10) rejecting; degrading/devaluing; terrorizing; isolating; corrupting; exploiting; denying essential stimulation, emotional responsiveness or availability; and unreliable and inconsistent parenting. Moreover, two additional behaviours have been added to the previous list: destroying personal possessions and torturing or destroying a pet. It is worth mentioning that such types can be found in Heathcliff's character. Furthermore, psychological abuse can be considered as an essential element that can be found in all the forms of abuse, since the major effects of abuse are on the child's psyche. (Briere, 1992)

It has been argued that children who are raised by unloving, unresponsive or emotionally neglectful parents are at risk of psychological disturbance in terms of disturbed attachment to and relationships with others. Accordingly, psychological abuse and neglect may have penetrating and severe negative effects that may link to equally severe outcomes in adulthood. It was important to mention the types of abuse since the physical and psychological abuse have been manipulated and this can be traced in Heathcliff's character. (Miller, 2006; Tower, 2002; Briere, 1992).

According to Tower (2002) and Briere (1992) abuse has so many effects on the victims which might start in childhood and continue to adulthood. Therefore, it is crucial to study and understand such effects to comprehend the behaviour of Heathcliff's character and his choices throughout the novel. The most common residual effects can be summarized as: 1. Trust: The personalities of all types of maltreatment survivors show difficulty with trust, since trust is a basic aspect of socialization, and it has been argued that the ability to trust begins from early childhood. (Tower; 2002, Briere, 1992) 2. Aggression or Anger: anger often creates problems for the survivors. Feeling robbed of childhood, betrayed and powerless, the adult reacts to the injustice with anger, which can become an intense rage. The past victim may turn the anger inward or act out the anger towards others. 3. Relational Imbalances: a failure to trust and low self-esteem, in addition to repressed or aggressive behaviour, will prevent the victims from having a satisfactory relationship with others.

4. Low self-esteem: it is common in victims of abuse to develop a sense of low self-esteem since the act of abuse and neglect can contribute to the feeling of worthlessness and being unloved as well as unwanted by their parents or others.

5. Anxiety and fears: Child abuse by its nature is threatening and disturbing, it would be normal to find the victims of such maltreatment are prone to feelings of fearfulness and anxiety, even after the abuse has transpired. 6. Dissociation: is defined as "a defensive disruption in the normally occurring connections among feelings, thoughts, behaviour, and memories, consciously and unconsciously invoked in order to reduce psychological distress." (Briere,1992, p.36)

7. Intimacy Disturbance: usually most of the abused children will display fear, distrust or experience ambivalence about interpersonal closeness. It has been argued that victims of parental neglect or emotional unavailability are prone to chronic fear of abandonment, alienation and perceived isolation in personal

relationships, and yet may simultaneously exhibit anxiety in the face of increasing interpersonal closeness, besides their inability to trust others. As a result, true friendships may be rare for such survivals and romantic relationships as well. (p. 51)

Heathcliff as a Victim

Hindley's ill-treatment of Heathcliff is a key point both in the novel and in the development of the character of Heathcliff, and it is the trigger to everything that goes so wrong in the end. It is worth mentioning that Hindley is the first one who started abusing and victimizing Heathcliff though he was just a child at that time. He abused Heathcliff physically by knocking him down with a heavy iron weight and kicked him under a pony's hoofs. While Mr. Earnshaw liked Heathcliff, everybody else hated him, and he seemed a sullen child who have been hardened by ill-treatment. Hindley did not miss any opportunity to treat him in an unkind and cruel manner. Who constantly physically and mentally batters Heathcliff. This provides the ammunition for later vengeance on Hareton, Linton, Cathy and Isabella. Guilty of usurping old Earnshaw's affection for his biological children, Heathcliff results as the victim of merciless degradation from Hindley until his disappearance in chapter 9. "...the young master had learnt to regard his father as an oppressor rather than a friend, and Heathcliff as a usurper of his parent's affections, and his privileges, and he grew bitter with brooding over these injuries." Hindley's jealousy extends to violence along with the practice of psychologically demoralizing Heathcliff. He frequently refers to Heathcliff as an "imp of Satan", "dog" and "devil", though Heathcliff's stoic nature reciprocates no action. He insidiously waits for the hour upon which he will revive the conflict and crush his enemies.

"...he [Heathcliff] would stand Hindley's blows without winking or shedding a tear...I was surpassed to witness how coolly the child gathered himself up and, went on with his intention." chapter 4.

"I'm trying to settle how I shall pay Hindley back. I don't care how long I wait, if I can only do it, at last. I hope he will not die before I do!" chapter 7.

The death of old Earnshaw provides the opportunity for Hindley to take full advantage of his masterdom over Heathcliff. The psycho-sadistic nature of Heathcliff's torment pleasures Hindley. He degrades Heathcliff in front of the Linton's upon Cathy's return from Thrushcross Grange, "...Mr Hindley, enjoying his [Heathcliff's] discomfiture and gratified to see what a forbidding young blackguard he would be compelled to present himself. 'You may come and wish Miss Catherine welcome, like the other servants.'"

Heathcliff forms a special bond with Catherine, and they spend a lot of time playing together out on the moors. One night they decide to go spy on the Lintons, which results in Catherine spraining her ankle and getting an invitation to stay until it is healed. Heathcliff, on the other hand, does not receive this invitation and must return to Wuthering Heights alone.

The turning point of the novel is when Catherine finally comes home, and this is also when Heathcliff truly is contrasted for the first time. The Lintons are portrayed as fine, cultivated creatures, and what is worse; they seem to have tamed and made a lady out of Catherine. This makes a sharp contrast to the black haired and dirty Heathcliff who has kept in the background until Catherine calls him forth. She kisses him at first, and then she turns right around and laughs at him in his face for being so "*black and cross*". Needless to say, this hurts him deeply and it has a major impact on his development throughout the rest of the novel. At first, he

makes a serious attempt to change his appearance by having the housekeeper groom him. This is also the first time his appearance is thoroughly described, making it very hard for the reader to believe that such a face could ever be anything else than dark and wild in the comparison of the angel-like Lintons.

“Do you mark those two lines between your eyes, and those thick brows, that instead of rising arched, sink in the middle, and that couple of black fiends, so deeply buried, who never open their windows boldly, but lurk glinting under them, like devil’s spies? Wish and learn to smooth away the surly wrinkles, to raise your lids frankly, and change the fiends to confident, innocent angels, suspecting and doubting nothing, and always seeing friends where they are not sure of foes – Don’t get the expression of a vicious cur that appears to know the kicks it gets are its desert, and yet, hates all the world, as well as the kicker, for what it suffers”.

This grim look, however, does not stop him from trying, resulting only in further humiliation by Hindley as he is shoved out of the room where Catherine and Edgar resides. From this point onward, Heathcliff is no longer the patient child enduring his torment in silence. He has had enough, and he starts fighting back for the first time, deciding that he will pay Hindley back no matter how long he has to wait for his revenge. He stays at Wuthering Heights a little while longer, but when Catherine decides to marry his exact opposite, Edgar Linton, after having rejected himself on several occasions, he cannot stand it anymore and leaves without saying a word.

Heathcliff in this sense has been abused physically and emotionally besides to be neglected by others. Everyone hates, degraded, and insulted him even Catherine his only friend and love. When she left him to marry Linton, which was for him the biggest insult and abuse to his feelings. That wound stayed with him all his life leaving a scar that cannot be healed.

Heathcliff as a Perpetrator

Three years pass by without anyone knowing where he is, but when he reappears in the novel it becomes apparent that he has gone through some major changes. This absence is an artistic effect in itself, and it somewhat resembles a butterfly's cocoon. The being that disappeared is not the same being that emerges afterwards, but the change itself becomes a hidden mystery of some kind, and it is more or less up to the reader to figure out what actually happened to Heathcliff while he was away. The author's choice of narrators allows her to do so, as none of the narrators went away with him, and consequently there is no one to tell us what happened at this point. All we are left with is the new impression of a full grown man, as described by the housekeeper:

"...I was amazed, more than ever, to behold the transformation of Heathcliff. He had grown a tall, athletic, well-formed man; besides whom my master seemed quite slender and youth-like. His upright carriage suggested the idea of his having been in the army. His countenance was much older in expression and decision of feature than Mr. Linton's; it looked intelligent, and retained no marks of former degradation. A half-civilized ferocity lurked yet in the depressed brows, and eyes full of black fire, but it was subdued; and his manner was even dignified, quite divested of roughness though too stern for grace."

Once again, the author uses contrast to establish the character, but this time the tables have turned: Heathcliff is now the one who is portrayed as the superior character in the plot, as Edgar "*seemed quite slender and youth-like*" in comparison and that his facial expression looks intelligent. The effect is further enhanced by mentioning the army, bringing to mind the ability to fight – both to defend and to conquer. This is indeed a capable and potentially dangerous man, and now he is back to settle the score with Hindley.

The first thing Heathcliff does upon his return is to call to gather information about Catherine so as he can meet her – just to have a glimpse of her face before he takes care of his business with Hindley and then executes himself to escape the law. However, he changes his mind when he sees her. This indicates that Catherine is able to control him to some degree, and that she could have stopped his plans of revenge by leaving Edgar for his sake. The suspense is held for quite a while, with Heathcliff coming and going at the Grange to see Catherine and with Edgar trying to prevent him in doing so without losing face. Then, Isabella, Edgar's younger sister, falls deeply in love with Heathcliff, thinking him a true, honorable soul. Catherine, who knows him very well by now, tries to talk her out of it but fails miserably. Again, the character of Heathcliff is established through the means of contrast, this time with the fair, frail and naïve Isabella. Also, it is enhanced by the words of Catherine, his true love, when she says to her:

"I'd as soon put that little canary into the park on a winter's day as recommend you to bestow your heart on him! (...) He's not a rough diamond – a pearl-containing an oyster of a rustic; he's a fierce, pitiless, wolfish man."

This is the first time Catherine herself makes a statement about Heathcliff's true character, and it is the last evidence the reader was waiting for. If we were not convinced before, we certainly would be now, after the heroine makes her little speech. Sadly, it does not have the same effect on Isabella. Four months after Heathcliff's return, he sweeps Isabella away from the Grange and marries her – not for love, as implied by both Catherine and Mrs. Dean, but for the opportunity of inheriting her brother's property. Some months later, she sends a long letter to the housewife, providing the reader with her narrative, the third one in the novel. Here she asks: *"Is Mr. Heathcliff a man? If so, is he mad? And if not, is he a devil?"* and once again we are reminded of his diabolic features. She concludes her letter by

assuring both the receiver and the reader that “*a tiger, or a venomous serpent could not rouse terror in me equal to that which he wakens*”, adding to the impression that all hell is, once again, loose in Heathcliff’s conduct. His revenge is starting to take form.

Meanwhile, Catherine has been taken ill from the eternal suspense between her husband and her love, as Heathcliff cares less and less about what her husband may think about his visiting the Grange. It all explodes in one final encounter between the three of them just before Heathcliff marries Isabella, which almost leads to a fight between the men, only prevented by the housekeeper’s wits. Edgar then requires Catherine to choose between himself and Heathcliff, pushing her into a frantic madness. A little while later, when Heathcliff learns of her illness, he decides that he should pay her a visit to see how she is. This is the first evidence of empathy or concern for other’s wellbeing in Heathcliff’s character, and shows just how much he really loves Catherine. This is further enhanced by his reaction when he finally sees her. As reported by Mrs. Dean:

“He neither spoke, nor loosed his hold, for some five minutes, during which period he bestowed more kisses than ever he gave in his life before, I dare say; but then my mistress had kissed him first, and I plainly saw that he could hardly bear, for downright agony, to look into her face! The same conviction had stricken him as me, from the instant he beheld her, that there was no prospect of ultimate recovery there – she was fated, sure to die.”

She is also the only one who makes him show signs of agony or despair of any kind. One could of course argue that it is not Catherine he loves – it is himself in Catherine. As she herself states when she decides to marry Edgar:

“...[Heathcliff] shall never know how I love him; and that, not because he is handsome, Nelly, but because he’s more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same...”

Another major turning point in the development in the character of Heathcliff is when Catherine dies. After this happens, Heathcliff takes on a different aspect, as he more or less resigns and makes himself invisible for long periods of time for the narrator. This is not to say he becomes passive in any way – he simply takes the form of a puppet master and cunningly manipulates everyone around him from behind the curtain. With Catherine gone, there are no softening elements to Heathcliff’s cruelty, and no romance to sugar coat the story of revenge. This is Heathcliff in his most scary aspect.

His character is almost fully evolved at this point of the novel. His cruelty and sternness has been thoroughly established through direct description, choice of adjectives and violent actions, and now the narrator adds another feature: his ability to deceive and plan ahead. This becomes evident when he tells Cathy, Catherine’s daughter, that his son Linton is heartbroken and cannot be told that she did not despise him after she is forbidden by her father to send him any more letters. The real story is that it is Heathcliff himself who has convinced him of this, and the manipulation becomes even more obvious when Linton becomes more and more terrorized by his father lurking in the shadows telling him how to behave in front of Cathy, beating him senseless when he fails to obey.

And sure enough, Heathcliff gets his revenge in the end. Hindley is driven to his death, Cathy and Linton marries just a few months before Linton dies, and Heathcliff inherits both the Grange and Wuthering Heights, besides to his revenge from Hindley by taking his son Hareton and enslaving him just like his father used to do with Heathcliff. The infant Hareton lives in much greater danger. Hindley's

first instinct when drunk is to kill his son whom Nelly constantly hides. On one occasion, Heathcliff accidentally rescues Hareton from a fall but then reflects that if it had been dark he would allow Hareton's skull to get broken on the steps. Later, Heathcliff is possessed by a desire to twist the life of Hareton. "We'll see if one tree won't grow as crooked as another," he says. Hareton, says Heathcliff, will never be able to emerge from his state of coarseness and ignorance, and will remain a complete brute. He has been given no education at all and has been taught to show no mercy either to animals or to human beings. He becomes a crude young man; every inclination towards goodness or virtue in him has been extinguished. As a result of this children's upbringing, he loses whatever good qualities he has born with. On one occasion, he is seen by Isabella hanging a little of puppies. Heathcliff tells Nelly that he is happy to bring up Hareton in this manner. Hareton himself feels proud of his brutishness; he is not in the least aware of the damage Heathcliff does to him.

Hareton manages somehow to survive, but Linton Heathcliff is slowly tortured to death by his father. That is, his desire to kill him is overwhelming. He tells Nelly that if he has been living in a country where laws were less strict, he would have enjoyed a slow vivisection of both Linton and Cathy as a kind of entertainment. Heathcliff's treatment of the younger Cathy and of his own son Linton shows him to be a fiend. In the next meeting between him and Catherine, young Linton looks terribly frightened of the presence of his father. Heathcliff shows delight over his son being overtaken by death.

Still, there are no hints about him being fulfilled or content in any way. The only thing that seems to calm him somewhat is to dig up Catherine's grave eighteen years after she is buried so as he can hold her in his arms once again. This sequence is a very powerful one, conveying madness, sorrow, desperate passion

and horror. This is also when it is revealed that Heathcliff has been haunted by Catherine's ghost all these years, adding spiritual terror to the already violent picture.

After this, there is yet another change in Heathcliff's character. He starts to feel like there is a change coming, but he cannot make it out. Yet, by making him tell Mrs. Dean about it, the author is able to say something more about his character, something that has never been said before: Heathcliff makes an effort to smile. This is the first time in the novel where this emotional expression has not been described as a diabolical sneer or a grin – it is an effort to actually smile. This signifies that there in fact is a change coming, and that it perhaps will change Heathcliff's character as well. This is also enhanced by Heathcliff making arrangements for his own funeral, so as he can be laid to rest besides Catherine. And as the reader already is well aware of: the only one who could make such a difference is Catherine herself.

With this in mind, his death scene is even more powerful as this is the only time he is described as actually smiling – without even making an effort to do so. As Mrs. Dean says: "*His eyes met mine so keen, and fierce, I started: and then, he seemed to smile.*" Heathcliff's unearthliness follows him even in death, as the housekeeper seems to think that he smiles at her after she started, even when he lies there cold. This is also enhanced by the fact that she can't seem to close his eyes, making the reader wonder if he really is dead and gone, after all.

And true enough, it does not take long before a little boy is found crying at the turn to the Heights, claiming that Heathcliff and a woman is "yonder, under t' Nab", and he dare not pass them. Even though Mrs. Dean concludes her narrative and the novel by "*wondering how any could ever imagine unquiet slumbers, for the*

sleepers in that quiet earth", the reader is left with a certain feeling of ongoingness concerning Heathcliff and his woman.

In the end, therefore, Isabella's questions still remain:

"Is Mr Heathcliff a man? If so, is he mad? And if not, is he a devil?"

There are no apparent answers to these questions. Maybe that is what makes the character of Heathcliff so endlessly fascinating even 160 years after he was first bestowed on the reading world, and what makes *Wuthering Heights* a classic novel to this day, still worth reading.

We meet Heathcliff in the very first paragraph of the novel, and we are struck with the mystery of the man as we behold "his black eyes withdraw so suspiciously under their brows." Although we learn a great deal more about him as the novel progresses, we are perhaps astonished at the end of the book to realize how little of his mystery we have penetrated. He is a strange man, curiously motivated to heights of love and depth of cruelty far beyond the comprehension of ordinary mortals. His passions are truly more superhuman than human. (Griffith, 1966, p.15)

The abuse and neglect he faced when he was a child, reflected in his treatment to Hareton and even to his son Linton. Heathcliff has been suffering throughout his childhood from victimization and that influenced him later on when he grew up to find himself the owner of *Wuthering Heights*. The effects of abuse continued with him until adulthood. He mistrusted all the people around him and that started from his early childhood when he was unsocial and primitive when it comes to human relationships. All people from his perspective do not worth his trust and respect.

Therefore, he developed another effect of abuse which is aggression and anger. His reaction to the injustice he faced is by anger and revenge and that attitude destroyed the people around him and destroyed himself from the inside. Aggression destroyed the last goodness in his soul. Moreover, that led him to be a failure when it comes to social relationships with others. He had also a low self-esteem though he was showing the opposite but he tried through revenge to present himself as powerful and superior which is a way to hide the crack in his personality made by abuse.

Anxiety and fear did not leave him alone for in spite of his rage and power over people, he was so fragile from the inside. He was afraid of Catherine's ghost and afraid of the idea that he might not be united with her after death. Furthermore, he was also hunted by his own crimes. So, he developed a sense of dissociation which is a kind of defense against his repressed memories and feelings, the conscious and the unconscious, in order to reduce the psychological trauma he was going through.

Conclusions

Cruelty toward the innocent is the chief sin in *Wuthering Heights*. This cruelty is shared by almost all the adult characters; moreover, it is often self-inflicted. There is no original sin, no absolute evil; no character is purely and wantonly malicious. In a novel in which the characters themselves are constantly blaming someone else for their misfortunes, the reader, prevented from pointing an accusing finger at any one of them, cannot declare, "Thou art the man!" Heathcliff blames Catherine for her willingness to marry Edgar; Catherine, in turn, blames Hindley for forcing her into a union with a man she cannot really love. Hindley has his own

scapegoats. He blames God, his Heavenly Father, for killing the one object of his love, Frances, just as he blames old Earnshaw, his earthly father, for loving Heathcliff the foundling instead of his rightful son. Earnshaw, however, has merely rationalized his perverse attraction to the foundling by telling himself that he is following the dictates of a just God. It is in that Justicer's spirit that he reproaches Nelly for her cruelty to the boy. But the deity he believes in is devoid of feeling. Out of justice comes injustice. Although this process proves reversible, Emily Brontë's novel nonetheless relies on this cruel arch-paradox.

Despite the novelist's efforts to vindicate her belief in goodness and love, *Wuthering Heights* achieves its harmony not because of its final synthesis but rather because of its recognition of paradox and contradiction. Although the plot represents a triumph for the benign social forces of the Grange, it is in the garden at that Grange, and not at the Heights, that the cleavage which will separate Catherine from Heathcliff first becomes manifest. By having Edgar and Isabella fight over their dog so fiercely that they almost tear the animal apart, the author shows that the Lintons' civilized ways are only skin deep.

By blending the illogic of Heathcliff's story with the logical realism of Nelly Dean and her nurslings, by fusing pessimism and hope, tragedy and comedy, Emily Brontë was able to resist the formulas by which her characters want to reduce reality. It is a tribute to the reality of *Wuthering Heights*, as well as to the novelist's integrity, that she was able to control the polarities on which her vision is built. Broadly speaking, Heathcliff, like Macbeth, is a hero-villain. The evil in him does not make him an Iago. His malignity is not motiveless as Iago's was; and we can be sorry for him. Yet he lacks the heroic virtues of Macbeth, and his brutality shows human nature on one of its lowest levels.

It has been argued that childhood abuse and harassment have long-lasting consequences that reach well into adulthood, and in order to obtain 'true adulthood,' adults who have been abused as children must contend with their repressed emotions and integrate the story of their experience of abuse into their lives instead of denying its influence. (Miller, 2006) Miller believed that "most depressions and other mental illness are caused by emotional and physical maltreatment." (2006, p.103) Abuse and neglect, accordingly, can contribute in turning normal children into monsters. Miller (2006) maintains that these monsters are victims for the people who have abused them.

All the negative effects of abuse and victimization built Heathcliff's personality and turned him into a demon like. Catherine left him to marry another man though she loved him deeply. He could not keep her for himself and could not keep Isabella too. He lost his son and lost Hareton who is may be the only person who cared about Heathcliff though he has enslaved him. Heathcliff made everyone hate him and look at him as a devil or a creature came from hell. Therefore, he died alone with a family and without a beloved. As he destroyed others, abuse once has destroyed him completely.

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سوء معاملة الاطفال في رواية العصر الفيكتوري: دراسة نقدية لشخصية هيثكليف كضحية او جاني في
رواية وذرغ هايتس لايميلي برونتي

كلمات افتتاحية: ضحية/ جاني/ سوء المعاملة/ وذرغ هايتس/ هيثكليف

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الملخص

ان رواية وذرنگ هاييتس تعطي القارئ فكرة جيدة عن ما كان عليه وضع الايتام في المجتمع الفيكتوري. في الغالب تذهب مشاعر القراء نحو هيثكليف لانه ممكن ان يعتبر ضحية لسوء المعاملة من قبل هندلي ايرنشو. عندما تم جلبه لاول مره الى منزل السيد ايرنشو كان رد فعل السيد ايرنشو هو رميه خارج المنزل. في تلك الليلة حتى نيلي الطيبة القلب تركته على امل ان يذهب في الصباح. عندما اصبح هندلي المالك لوزرنگ هاييتس بدا باحتقار واساءة معاملة هيثكليف واجباره على العمل في المزرعة. ان هذه المعاملة شكلت قرار هيثكليف بالانتقام من هندلي وادغار.

ان شخصية هيثكليف هي الشخصية الاساسية في رواية وذرنگ هاييتس والقصة باكملها تدور حول هذا الرجل الغريب منذ اليوم الذي وصل فيه الى وذرنگ هاييتس كيتيم قذر وحتى انهى ايامه كمالك قوي لكل من وذرنگ هاييتس وثرشكروس غرينج. ان هذا التطور في الشخصية جعله من اكثر الشخصيات المثيرة للاهتمام في الادب الانكليزي.

ستحاول الدراسة الحالية ان توضح تصوير برونتي لمفهوم الضحية متجسدا بالشخصية الرئيسية هيثكليف والذي اسيئت معاملته فتحول من ضحية الى جاني. من المتوقع ان نجد بان البطل يمكن ان يكون ضحية او جانت او كلاهما وكيف ان سوء المعاملة يمكن ان يؤثر بشخصيته وسلوكه تجاه نفسه والمجتمع الذي يعيش فيه.بالاضافة الى ان الضحية يمكن يتطور لديه الشعور بالقلق واضطراب لما بعد الصدمة ويمكن ان يعاني من ضرر جسدي او نفسي دائم وهذا سيترك ندبا في شخصية البطل والتي بدورها ستحواله اما الى ملاك او شيطان.