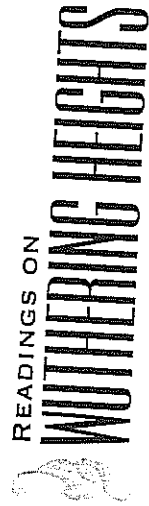


CHAPTER 1

The Inhabitants of *Wuthering* Heights



Heathcliff Is Both Tyrant and Victim

Graham Holderness

As Heathcliff changes throughout Brontë's novel, readers alternately hate and sympathize with him. Graham Holderness, an educator at University College of Swansea in Wales and author of *D.H. Lawrence: History, Ideology, and Fiction* and *Shakespeare's History*, explores this love/hate relationship with Heathcliff and suggests that both emotions are justifiable. Although Heathcliff becomes a tyrant, bent on revenge after years of humiliation at Wuthering Heights, he can also be seen as an obsessive and beaved outsider—a sympathetic victim.

Heathcliff is really the central problem of *Wuthering Heights*: our valuation of him determines our sense of what the novel is about. If you think about it, it would perhaps be more orthodox to regard Edgar Linton—who has all the conventional requirements—as the hero, and Heathcliff as the villain of the piece. Heathcliff never does anything virtuous or noble in the conventional sense: his story is a long list of morally reprehensible actions. Are we supposed to see Heathcliff (in the words of the *Examiner*, 8 January 1848) as 'an incarnation of evil qualities; implacable hate, ingratitude, falsehood, selfishness, and revenge'—and despise him? Or are we supposed to sympathize with him in his obsessive pursuit of love and then revenge? . . .

In the 1840s critics were divided on the subject of the book's 'morality'. Those who thought the book *immoral* seem to have assumed that Emily Brontë wanted us to admire the obviously immoral Heathcliff. Those who thought it moral assumed that she wanted us to judge him. These two ways of looking at him aren't the only ones, but they are the most common. How then are we supposed to see Heathcliff?

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HEATHCLIFF THE TYRANT

If we look at what he actually does in the novel, in the abstract, it's a pretty disgusting performance. This process is attempted in a critical article by Philip Drew called 'Charlotte Brontë as a critic of *Wuthering Heights*'. Drew thinks that Charlotte's judgement on Heathcliff was correct: 'Heathcliff . . . never once swerving in his arrow-straight course to perdition'. She solved the problem of orientation within the moral world of the novel—the problem of knowing what we should think, what we should feel, how we should value—by reading it firmly within a known and recognizable moral system. As Drew writes:

Charlotte's assessment of Heathcliff depends on a recognition of his superhuman villainy, whereas modern critics . . . usually choose to minimise or justify Heathcliff's consistent delight in malice in order to elevate him to the status of a hero.

Drew then provides a long catalogue or charge-sheet of Heathcliff's actual misdemeanours. Catherine calls him 'a pitiless, wolfish man', and this assessment, Drew argues, is borne out by his actions. When he returns to Wuthering Heights as an adult, he immediately begins to lead Hindley Earnshaw to perdition; he courts Isabella Linton not out of love but desire for revenge; he breaks up the marriage between Catherine and Edgar; he has a fight with Hindley in which he knocks him down and kicks him; there is evidence that he murders Hindley; he degrades and perverts Hareton; he treats his own son Linton with great cruelty, trapping the second Cathy into marrying him, and finally letting him die without calling a doctor. All these actions are perpetrated with a savage and voracious appetite for inflicting cruelty. Drew sums up:

His whole career is one of calculated malice: during this time he does not perform one good or kindly action, and continually expresses his hatred of all other characters. So extreme is his malevolence that one might expect him to impress critics as a grotesque villain like Quilp in *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

Some readers respond sympathetically to this hostile view of Heathcliff. Others feel that there is much more to admire both in Heathcliff's character and in what he represents: the figure of quenchless love, enormous suffering, irrepressible pride and resolute refusal to submit to circumstances or fate. Philip Drew's own critical approach should perhaps also be subjected to some interrogation: do we really respond to the

actions of a fictional character in exactly the same way as we would to such actions performed by a real person? If Heathcliff does not impress readers as a grotesque villain like Quilp, does that not indicate some profound difference of artistic effect? You must of course reach your own decision about Heathcliff, as about every other aspect of the novel: to assist you I will offer two alternative ways of thinking about Heathcliff himself, before proceeding to consider him in relation to Catherine. . . .

THE UNWANTED GYPSY

The following passage describes Heathcliff's initiation into Wuthering Heights and into the Earnshaw family: . . .

They entirely refused to have it [Heathcliff] in bed with them, or even in their room, and I had no more sense, so I put it on the landing of the stairs, hoping it might be gone on the morrow. By chance, or else attracted by hearing his voice, it crept to Mr Earnshaw's door and there he found it on quitting his chamber. Inquiries were made as to how it got there; I was obliged to confess, and in recompense for my cowardice and inhumanity was sent out of the house.

This was Heathcliff's first introduction to the family: on coming back a few days afterwards, for I did not consider my banishment perpetual, I found that they had christened him 'Heathcliff'; it was the name of a son who died in childhood, and it has served him ever since, both for Christian and surname.

Miss Cathy and he were now very thick; but Hindley hated him, and to say the truth I did the same; and we plagued and went on with him shamefully, for I wasn't reasonable enough to feel my injustice, and the mistress never put in a word on his behalf, when she saw him wronged.

He seemed a sullen, patient child; hardened, perhaps to ill-treatment: he would stand Hindley's blows without winking or shedding a tear, and my pinches moved him only to draw in a breath and open his eyes, as if he had hurt himself by accident and nobody was to blame. This endurance made old Earnshaw furious when he discovered his son persecuting the poor, fatherless child, as he called him. He took to Heathcliff strangely, believing all he said (for that matter, he said precious little, and generally the truth), and petting him up far above Cathy, who was too mischievous and wayward for a favourite.

So, from the very beginning, he bred bad feeling in the house; and at Mrs Earnshaw's death, which happened in less than two years after, 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.

The most striking aspect of the family's reaction to Heathcliff is its immediate and instinctive hostility. Nelly consistently refers to the child as 'it', denying Heathcliff any human status. He is not only treated with callous indifference, he is subjected to active and gratuitous cruelty. Consider the succession of verbs denoting ill-treatment in the three paragraphs beginning 'Miss Cathy and he were now very thick'—*hated, plagued, wronged, hardened, persecuting*; all summed up in the single word *injustice*.

The 'bad feeling' Heathcliff arouses seems entirely disproportionate to what he is and does. Is it that this close-knit family structure, with its long ancestral past, is threatened and challenged by the arrival of an outsider, a stranger who has no proper place in the family? One who simply requires acceptance, without claim or justification? Evidently the 'bad feeling' arises from within the family itself, rather than from Heathcliff.

The 'gipsy brat' old Mr Earnshaw brings home with him has neither name nor status, property nor possessions. He emerges from that darkness which is the *outside* of the tightly-knit family system: an outsider who *tests* the family by introducing an alien element into a jealously-guarded system of parental and filial relations, of inheritance and possession. 'You must e'en take it as a gift from God', says old Mr Earnshaw 'though it's as dark as if it came from the devil'. Heathcliff can be either gift or threat, by virtue of his single passive demand, to be loved: Catherine takes the opportunity of loving him, and thereby disturbs the family's equilibrium. Hindley sees Heathcliff as a rival for his father's affections and his own position as heir, a potential disrupter of the ancient lineage; and accordingly hates him. Heathcliff here is not the instigator but the recipient of violence: violence which his arrival has provoked in that defensive, exclusive family unit. The violence, then, is latent in the family structure, and provoked by an individual who expects to be treated as an equal.

HEATHCLIFF'S REVENGE

Naturally, however, these experiences have their effect on him: we begin to see emerging a representative pattern of victimization begetting violence, injustice provoking resentment. Heathcliff doesn't remain a victim all his life: he deliberately resolves to free himself from the humiliation of

oppression by attaining for himself the status of an oppressor. His plan of revenge, carefully laid and executed, is to revenge himself on Hindley and the Lintons by two methods: oppressing and exploiting their children, Hareton and Linton Heathcliff, in precisely the same way that Hindley and Edgar oppressed and exploited Heathcliff; and by expropriating their lands and possessions and seizing them himself. Heathcliff makes the identification between himself and Hareton very clear:

Now, my bonny lad, you are *mine!* And we'll see if one tree won't grow as crooked as another, with the same wind to twist it!

I think most readers find it difficult to sympathize with Heathcliff's actions after he returns, even though we may recognize in them a 'rough moral justice'. It would surely be impossible to sympathize wholly with him, since our initial sympathy went to him as a victim of oppression—and we very soon see that in order to secure his revenge he has become an oppressor himself:

The tyrant grinds down his slaves—and they don't turn against him, they crush those beneath them. You are welcome to torture me to death for your amusement, only, allow me to amuse myself a little in the same style—And refrain from insult as much as you are able. Having levelled my palace, don't erect a hovel and complacently admire your own charity in giving me that for a home.

But if Heathcliff, the novel's only candidate for the status of 'hero', loses our sympathy in respect of his actions, where does it go? Do we begin to take sides with the Lintons, or is a vacuum of sympathy set up in the novel? . . .

HEATHCLIFF'S MORAL INSIGHT

In Chapter 10 Nelly conceives an intense dislike for Heathcliff. At the beginning of Chapter 11 the direction of her feelings guides our own—towards the child Hareton, who is now in the position Heathcliff occupied formerly. Hindley and Hareton are now victims of a tyrant: we feel sympathy for them, not the tyrant himself.

Hareton develops from this point into a very important element in the novel. The development of the relationship between him and Cathy is a continuation of the Catherine-Heathcliff relationship. . . .

Why does Heathcliff avoid striking Cathy?

He had his hand in her hair; Hareton attempted to release the locks, entreating him not to hurt her that once. His black eyes flashed, he seemed ready to tear Catherine in pieces, and I was just worked up to risk coming to the rescue, when of a sudden his fingers relaxed, he shifted his grasp from her head to her arm, and gazed intently in her face.—Then, he drew his hand over his eyes, stood a moment to collect himself apparently, and turning anew to Catherine, said with assumed calmness, "You must learn to avoid putting me in a passion, or I shall really murder you, some time!"

Because, seeing Hareton and Cathy unite in love and comradeship against brutal and tyrannical oppression, he recognizes himself and Catherine as they were together, rebelling against an oppressive regime. Heathcliff has come to see the emptiness of his triumph: he has recognized that Hareton is himself; Catherine's daughter, Catherin . He has achieved the same moral insight into them as we have into Heathcliff himself in the early stages of the novel.

Nelly Dean: The Storyteller

Bonamy Dobrée

Nelly Dean is one of two narrators of *Wuthering Heights*, perhaps the more important of the two. Bonamy Dobrée, author of the introduction to the 1955 Collins Classics edition of *Wuthering Heights*, writes that Brontë's choice of narrators lends authenticity to her text. While Lockwood's role as narrator remains a mechanical one, Dean, because she witnesses the most crucial incidents of the novel, is involved at its core. In a position to influence the actions of major characters, she not only reports on the events around her but becomes part of their "emotional texture."

It is universally acknowledged that *Wuthering Heights* is a great work of art, in itself an experience: it colours our view of what life is about. It is of enormous interest to ask ourselves, not "How did this astonishing thing happen?"—one cannot track down genius in that way—but rather "By what means did Emily Brontë produce her effect?" We may be quite sure that this is not the lucky result of untutored genius flinging itself haphazard at the task. The actors live in as small an enclosed world as they do in any of Ibsen's later plays, and the book has all the tension of a drama, together with the final effect of drama rather than of the novel: that is, we do not drop into a muse when we have finished it: we feel exhilaration. This is the achieved result of long brooding on the theme until the imagination encounters the symbols which will embody it: and then of the imagination concentrating powerfully on the means of making these living symbols real for other people. That is where the intellectual problem must emerge with the intuitional creation.

Emily Brontë had had practice in the Gondal romance or

epic, and in the other writings conducted by all four Brontë children; so there is nothing slack or amateurish about the conception of this book. The relationships of the people, the working out of the dates of the events, the fitting in of the various conflicts, all are mechanically perfect; and what is more, Emily Brontë had learnt, so that she might apply it here, the complicated law of inheritance which prevailed, not when she wrote, but at the time of the story she was telling. She must, we see, have been able to live in a vivid state of actuality with her people while she was creating them. Not that this is uncommon, for after all, this is what normally constitutes inspiration; what is rare is the faculty of intense visual imagination which she shared with her elder sister, a sense of vision so strong that she can impart it to us incidentally, almost: she never has to reassure herself of the existence of her people by describing them minutely.

TWO NARRATORS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

What may seem nearly as astonishing when considering a first novel, written before much had been said about the craft of fiction, is that Emily Brontë seems to have been acutely alive to the problem of presenting her material, of making her vision tell upon the page. She must certainly have pondered the technical side of novel writing, and it surely was deliberately that she chose the two narrators as vehicles for her tale. It might have been better, we may think, if she had taken up the position of the all-seeing creator, the method usually adopted by her predecessors and contemporaries when they were not using the autobiographical convention clearly unsuitable here: but whereas the omniscient method is well enough where there is no temptation to disbelieve what you are told, as, say, in Jane Austen's novels which deal with the normal, here, with so wild a story, the method would have exposed its greatest flaw, namely that there is nothing to guarantee for the reader that he is being told the truth. Yet it was essential to Emily Brontë's purpose that you should believe it, wholly and utterly accept it: so she gave the story into the hands of two narrators, each of whom can say, "This is true; I was there; this is what happened." We know then that the story is authentic.

But how was Emily Brontë to find someone who would always be, who could plausibly be, there, just when it was absolutely necessary for her to be present? She had recourse to

the confidential servant, brought up with the children of the family, necessarily involved in all their affairs. But then, how can an uneducated woman have the knowledge—of complex circumstances, of outrageous sentiments, of words, of arful story-telling—to satisfy the requirements of a story at that level, to be a trustworthy witness? Emily Brontë was quite aware of the difficulty: almost as soon as Ellen Dean begins to take up the tale, she reassures her temporary master: "I have undergone sharp discipline, which has taught me wisdom: and then, I have read more than you would fancy, Mr. Lockwood. . . ." It is true, on examination, that only a very highly cultured, literary woman, could speak and discuss as Nelly does at the end of the book: but by that time verisimilitude has ceased to matter—to anyone for whom the means of communication offered by novels has any validity at all.

Yet—a further complication, which might have been disastrous—it is not to us, but to Lockwood, that she tells her story. Lockwood even repeats to us what Nelly says somebody else told her was uttered by yet another person, as when we know what the Lintons remarked when the Wuthering Heights children broke in upon them. All their sayings are reported verbatim, and this undoubtedly introduces a certain clumsiness. Every method involves its own risks, exacts even some payment: the question is, can the author, by proper handling of the method, keep up so great a pressure on our consciousness, We too are at the moment reassured: and soon we cease to our recollection, as to justify the price paid in verisimilitude? It must be confessed that once or twice, in the very middle of the book, our belief wavers. What, we ask, was the "good authority" which apprised Dr. Kenneth of there being something afoot between Heathcliff and Isabella? And how, soon afterwards, did Nelly Dean get Isabella's letter, and why was such an unlikely epistle addressed to her at all? Just for a moment, then, the pressure slackens: but it is for a moment only that we feel uneasiness. Such is the force and passion of the prose, the speed of the narrative, that we soon accept again.

For though the story seems thus unnecessarily involved, it does not seem so in the reading, for the scenes are dramatized without our noticing it; the "he said"s are left out whenever dramatic actuality is demanded. Moreover Nelly is introduced as narrator only after we have had what is, so to speak, a first-hand glimpse of the atrocious agony of feeling which gives the book its power. For the deep emotions in

action are presented to us, not in retrospect as they ultimately must be with a narrator, but as a violent scene in which the first narrator, Lockwood, is willy-nilly caught up. We do not have to wait for Nelly and her contemporaries, Cathy and Hindley and Heathcliff to become responsible adults, but are plunged straightway into the maelstrom of feelings which direct the story. Today the method is the ordinary one—it was not so much the routine in 1846—a scene to begin with, then a retrospect, then a summary, with the tale going on: even so, in this book, the first scene is very long, and the retrospect occupies nearly all the rest of the book: the summary and the continuing tale are almost in the nature of an epilogue. All the same the effect is achieved.

INVOLVEMENT VERSUS DETACHMENT

Nelly is brilliantly thought out and executed; nothing more clearly reveals the power of a novelist than making the vehicle of communication really convey the intuition, and not merely relate events. Since she is the confidante of so many people, the story does not suffer from the usual defect of the narrator method, that of seeing people from only one point of view: Heathcliff, for example, we see not only through her eyes, but through the first Catherine's, when she tells Isabella what Heathcliff is like; through the unlucky Linton Heathcliff's, when Nelly sees him shrink in terror from his father; and even through the devoted eyes (an amazing touch of art) of Hareton Earnshaw. Lockwood too is admirably conceived as a narrator; he never has to be drawn into the emotional development; he is external and detached, though he is not unnecessary to the story. For he is all unconsciously an agent, and we realize at the end that it was his visitation by the ghost of Cathy (if we choose to regard his nightmare as such) that precipitated Heathcliff's final crisis. Apart from that, however, he is outside the story. His role is to add convincing evidence to what Nelly tells us through him, since he has no need to lie, no subconscious urge to conceal, reveal, or justify. He clinches Nelly's statements: he confirms for us the ghastly truth of what she tells. It is through this quite disinterested person that from the very beginning we feel the tension of the whole story.

So much for what we might call the purely mechanical side; there is more to be noticed. We see that since Nelly is so often "there" we do not miss any of the dramatic possibilities

when the great scenes occur, but we have to realize further that this can happen only because she is the kind of person Emily Brontë chose to make her. It is not simply that as a family servant she identifies herself with the family and is personally involved in all that happens: it is that her own feelings are part of the drama; it is through her passion that we feel it. One might instance this particularly from her anger with Cathy at her fatal fit of temper when Heathcliff is turned out of Thrushcross. Moreover, she has enough of the peasant in her to be able to sit and brood over the past; she re-lives it, one feels, over and over again; it is all arranged (or re-arranged) in her mind with perfect clarity. So that when she tells any part of the story she does actually re-live it, and the drama is vividly present to her, not dimly seen, not sophisticated, as it nearly always is in a narrator's retrospect. Again, for Emily Brontë's purpose, she is just educated enough to understand what is happening, but not so educated as to be anything but acceptant. There is no scepticism in her. Someone more analytical could not have told about Heathcliff's last visionary days, if only, for one thing, that Heathcliff could not have talked as he did to any other kind of person.

Nelly, then, is not a mere mechanical vehicle; she is part of the emotional texture, not simply chorus to the tragic scene in company with the hideous Joseph. She is there at every one of the crucial moments except the tremendous opening one where Lockwood sees Heathcliff frantically imploring Cathy's ghost to come in. It is to her that Cathy says: "I *am* Heathcliff"; it is to her that Heathcliff says: "My soul's bliss kills my body, but doesn't satisfy itself." It is she who is present at the last despairing interview between the two eternal lovers, where at once both Heaven seems to open and Hell to gape. Nevertheless all the time Emily Brontë is in control—perhaps Ellen Dean was her sheet anchor in this respect. But then she can be broken away from. Lockwood, the detached—or almost detached—observer comes back to report to us directly; and how ingeniously, we note, Emily Brontë had sent him away for a few months, so that Nelly can tell him the rest of the story quickly. The tale thus gathers speed towards the end, and the gap enables a sane love, not the "monomania" of Heathcliff or the tormented possession of the elder Catherine, to break in upon the fire-purged horror, so that the story can be dovetailed, as it were, into our daily life lived at the normal intensity.

fusal to forgive his sister for eloping with Heathcliff, and his complete lack of physical and moral stamina—all force the reader to consider his fate essentially just.

VIOLENCE SUBDUED

In the final pages of the novel, the growth of a sympathetic love between Cathy and Hareton and their determination to achieve happiness in spite of the gloom of their surroundings provide a final touchstone for evaluating the author's conception of Heathcliff. Although there is no basic alteration in Heathcliff's nature, the reader is at the point not only of losing sympathy for the central character but also of developing an overt antagonism for him. For no longer are his enmity and vindictiveness justified by the perverse nature of his adversaries; now his potential victims are innocent and youthful. It is precisely at this point, when sympathy for his revenge can no longer be sustained, that Heathcliff becomes passive and his violence subdued—not from any conscious change of heart but from a sense of exhaustion and a deepening obsession to find reunion with Catherine beyond the grave.

An absurd termination to my violent exertions? I get levers and mallets to demolish the two houses, and train myself to be capable of working like Hercules, and when everything is ready, and in my power, I find the will to lift a slate off either roof has vanished! My old enemies have not beaten me—now would be the precise time to revenge myself on their representatives—I could do it—But where is the use? . . . I have a single wish, and my whole being, and faculties are yearning to attain it.

Brontë has terminated Heathcliff's obsessive pursuit of revenge at the very moment when its continuance would evoke disapprobation from the reader.

There can be little doubt that the author has intended Heathcliff to be, not a devil or a bully or an elemental symbol, but a credible protagonist. She has carefully and methodically created an atmosphere in which sympathy for his revenge can be achieved and has so manipulated the surrounding characters and events that transfer of sympathy becomes a virtual impossibility. The result is that Heathcliff emerges as a mortal, fallible man twisted and tortured by the evil which pervades his environment. As such, like many tragic characters, he is corrupted and eventually consumed by his own passion, but at no time is he "unbelievable" or "unsympathetic."

The Action of *Wuthering Heights*

Norman Lavers

Instructor of creative writing at Western Washington State College Norman Lavers writes that the action of *Wuthering Heights* is governed by the necessity of restoring power to the Earnshaw family. All of the smaller actions of the novel, he maintains, work toward this ultimate end, and when characters have fulfilled their purpose of advancing the story along these lines, they are disposed of—conveniently, through death.

It is common, in beginning the discussion of a drama, to look for the one Action under which the various smaller actions can be subsumed, an Action which can be expressed in an infinitival phrase: e.g., To find the murderer of Laius. Let me suggest for the governing Action of *Wuthering Heights*, to which all the smaller actions of the novel contribute, the phrase, To restore to power the Earnshaw family.

A CHILD IS FOUND

As I am going to show how the smaller "actions" all lead to this ultimate end, it is proper to begin with old Earnshaw's bringing in of Heathcliff, for this is the action from which the rest of the novel's actions follow.

Is old Earnshaw a kind of Lear, in his dotage spurning his deserving children to favor the demon, the "cuckoo," who will destroy everything? I do not think so. Look at the situation at the chronological beginning of the story. The Earnshaw family is 500 years old. It is past its peak. Great strength is still there, but like the stunted firs growing at the end of the house, time has twisted it. Hindley and Catherine are the last of the line, and Hindley, old Earnshaw tells us, "was naughty, and would never thrive as where he wan-

Excerpted from Norman Lavers, "The Action of *Wuthering Heights*," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, vol. 72, no. 1, (Winter 1975), pp. 43-52. Copyright 1975, Duke University Press. Reprinted with permission.

dered." And to Catherine he says: "I cannot love thee; thou'rt worse than thy brother. . . I doubt thy mother and I must rue that we ever reared thee!" Future events prove him accurate. There had been an earlier son, dead in childhood, named Heathcliff. Shall we suggest that old Earnshaw, on his long walking journey, reclaimed this lost child? Remember, this is a book full of magic, a descendant of the tales of the "fairies" told Emily Brontë by her old nurse. Heathcliff, the "it," the "demon," "ghoul," "goblin," nameless, without antecedents, speaking some "gibberish," is certainly from somewhere beyond. But from which beyond? "Where did he come from, the dark little thing, harboured by a good man to his bane?" Nelly wonders. Old Earnshaw, an accurate judge of his other children, suggests that we "must e'en take it as a gift of God, though it's as dark almost as if it came from the devil." From the beginning, the child is treated as one of his own children—in fact, it is treated better than the others. Earnshaw "took to Heathcliff strangely, believing all he said," Nelly tells us (and then confesses in a parenthesis, "for that matter, he said precious little, and generally the truth").

So here is the first action: Earnshaw reclaims a spiritual son. . . . Let us suggest that Earnshaw . . . was bringing in something from outside and beyond, new forces and powers to stir into his deteriorating stock, his last-ditch effort to save his ancient family from decline. Having performed this essential action, there is nothing more to keep him in this world, and a page or two later, he "began to fail. He had been active and healthy, yet his strength left him suddenly." This becomes a regular feature of the novel, for each character, having performed his action, done his best, goes from apparent health to immediate decline. The one exception is Nelly Dean, but, unlike the others, she never acts to change or improve anything. Her first action ("I put it on the landing of the stairs, hoping it might be gone on the morrow") is topical, for in all her actions her only motive is to preserve the status quo.

LIFE AND DEATH

The next significant action is Hindley's, and it exactly parallels Earnshaw's. He returns from an absence carrying with him, to everyone's surprise, a stranger: his wife, Frances. Her parallel with Heathcliff is pointed: "What she was, and where she was born he never informed us; probably she had

neither money nor name to recommend her." Nameless, destitute, without antecedents—does she come from "beyond" herself? They are both morbidly concerned with death, though her striking difference from the necrophilic Heathcliff is that "she felt so afraid of dying!" But then she must return so much more quickly than Heathcliff, and she has no lover waiting for her there.

She performs her essential action—bearing Hareton—and at once from seeming health (Nelly "imagined her as little likely to die as myself") goes into immediate decline. Hindley, unable to bear the loss, loses himself in dissipation. He, it is clear, is not going to rejuvenate the family; it is Catherine's turn to act. She will marry Edgar Linton. "It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now," she reasons, even though she loves him. But her action, like Earnshaw's action, is, in its own peculiar and regardless way, unselfish. "Nelly, I see now, you think me a selfish wretch, but, did it never strike you that if Heathcliff and I married, we should be beggars? whereas, if I marry Linton, I can aid Heathcliff to rise."

But just as Earnshaw's unselfish action in taking Heathcliff in had alienated Hindley, first banishing him from the house (to college), and then bringing him back with education and power over Heathcliff, power to revenge himself on him, so now Catherine's unselfish action banishes Heathcliff, to return with education and power to revenge himself on the others. Once more, Catherine performs her essential action—bearing Cathy—and having done so, she dies, declining rapidly from robust health.

I believe a pattern is emerging. . . .

The Earnshaw family has fallen into decay. The need is to rejuvenate it. The various characters, generally acting quite misguidedly for motives of their own, in fact are working steadily towards this end. Surrounding these actions is an aura of magic, of control from "beyond." Earnshaw has sought to help out a homeless waif. Hindley has acted to indulge his love. Catherine has acted to "raise" Heathcliff. All of these seem to have been serious mistakes, but in the grand design, they are all essential acts. Hindley, trying desperately to recoup his fortune, gambles away his patrimony to Heathcliff. Finally he even tries to kill Heathcliff, in order to do Hareton "justice," to prevent his being a "beggar." He fails. Here is the other side of the pattern working. The novel's characters are successful in every action which ad-

vances the design; they are abject failures in every undertaking counter to it. In this case, for example, suppose Hindley had not lost the house to Heathcliff, or suppose he had actually killed him. He would still have gambled or dissipated his money away, and the house would have gone to strangers, and Hareton would genuinely have been a beggar. It is Heathcliff's business acumen which ultimately preserves the property for Hareton. Hindley now, having performed his essential action, which was to lose the property to Heathcliff, falls, despite his iron constitution, into immediate decline and death.

Isabella lives long enough to raise Linton into adolescence . . . and dies. Edgar Linton lives long enough to raise Cathy in some civilization, and to bless her marriage with young Linton. Isabella's hopes that Heathcliff will not get the keeping of Linton and Edgar Linton's feckless last-minute attempts to keep Cathy financially independent of Heathcliff are both frustrated, but it is necessary for the grand design that they be.

HEATHCLIFF'S NATURAL POWER

We are down to Heathcliff, old Earnshaw's seemingly ill-advised adoption. Here, it seems to me, is the prime mover behind it all. As Dorothy Van Ghent suggests, Heathcliff, with his "gypsy lack of origins, his lack of orientation and determination in the social world, his equivocal status on the edge of the human . . . might *really* be a demon." Let us accept that he is. Surely his power is inordinate. Critics, peering through the novel's imagery, have seen him as a great natural force, as an immense sexual energy. Let us examine the uses made of this power.

First, the three children, Cathy, Linton, Hareton, are all necessary to the successful resolution of the action. Thomas Moser, in an amusing and convincing Freudian interpretation of the novel, has shown that Heathcliff, as a sort of irresistibly fertile incubus, may be implicated in the conceiving of all three of these. Obviously he impregnated Isabella, and on the first night, since it is inconceivable that they ever shared a bed again. Then, we remember, Catherine lived unproductively for six months with Edgar: "The gunpowder lay as harmless as sand, because no fire came near to explode it." Then Heathcliff (often enough equated with fire and lightning) comes near, and precisely seven months

later, Catherine bears "a puny, seven months' child." In view of this, we look suspiciously at the fact that it was nine months after Frances came to the house (where Heathcliff was) that she gave birth.

In other ways, sometimes more obviously, sometimes more remotely, Heathcliff's power can be seen operating on the plot. It was necessary for Catherine to marry Linton: she does it at least partly with the object of helping Heathcliff; Heathcliff it is who saves Hareton, walking under the stairs just as Hindley has dropped him; it is Heathcliff running off into exile which, properly to his demon character causes a tremendous lightning storm in which Catherine catches a chill she later transmits to the elder Lintons, effectively killing them off. It was necessary to have them out of the way so that the younger Lintons would be unprotected against the machinations of Catherine and Heathcliff.

Heathcliff's power seems to have an irresistible attractiveness to some of the characters which makes them ignore all well-intentioned advice about his remorselessness. Old Earnshaw is attracted to him, in the first place, thinking him "a gift of God," though the others see only a dirty, ragged "gypsy brat." Isabella is strongly enough attracted to elope with him, though Catherine has told her in no uncertain terms that he is "an unreclaimed creature . . . [a] wilderness of furze and whinstone . . . fierce, pitiless, wolfish." In this description is the secret of Catherine's own attraction to Heathcliff: he is a natural force; he has no soul, no ethical sense in the ordinary meaning; he is natural power, ruthless perhaps, but effective. "My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath—a source of little visible delight, but necessary." And it has been necessary that each of these characters—Earnshaw, who adopts him, Catherine, who marries Linton for him, and Isabella, who gives him a son—it has been necessary to the Action of the novel that each of these be attracted to him. One more character must be: Cathy. But her attraction is displaced into the symbolism of the novel. "How long will it be," she asks Nelly, "before I can walk to the top of those hills?" She is speaking of Penistone Crag, steep cliffs rising out of the heath—a literal heath cliff. Nelly seeks to dissuade her, telling her "they were bare masses of stone [“the eternal rocks beneath”] with hardly enough earth in their clefts to nourish a stunted tree." "Papa would tell you, Miss . . . that they are not worth the trouble

of climbing." But in the face of this advice, Cathy, just like the others, sets out after them, and on the way runs directly on to Heathcliff.

Much has been made of Heathcliff's revenge motive. It is there of course: superficially he is motivated by his hatred of the characters. But this is only his conscious motive, just as Earnshaw, consciously, was only doing a good turn, and Catherine, consciously, was marrying Edgar to raise Heathcliff. But at the same time that he shows and feels his hatred, much is made of the fact that he holds this hatred in check. When he is beating Hindley, for example, "he exerted preternatural human self-denial in abstaining from finishing him completely." He hasn't control of the house yet; his plan comes before every thought of revenge.

THE NEXT GENERATION

Critics have already belabored the fact that the novel's second half symmetrically duplicates the first half. I only want here to point out the particular way in which the second half matches the first, and to show how this matching was entirely Heathcliff's doing. Too much has been made of the fact that Heathcliff was merely getting even with Hindley and the Lintons. Let us ignore this, and see what his actions actually are. What he does is to reproduce a certain moment in the first half of the novel: that moment at which Catherine has married Edgar Linton, and Heathcliff has vanished. Hareton, as everyone knows, takes Heathcliff's place in the second generation. In the first generation, Hindley, the master of Wuthering Heights, for purposes of revenge thrusts Heathcliff out into the fields, to let him degenerate socially and intellectually, in order to separate him from Catherine. In the second generation, Heathcliff, the master of Wuthering Heights, for purposes of revenge thrusts Hareton out into the fields, to let him degenerate socially and intellectually, effectively separating him from Cathy. Hareton is the displaced rightful heir of the Heights, just as Heathcliff was, if (as I have suggested) he is the spiritual embodiment of old Earnshaw's first son, Heathcliff.

Linton obviously represents, in the new generation, Edgar Linton. Heathcliff, though supposedly also seeking revenge on him, does not barbarize him. He lets Isabella raise him until she dies, and after he takes him over, however much he hates him, still he takes good care of him (over and

over again in all his machinations Heathcliff acts against his personal feelings, his design always taking precedence over his emotion of hatred). "In fact," Heathcliff says, "I've arranged everything with a view to preserve the superior and the gentleman in him." He will be just like Edgar, then, so that Cathy can be reasonably attracted to him (even though his weakness and selfishness stand out in greater relief than Edgar's) and eventually—though this took some forcing—marry him.

There is the original situation, then. Hareton-Heathcliff a barbarian banished to the fields. Cathy, spoiled and immature, marrying for all the wrong reasons—the weak and selfish, but genteel Linton. But now comes the change. This time, the situation is going to come out properly. Before, the healthy Catherine had died, and the sickly Edgar lived on; this time Linton dies quickly, while Cathy's health is unbroke. At Linton's death, Heathcliff cannot help exulting. "How do you feel, Catherine?" Twice he asks Cathy this (calling her by the name usually reserved for the first-generation Catherine). "He's safe, and I'm free." Perhaps this is exactly the answer he wants. Clearly there will be no lifelong mourning here, for her relationship with Linton was too trivial. Heathcliff has proved to his satisfaction, perhaps, that Catherine's marriage to Edgar Linton was no more than this.

In the succeeding passages of the novel, Heathcliff, for all his seeming hatred of Cathy, his seeming wish to be revenged on Hareton, actually does everything to thrust them together. Gratuitously, he takes all Cathy's books away from her, putting her more on Hareton's level, and also leaving her absolutely no diversion but his company. More and more Heathcliff leaves the house to them, shuns Hareton's company, and forces him to stay in the room where Cathy is sitting. Critics who do not like this part of the book feel that Cathy merely pretties up and domesticates Hareton, to his great loss. The interesting thing to me is how closely Hareton follows Heathcliff's own childhood actions. First he enlists Zillah's aid in getting himself made presentable, just as Heathcliff long before had let Nelly scrub him clean to be presentable for Catherine. If Heathcliff had wanted revenge, at this point he would have banished Hareton from Cathy's company, which is what Hindley had done to him in the similar situation. Precisely the same holds for the learning-to-read passages, for when Hindley first separated Heathcliff

from the family, "Heathcliff bore his degradation pretty well at first, because Cathy taught him what she learnt." But Hindley makes it too hard for him. "He struggled long to keep up an equality with Catherine in her studies and yielded with poignant though silent regret; but he yielded completely." Properly, the revenge-seeking Heathcliff should have discouraged Cathy's attempts to educate Hareton. But he does not, for the underlying plan is to make things come out right, the way they should have the first time. Heathcliff seems as unconscious as the other characters of the success of his plan. It had seemed a mistake when Earnshaw took in Heathcliff, it had seemed a mistake when Catherine married Edgar, when Isabella married Heathcliff; it had seemed a failure when Hindley lost the Heights to Heathcliff, and Edgar lost the Grange. But as I have been pointing out, these superficial failures were all clear successes for the underlying plan. This is true again with Heathcliff. He seems to have failed at his revenge. "It is a poor conclusion, is it not," he observes to Nelly. "An absurd termination to my violent exertions." But the underlying design, of recreating the original situation (by this time he has even moved Nelly back into the household), so that it could come out properly this time, has been a success. He has played his essential role in it, and having done so, he, like the others, goes from robust health into immediate decline.

Realism in *Wuthering Heights*

Barbara Hardy

Despite its inclusion of fantastic and supernatural events, Barbara Hardy contends that *Wuthering Heights* is a realistic novel. Hardy, a professor of English language and literature at Royal Holloway College, University of London, writes that Brontë controls the supernatural elements of the novel by placing them in the context of ordinary details of routine life. The very real love of Catherine and Heathcliff, along with the presence of Brontë's narrators, also helps contribute to the "emotional vividness" and "dramatic truth," or realism, of the novel.

[*Wuthering Heights*] is not a fantasy where supernatural or mysterious events and causes move freely in and out of the action, distorting the appearances of the solid material world and the solid rational explanations. From the beginning we have seen the irrational passions and the supernatural suggestions controlled in this way by being placed in the context of 'normal' commonsense and familiar objects and routine. Even if we learn, as I believe we should, not to rely too securely on the rational explanations of Lockwood and the rational though slightly more superstitious responses of Nelly Dean, there is no doubt that what we may call the realism of the novel owes much to their presence. They are ordinary and familiar: They form a plausible bridge between the reader and the story of 'another species' which lies at the novel's heart. . . .

Wuthering Heights has the realism of its emotional vividness, not merely as shown in the 'dramatic truth' of Catherine and Heathcliff's wild passions and strange history, but also as shown in the dramatic truth of the other characters. The strange history is framed in the ordinary world inhab-

ited by Hareton and Catherine, victims of the strangeness and wildness but eventually emerging to lead their ordinary lives. It is framed too, as we have seen, in the point of view of Lockwood and Nelly Dean.

At the end we see Hareton and the second Catherine walking unafraid on the moors, just as Lockwood is unafraid even though he is visiting the churchyard at night—he who began by dreaming of ghosts. The familiar ordinary impression made, even if not conclusively, at the end of the novel, owes much not only to the impression these characters have made throughout the novel, but also to the natural setting and its solidity. It is in stormy winter that people are afraid in *Wuthering Heights* and the peaceful appearances at the end are the appearances of summer. Lockwood prefers the moors in summer, of course, and the last reassuring words rely significantly on hints of the seasons' limitations. The 'autumn storms' are yet to come, the heath and harebells are a part of the transient foliage, the wind will not always be soft, and the moths will stop their fluttering. But if the whole novel is still vibrating in our mind, we will be aware of the double implications of such a landscape. After all, we began in storm. After all, we do not know whether or not Heathcliff's dust is mingling with Catherine's beneath the quiet earth in final assertion of their defiance of death and religious rites. The 'any one' who *is* in a position to 'imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers in that quiet earth' might well be the reader of the novel. But the point I want to stress here is that the reader is throughout presented not only with the wild history but with the soberness of ordinary people and real nature. A novel which concentrated more purely on the passions and mysteries of Heathcliff and his Catherine would be more romantically remote from ordinary life. It would leave out the range of human experience which includes the spectators, like Lockwood and Nelly, or the peaceful and fortunate, like Hareton and Catherine. It would leave out the views of such ordinary people which form the medium for the strange history, a medium which both holds it at a distance and allows us to make up our own minds about its meaning and values. But it would also leave out a great deal within that strange history itself. . . .

REAL LOVE IN A REAL WORLD

Charlotte Brontë, in her second Preface to *Wuthering Heights*, tells us that without Heathcliff's feeling for Hareton

and Nelly we would not see him as a human being, but 'say he was child neither of Lascar nor gipsy, but a man's shape animated by demon life—a Ghoul—an Alfreel. It is a pity that Charlotte does not say something about Catherine as well as Heathcliff, and her comment that his love for Catherine 'is a sentiment fierce and inhuman' is one you should think hard about, since it seems at least open to argument. But it is generally true, I think, that Heathcliff and Catherine are made real by their relationships with other characters and with their environment.

Think of that early Christmas party, where Nelly watches Catherine's conflict between her delight in her grand new friends and her love for the disgraced Heathcliff, as she puts up some show of eating her dinner. Think of the earlier scene where Heathcliff and Catherine gaze through the window of Thrushcross Grange at the 'splendid place carpeted with crimson' and the Linton children quarreling over their dog. Or the scene where Catherine returns from her stay at the Grange, in elegant ringlets and the new dress which is both a slightly self-conscious pleasure and a barrier between her and the dogs, the dirty Heathcliff, and even Nelly Dean, 'all flour making the Christmas cake'. All these scenes are socially and visually real and solid. We see the upholstery, the drops and chains of the chandelier, the enchanted vision for the two wild children from the Heights. The characters inhabit the real world of places, things, and activity. Nelly Dean does her dusting while Edgar Linton gets his first taste of Catherine's temper. Heathcliff decides to be a good boy and asks Nelly to make him clean and tidy. And thus solid environment continues throughout the novel. Isabella makes lumpy porridge on her first inauspicious return from her elopement with Heathcliff. Nelly worries because Heathcliff is not eating his meals, and it is real food which he accepts and then is forced to neglect. . . . The characters are shown in relationship with Nelly's solid ordinariness, and an important aspect of this kind of realism is the solid portrayal of environment too.

ORDINARY DETAILS

Natural details, as well as social and domestic ones, play their part. Consider the moving moment when Nelly goes out, after Catherine's death, to find Heathcliff standing under the ash-tree: 'He had been standing a long time in that

position, for I saw a pair of ousels passing and repassing scarcely three feet from him, busy in building their nest, and regarding his proximity no more than a piece of timber.' Heathcliff's 'knowledge' of the death is tethered to this ordinary detail. It is given substance and made more moving by the detail and its implications.

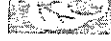
Consider the wild and hysterical scene when Catherine pulls her pillow to pieces and arranges the feathers on the sheet:

'That's a turkey's she murmured to herself; and this is a wild duck's; and this is a pigeon's. Ah, they put pigeon's feathers in the pillows—no wonder I couldn't die! Let me take care to throw it on the floor when I lie down. And here is a moor-cock's; and this—I should know it among a thousand—it's a lapwing's. Bonny bird; wheeling over our heads in the middle of the moor. It wanted to get to its nest, for the clouds had touched the swells, and it felt rain coming. This feather was picked up from the heath, the bird was not shot; we saw its nest in the winter, full of little skeletons. Heathcliff set a trap over it, and the old ones dare not come. I made him promise he'd never shoot a lapwing after that, and he didn't. Yes, here are more! Did he shoot my lapwings, Nelly? Are they red, any of them! Let me look.'

In many ways this is a wild strange speech, rather like Ophelia's flower speech in *Hamlet* in being both fey and precise. Nelly is frightened and answers, as commonsense usually does, by telling Catherine to pull herself together: 'Give over with that baby-work!' But the speech is a fine example of Emily Brontë's realism as well as of her ability to delineate abnormal states of consciousness. The trap and the little skeletons have a sinister reference to the future as well as the past, but they are more than a symbol. They are a part of actual things and experiences and places: the disturbed mind lovingly identifies the real feathers, and the recognition brings with it real memories. When we think of Heathcliff as a diabolical figure, or even as a man whose love for Catherine is 'fierce and inhuman' we forget such details as this, which create the world of childish joys and companionship in which this love grew up. When a little later, Catherine tells Nelly of her hallucination of grief and misery in which the last seven years 'grew a blank' and she returned to the misery of her separation from Heathcliff we have a bare and violent strained expression of emotion. It is the small solid details, natural or domestic, like the feathers or the flour on Nelly's hands, that make the love seem human and recognisable at least in ori-

gin. Nelly's response, . . . gives us the sense of ordinary relationships so that Catherine and Heathcliff are not seen entirely in isolation, as belonging to 'another species', but it is the scenes and objects, as well as the people, which contribute to the feeling that the strange passions and events take place in a familiar landscape.

So that when we come to the last description of the three graves we have already become solidly habituated to the rhythm of the seasons, both in actual description and in the imagery used by the characters. The natural setting, as I have suggested earlier, is not a mere set of symbols. It has fo-



LYRICISM AND RESERVE

Muriel Spark and Derek Stanford suggest that the "poetic realism" of Brontë's style presents itself in her lyricism and reserve. Lyricism is evident in the spontaneous natures of Catherine and her daughter, and reserve derives from the "dourness" of Nelly and Joseph.

I [contend that] the poetic realism of Emily's style [resides] in a combination of lyricism and reserve. These opposite traits are brought together in artistic conjunction most naturally by Emily; and it is the play of these characteristics that makes for the genuine tone of the novel. Without the lyrical element present, the notes of dourness and reserve would leave *Wuthering Heights* a pedestrian chronicle of cruelties committed in a brutish district, and with little in it to redeem the story. Similarly, without the reserve, the lyricism would want conviction. Lockwood's nightmare, Heathcliff's obsession, Catherine's delirium and ghostly reappearance: these, by themselves, would be too much if *Wuthering Heights* was to have avoided the fate of being just another Gothic novel. Then, too, the environment is such that *Wuthering Heights* might have become a simple idyll of the soil, with the regional interest as the chief factor. The "unreclaimed" nature of this "remote region" is certainly one of the charms of the book. The wildness and remoteness is well suggested when we learn that, although the Earnshaws live on a farm, they lack even such rustic luxuries as apples and pears. In fact these fruits are looked upon as novelties, for when the elder Mr. Earnshaw sets out on his sixty-mile tramp to Liverpool, he promises Nelly Dean he will bring her a peckeful back with him.

Muriel Spark and Derek Stanford, "Chapter X: Spirit, Style, and Values," *Emily Brontë: Her Life and Work*. New York: London House and Maxwell, 1960, pp. 260-262.

liage which changes, creatures which move, weather which shifts. At few points in the novel—not even in the wildest accounts of delirium and passion and anguish—can we say that there is no link with the ordinary world. We have to expect the dreams, and these are frankly present as dreams. The few sinister crannies I mentioned, through which suggestion leaks which cannot be always rationally answered, are the more frightening and moving because they are cracks in a recognisable and solid world. If *Wuthering Heights* is one of the strangest and most poetic of novels, it is not an unrealistic story.

CHAPTER 3

Psychological Issues in *Wuthering Heights*

Love and Addiction in *Wuthering Heights*

Debra Goodlett

Author Debra Goodlett writes that the relationship between Catherine and Heathcliff is an unhealthy addiction. She discusses the precursors of addictive behavior—missing parents, a lack of emotional support and outside interests, and the need for love and comfort—and she explains how both Heathcliff and Cathy's lives fit these criteria.

Some scholars explain [Heathcliff and Catherine's] relationship in terms of Romanticism. Volumes of literature containing discussions of Byronic heroes and bleak landscapes have filled entire sections in university libraries. Others speak of the reconciliation of conflicting attractions: the destructive nature of Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship obtains equilibrium in the second generation with Cathy and Hareton. In a similar vein, the theme of another type of duality is proposed: that of the intellect (Linton), and the heart (Heathcliff). Some believe that Emily Brontë attempted to mesh this duality into one entity, and from that failure arises the intensity and dramatic conflict that exists in *Wuthering Heights*. I would argue instead that this intensity arises out of the bond between Catherine and Heathcliff, a bond which can best be described as an addiction rather than as a "theme" of a traditional Romantic Gothic novel. The addictive nature of the relationship is illuminated by Catherine's cry of "I am Heathcliff!" Lacking any inner resources, Catherine attempts to capture Heathcliff's psyche to fulfill the emptiness in her own soul. This then is sexual addiction—the need to possess another being. While the passionate intensity produced by this conflicting pull between the two lovers has been explained in various ways, these explanations seem fragmentary. Recent developments in psy-

Reprinted from Debra Goodlett, "Love and Addiction in *Wuthering Heights*," *The Midwest Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 3 (Spring 1996), by permission of the publisher.

chology offer new insights on unresolved literary conflicts, and I believe that Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship may well fit into this category. Exploring this relationship, through a paradigm of addiction, will illuminate this theory.

Stanton Peele, author of *Love and Addiction*, states:

An addiction exists when a person's attachment to a sensation, an object, or another person is such as to lessen his appreciation of and ability to deal with other things in his environment, or in himself, so that he has become increasingly dependent on that experience as his only source of gratification.

Peele does not differentiate between people or drugs. Both are seen as the focuses of addictions, and in addictive relationships the participants are forced to rely on the other for bolstering their flagging identities. Addictive relationships are based on the need for psychological security; the partners, as in a drug addiction, will do everything necessary to maintain that bond. Catherine and Heathcliff unsuccessfully attempt to do this, with tragic results.

Stanton Peele explores relationships resembling Catherine and Heathcliff's and theorizes that many of the environmental factors that are believed to cause drug addictions also play a role in initiating addictive relationships. *Wuthering Heights* contains many of these same conditions, and these are contributory to the addictive nature of Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship. Peele states that addiction occurs

in people who have little to anchor them to life. Lacking an underlying direction, finding few things that can entertain or motivate them, they have nothing to compete with the effects of an addiction for possession of their lives.

THE MISSING PARENTS

This "lack of underlying direction" correlates strongly with an absence of strong parental figures. Catherine is entirely without guiding influences while growing up. Her parents die early in her childhood, and only Hindley, her brother, is left as a possibly stabilizing factor. Given Hindley's nature, which is emotionally sterile, Catherine is still bereft of a positive role model that could give some direction to her life. Even while alive, Catherine's father has difficulty accepting Catherine as she is and repeatedly informs Catherine of his disappointment in her. Mr. Earnshaw tells her during a rare moment of tenderness between them, "Why cannot you always be a good lass, Cathy?" Catherine replies, "Why cannot

you always be a good man, father?" Another parental figure, Joseph, consistently influences Mr. Earnshaw to reject Catherine.

He [Joseph] encouraged him to regard Hindley as a reprobat; and, night after night, he regularly grumbled out a long string of tales against Heathcliff and Catherine always minding to flatter Earnshaw's weakness by heaping the heaviest blame on the latter.

Similarly, Heathcliff, an orphan prior to his arrival at Wuthering Heights, receives only a small amount of affection from the elder Earnshaw before Earnshaw's death, and with his death, both Catherine and Heathcliff are grief-stricken. Nelly Dean describes their sorrow and their isolation:

I ran to the children's room; their door was ajar, I saw they have never laid down, though it was past midnight; but they were calmer, and did not need me to console them. The little souls were comforting each other with better thoughts than I could have hit on; no parson in the world ever pictured heaven so beautifully as they did, in their innocent talk; and, while I sobbed and listened, I could not help wishing we were all there safe together.

CATHERINE AND HEATHCLIFF LACK EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AND OUTSIDE INTERESTS

Another characteristic indicative of an addictive nature is a lack of emotional stability. Peele believes that a large part of a healthy emotional outlook is the ability to express feelings appropriately. According to most psychologists, the early developmental years are the most critical in the formation of this ability. Catherine and Heathcliff are both punished when young for expressing feelings. Nelly Dean tells of one such incident:

"Nay, Cathy, I cannot love thee; thou'rt worse than thy brother. Go say thy prayers, child, and ask God's pardon. I doubt thy mother and I must rue that we ever reared thee!" That made her cry at first: and then being repulsed continually hardened her, and she laughed if I told her to say she was sorry for her faults, and beg to be forgiven.

Insularity is another characteristic of an addictive relationship. Wuthering Heights is the epitome of desolation, as symbolized by the savage natural setting. Peele states that "for the children, at least in their early years, the sealing off of the home strictly limited what sense they could make of things on their own." Catherine and Heathcliff live in this

isolated environment. Except for Mr. Lockwood, the narrator, there is no mention of visitors to Wuthering Heights. And as was discussed earlier, Catherine and Heathcliff are without emotional support from either parents or siblings. Without any of these external stimuli, neither Catherine nor Heathcliff have the opportunity to develop social dexterity or coping skills.

With these disadvantages, it is not surprising that Catherine and Heathcliff should be attracted to each other; they share similar outlooks. Peele maintains that addictive relationships are defined by the desire to be consumed by love; to form one human entity out of two incomplete beings. Without inner resources, people are driven to look outside of themselves to find those resources, usually in individuals sharing similar outlooks. Catherine and Heathcliff are alike in their passionate rebellious natures, natures unsatisfied by the arti-

IN NEED OF FORGIVENESS

Verena M. Bell writes that in an atmosphere where "father is turned against son, brother against sister, servant against master, husband against wife, lover against lover," it is clearly the want of forgiveness that "disrupts the moral and social order of Wuthering Heights."

It is the want of forgiveness—or phrased positively, it is vengeance—that disrupts the moral and social order of *Wuthering Heights*. Hindley cannot forgive Heathcliff for usurping the love of his father; so once he is master of the Heights, he sees that Heathcliff is methodically humiliated and degraded. Heathcliff's degradation in turn enforces a physical and psychological separation from Catherine which preordains her marriage to Edgar Linton. When Heathcliff acquires his fortune, he uses the power it affords to avenge himself against Hindley, whom he easily corrupts and destroys; against Hareton and Catherine, the children, who of course are innocent; against Isabella, who is equally blameless; and through all of these, against Edgar Linton, whom he hates not just as a rival but as an embodiment of everything effete and conventional that erodes Catherine's spirit and finally destroys her. Father is turned against son, brother against sister, servant against master, husband against wife, lover against lover—"Every man's hand was against his neighbour."

Verena M. Bell, *Wuthering Heights and the Unforgivable Sin*, in Bradford A. Booth, ed., *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. New York: AMS Reprint Company, 1965.

ficial society that Linton represents. Both are rebellious against societal structures, as demonstrated by the relationship itself. Heathcliff is looked upon as a rough, uncouth savage, and Catherine is attracted by the inherently taboo nature of the bond. Not only is Heathcliff rough, he is also her foster brother, and thus it is also an incestuous bond.

Along with insularity, people in addictive relationships also have few outside interests. Peele believes that the extent and diversity of a person's social relationships and activities are crucial in determining whether a person will become addictive in his or her relationships. As children, Catherine and Heathcliff entertain themselves by taking walks among the moors. Other than this activity, neither displays an interest in hobbies and such things. Along with lack of interest, Heathcliff in particular has no time for anything else as he is kept busy working for Hindley.

This lack of outside interests contributes to the change in quality of Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship. As with any addiction, as tolerance develops, initial feelings of joy may dissipate, but the overwhelming need remains. Catherine states to Nelly in this critical passage:

So he shall never know I love him: and that, not because he's handsome, Nelly, but because he's more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same; and Linton's is as different as a moonbeam from lightning, or frost from fire.

At first glance, her speech seems a declaration of love. Catherine states that Heathcliff is a part of her; if Heathcliff were to disappear, then Catherine would no longer exist. This passionate outcry is indicative of the intensity present in Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship. The intensity is not so much an erotic element, but a dependent, life-giving need, without which Catherine or Heathcliff would wither. Very little joy is shown by either of them; instead, both seem usually intense and desperate. As Catherine states, "My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath; a source of little visible delight, but necessary."

CATHERINE'S NEED FOR LOVE AND COMFORT

Dramatic conflict begins to arise in the novel when, out of loneliness and boredom, Catherine is drawn to the Lintons' active social world. At the time of her first introduction to the Lintons, Catherine is attacked by the Lintons' dog, and she is

forced by her injuries to remain in Linton's care; thus begins the conflict in Catherine and Heathcliff's attachment. Catherine begins to find the comfortable, secure atmosphere of Linton's world attractive, and after returning to Wuthering Heights, sees Heathcliff in a new light. Until now, Catherine has seen no other world, and she looks upon the new one as an appealing alternative to the strangling addictive bond that she shares with Heathcliff. Linton can provide her with the material comforts that her insecurity demands. The addiction between Catherine and Heathcliff is complicated by Catherine's need, not only for love, but also for material comfort. To Catherine, psychological security means having not only a partner, but having one that is wealthy and socially acceptable. According to 19th-century custom, a woman was not "complete" unless she married successfully. Heathcliff is barely capable of supplying himself with food and shelter, and so Catherine's eyes stray towards Linton. She is reluctant, due to her intense bond with Heathcliff, but he cannot fulfill her need for comfort and security. Catherine states:

I've no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven: and if the wicked man in there had not brought Heathcliff so low, I shouldn't have thought of it. It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now.

After her marriage to Linton, the following years are tranquil for Catherine. Heathcliff has disappeared, and Catherine attempts, somewhat successfully, to be satisfied with the psychological and material security that Linton provides for her. The one lacking element is the intensity that she shared with Heathcliff. Only upon Heathcliff's return is her addiction again triggered.

She persistently attempts to manipulate Heathcliff's acceptance into the Linton society, and she is temporarily successful. Present in Catherine is the knowledge, demonstrated by Heathcliff's impatience, that the arrangement between Catherine and Heathcliff is not satisfactory. Heathcliff will either possess Catherine or he will destroy the security that Catherine has found in Linton. Catherine, on the other hand, seems content with the knowledge that Heathcliff belongs to her emotionally. It is not necessary that she possess him in a more physical sense. To maintain her denial, Catherine demands that Linton accept Heathcliff as her "friend," regardless of how inappropriate that demand is.

Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship is obviously one of a romantic nature, as ~~has~~ demonstrated by Linton's careful use of the word "friend." Linton states, "will you give up Heathcliff hereafter, or will you give up me? It is impossible for you to be my friend and his at the same time: and I absolutely require to know which you choose."

Catherine is oblivious to the problem here. It is necessary for her to have Heathcliff in her life, at whatever the cost. The addiction is shown most clearly when Catherine is faced with Linton's ultimatum. Catherine has to choose either Linton, and the psychological security inherent in that relationship, or she must choose Heathcliff and the passionate intensity present in the addiction. Forced with this dilemma, Catherine becomes ill. Peele believes that extreme emotional reactions also conclusively establish that a relationship is addictive. Definite signs of withdrawal are displayed when a partner attempts to leave the relationship—signs of physical illness, such as shortness of breath, nausea, and faintness. All of these are demonstrated by addictive lovers upon hints of the relationship being dissolved. Catherine's illness, after Linton's ultimatum, is a direct result of the threat of losing Heathcliff. She is described as having symptoms of weakness, loss of appetite, and faintness.

HEATHCLIFF'S NEED FOR POSSESSION

Heathcliff, unlike Catherine, needs to possess in a physical sense. Confronted with Catherine's rejection of him, she states that it would "degrade" her to marry him, and Heathcliff leaves with the express intention of remaking himself into an image that will satisfy Catherine. Heathcliff is a man without an identity and is ~~referred~~ ^{referred} upon Catherine to choose that identity for him. He returns several years later, a polished, wealthy man.

Upon his return, Heathcliff is faced with the dilemma of Catherine's marriage. He attempts to destroy Catherine's marriage, regardless of what damage that inflicts on her. Furious and in withdrawal, Heathcliff wants only to repossess Catherine. Heathcliff is more honest with his feelings than any other character in the novel. Nowhere does he try to hide how he feels; Heathcliff needs Catherine to survive emotionally. Becoming distraught because of the separation that occurs during Catherine and Linton's marriage, Heathcliff remains dissatisfied until he is again reunited with her; in death,

buried beside her. This desire, I believe, is what primarily motivates Heathcliff. According to Peete, "when the connection is severed, even temporarily, the lover ceases to exist—something must retrace it." But Heathcliff has no life, no concerns other than his obsession with Catherine. This is made clear by Heathcliff's statements directly after Catherine's death:

And I pray one prayer—I repeat it till my tongue stiffens—Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest as I am living! You said I killed—you—haunt me, then! The murdered do haunt their murderers, I believe. I know that ghosts have wandered on earth. Be with me always—take any form—drive me mad! Only be not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! I cannot live without my soul!

Upon Catherine's death, Heathcliff is finished. He lives several more years, but he is a half-man—a shadow of what a human being should be. He needed Catherine to fill the abyss in his soul.

Heathcliff is more a force than a man. He is passionate, available, loyal, and desires only Catherine. Catherine's own addictive nature readily motivates her into giving her allegiance to Heathcliff. Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship, seen as a separate entity, always stands outside societal standards. Heathcliff's presence is thinly disguised as a childhood friend, but the relationship has always been taboo. This forbidden element, I believe, only adds to the addictive pull the relationship holds. It is stimulated by outside hostility, from Linton and others. The relationship also demands from both partners total attention to the addictive bond. Heathcliff never abandons this theme, but Catherine's failure to totally engross herself in him, as demonstrated by her marriage to Linton, eventually leads to her destruction.

ADDICTIVE LOVE

A healthy love affair demands well-balanced, mature individuals who have the capacity to want the best for the other partner. Catherine and Heathcliff do not display these qualities. Addictive love differs from a healthy attachment by the lover's need to possess the other being, regardless of the effect this might have on the latter. Catherine's love for Linton seems less destructive than ^{she} does the love that she and Heathcliff share. As Catherine states:

If all else perished, and he remained, I should still continue to be, and if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn to a mighty stranger; I should not seem a part

of it. My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods: time will change it, I'm well aware, as winter changes the trees.

Catherine does not exist without Heathcliff. Catherine and Heathcliff nourish their insufficiencies by feeding off each other, and as the novel shows, this system of addiction is not an efficient one.

Peete states that addicts are "emotionally detached from people, and are capable of seeing others only as objects to be exploited." Heathcliff is totally detached from people; he shows no affection for any human being, other than Catherine. He displays hostility towards everyone, except when it is necessary for him to gain some advantage from them. Even with Catherine, he is interested not so much in her well-being but in what the relationship can bring to him. After Heathcliff's return he is outraged to find Catherine has married Linton. Heathcliff's lack of concern for Catherine is emphasized when he states:

I want you to be aware that I know you have treated me infernally—infernally! Do you hear? And if you flatter yourself that I don't perceive it you are a fool; and if you think I can be consoled by sweet words you are an idiot: and if you fancy I'll suffer unrevenged, I'll convince you of the contrary, in a very little while!

Catherine is similar to Heathcliff in this respect. She uses Nelly Dean as an intermediary for her intrigue with Heathcliff, but otherwise displays no affection towards her. She dislikes her brother, Hindley, and barely tolerates Linton. Her only passion is for Heathcliff, and for what validation he can provide for her femininity. . . .

Peete examines in depth the strikingly close similarity between the pattern drug addiction takes and that of an addictive relationship, and he believes that addiction is addiction, no matter what the focus is. He defines love addiction as an obsessive and destructive relationship, and this correlates perfectly with Catherine and Heathcliff's attachment. Love addiction is based on an unhealthy dependence between two individuals, and Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship is clarified by examining it through this framework of dependency. Their relationship is based upon a lack of inner resources, and not upon love. Their bond is not an amoral one, or outside the realm of human experience either. Rather, it is a pattern of an obsessive and destructive relationship; one that is found frequently in literature and in modern society.

qualities of mind have come from "living among the hills and seeing one set of faces, and one series of actions, from year's end to year's end. . . ." Rather, she insists: "here we are the same as anywhere else, when you get to know us. . . ."

In Chapter VII, therefore, Emily Brontë sets significant signposts relative both to her theme and to her method: the important characters are put into proper relation one to the other; Heathcliff becomes determined in his "sin"; and the trustworthiness of the narrator is established.

Charlotte Brontë's Preface to *Wuthering Heights*

Charlotte Brontë

The preface to the second edition of *Wuthering Heights*, by Charlotte Brontë, Emily's elder sister and author of *Jane Eyre*, is both a defense of and an apology for the novel. She claims the book was written in a "wild workshop, with simple tools, out of homely material," but to those critics who view the novel as nothing more than a "horror of great darkness," she is quick to point out the redeeming qualities of Nelly Dean and Edgar Linton, who ironically have not always been looked on favorably by readers. Charlotte makes no apologies for Heathcliff, however, who stands "completely unredeemed," and notes that it is scarcely ever advisable to create such a character.

I have just read over "Wuthering Heights," and, for the first time, have obtained a clear glimpse of what are termed (and, perhaps, really are) its faults; have gained a definite notion of how it appears to other people—to strangers who knew nothing of the author; who are unacquainted with the locality where the scenes of the story are laid; to whom the inhabiting hills and hamlets in the West Riding of Yorkshire are things alien and unfamiliar.

To all such "Wuthering Heights" must appear a rude and strange production. The wild moors of the north of England can for them have no interest; the language, the manners, the very dwellings and household customs of the scattered inhabitants of those districts, must be to such readers in a great measure unintelligible, and—where intelligible—repulsive. Men and women who, perhaps naturally very calm, and with feelings moderate in degree, and little

Reprinted from Charlotte Brontë's Editor's Preface to the 2nd edition of *Wuthering Heights*, by Emily Brontë. This version appeared in the 1943 Random House edition.

marked in kind, have been drained from their cradle to observe the utmost evenness of manner and guardedness of language, will hardly know what to make of the rough, strong utterance, the harshly manifested passions, the unbridled aversions, and headlong partialities of unlettered moorland hinds and rugged moorland squires, who have grown up untaught and unchecked, except by mentors as harsh as themselves. A large class of readers, likewise, will suffer greatly from the introduction into the pages of this work of words printed with all their letters, which it has become the custom to represent by the initial and final letter only—a blank line filling the interval. I may as well say at once that, for this circumstance, it is out of my power to apologise; deeming it, myself, a rational plan to write words at full length. The practice of hinting by single letters those expletives with which profane and violent persons are wont to garnish their discourse, strikes me as a proceeding which, however well meant, is weak and futile. I cannot tell what good it does—what feeling it spares—what horror it conceals.

With regard to the rusticity of "Wuthering Heights," I admit the charge, for I feel the quality. It is rustic all through. It is moorish, and wild, and knotty as a root of heath. Nor was it natural that it should be otherwise; the author being herself a native and nursing of the moors. Doubtless, had her lot been cast in a town, her writings, if she had written at all, would have possessed another character. Even had chance or taste led her to choose a similar subject, she would not have treated it otherwise. Had Ellis Bell been a lady or a gentleman accustomed to what is called "the world," her view of a remote and unreclaimed region, as well as of the dwellers therein, would have differed greatly from that actually taken by the homebred country girl. Doubtless it would have been wider—more comprehensive: whether it would have been more original or more truthful is not so certain. As far as the scenery and locality are concerned, it could scarcely have been so sympathetic: Ellis Bell did not describe as one whose eye and taste alone found pleasure in the prospect; her native hills were far more to her than a spectacle; they were what she lived in, and by, as much as the wild birds, their tenants, or as the heather, their produce. Her descriptions, then, of natural scenery, are what they should be, and all they should be.

EMILY'S LACK OF PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

Where delineation of human character is concerned, the case is different. I am bound to avow that she had scarcely more practical knowledge of the peasantry amongst whom she lived, than a nun has of the country people who sometimes pass her convent gates. My sister's disposition was not naturally gregarious; circumstances favoured and fostered her tendency to seclusion; except to go to church or take a walk on the hills, she rarely crossed the threshold of home. Though her feelings for the people round was benevolent, intercourse with them she never sought; nor, with very few exceptions, ever experienced. And yet she knew them: knew their ways, their language, their family histories; she could hear of them with interest, and talk of them with detail, minute, graphic, and accurate; but *with* them, she rarely exchanged a word. Hence it ensued that what her mind had gathered of the real concerning them was too exclusively confined to those tragic and terrible traits of which, in listening to the secret annals of every rude vicinage, the memory is sometimes compelled to receive the impress. Her imagination, which was a spirit more sombre than sunny, more powerful than sportive, found in such traits material whence it wrought creations like Heathcliff, like Earnshaw, like Catherine. Having formed these beings she did not know what she had done. If the auditor of her work when read in manuscript, shuddered under the grinding influence of natures so relentless and implacable, of spirits so lost and fallen; if it was complained that the mere hearing of certain vivid and fearful scenes banished sleep by night, and disturbed mental peace by day, Ellis Bell would wonder what was meant, and suspect the complainant of affectation. Had she but lived, her mind would of itself have grown like a strong tree, loftier, straighter, wider-spreading, and its matured fruits would have attained a mellow ripeness and sunnier bloom; but on that mind time and experience alone could work: to the influence of other intellects, it was not amenable.

NELLY AND EDGAR ARE SAVING GRACES

Having avowed that over much of "Wuthering Heights" there broods "a horror of great darkness"; that, in its storm-heated and electrical atmosphere, we seem at times to breathe

lightnings, let me point to those spots where clouded daylight and the eclipsed sun still attest their existence. For a specimen of true benevolence and homely fidelity, look at the character of Nelly Dean; for an example of constancy and tenderness, remark that of Edgar Linton. (Some people will think these qualities do not shine so well incarnate in a man as they would do in a woman, but Ellis Bell could never be brought to comprehend this notion: nothing moved her more than any insinuation that the faithfulness and clemency, the long-suffering and loving-kindness which are esteemed virtues in the daughters of Eve, become foibles in the sons of Adam. She held that mercy and forgiveness are the divinest attributes of the Great Being who made both man and woman, and that what clothes the Godhead in glory, can disgrace no form of feeble humanity.) There is a dry saturnine humour in the delineation of old Joseph, and some glimpses of grace and gaiety animate the younger Catherine. Nor is even the first heroine of the name destitute of a certain strange beauty in her fierceness, or of honesty in the midst of perverted passion and passionate perversity.

Heathcliff, indeed, stands unredeemed; never once swerving in his arrow-straight course to perdition, from the time when "the little black-haired swarthy thing, as dark as if it came from the Devil," was first unrolled out of the bundle and set on its feet in the farmhouse kitchen, to the hour when Nelly Dean found the grim, stalwart corpse laid on its back in the panel-enclosed bed, with wide-gazing eyes that seemed "to sneer at her attempt to close them, and parted lips and sharp white teeth that sneered too."

HEATHCLIFF IS A GHOUL

Heathcliff betrays one solitary human feeling, and that is *not* his love for Catherine; which is a sentiment fierce and inhuman; a passion such as might boil and glow in the bad essence of some evil genius; a fire that might form the tormented centre—the ever-suffering soul of a magnate of the infernal world: and by its quenchless and ceaseless ravage effect the execution of the decree which dooms him to carry Hell with him wherever he wanders. No; the single link that connects Heathcliff with humanity is his rudely-confessed regard for Hareton Earnshaw—the young man whom he has ruined; and then his half-implicit esteem for Nelly Dean. These solitary traits omitted, we should say he was child

neither of Lascar nor gipsy, but a man's shape animated by demon life—a Ghoul—an Afreet.

Whether it is right or advisable to create beings like Heathcliff, I do not know: I scarcely think it is. But this I know: the writer who possesses the creative gift owns something of which he is not always master—something that, at times, strangely wills and works for itself. He may lay down rules and devise principles, and to rules and principles it will perhaps for years lie in subjection; and then, haply without any warning of revolt, there comes a time when it will no longer consent to "harrow the valleys, or be bound with a band in the furrow"—when it "laughs at the multitude of the city, and regards not the crying of the driver"—when, refusing absolutely to make ropes out of sea-sand any longer, it sets to work on statue-hewing, and you have a Pluto or a Jove, a Tisiphone or a Psyche, a Mermaid or a Madonna, as Fate or Inspiration direct. Be the work grim or glorious, dread or divine, you have little choice left but quiescent adoption. As for you—the nominal artist—your share in it has been to work passively under dictates you neither delivered nor could question—that would not be uttered at your prayer, nor suppressed nor changed at your caprice. If the result be attractive, the World will praise you, who little deserve praise; if it be repulsive, the same World will blame you, who almost as little deserve blame.

"Wuthering Heights" was hewn in a wild workshop, with simple tools, out of homely materials. The statuary found a granite block on a solitary moor; gazing thereon, he saw how from the crag might be elicited a head, savage, swart, sinister; a form moulded with at least one element of grandeur—power. He wrought with a rude chisel, and from no model but the vision of his meditations. With time and labour, the crag took human shape; and there it stands colossal, dark, and frowning, half statue, half rock: in the former sense, terrible and goblinlike; in the latter, almost beautiful, for its colouring is of mellow grey, and moorland moss clothes it; and health, with its blooming bells and balmy fragrance, grows faithfully close to the giant's foot.