



The Australian Brontë Association Newsletter

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JUVENILIA CONFERENCE 2020 Wed 20 May to Sat 23 May 2020.



The ABA is helping to sponsor the seventh International Literary Juvenilia Conference at the University of New South Wales in 2020. The Friday sessions will be devoted to Brontë juvenilia, especially Anne's juvenilia (2020 is the 200th anniversary of her birth.)

The theme of the conference will be *Literary Juvenilia, material imagination and 'things'*.

Young writers ranging from **Pope**, **Chatterton** and **Burns** in the eighteenth century, to **Austen**, the **Brontës**, **Eliot** and **Dickens** in the nineteenth, and **Edith Wharton**, **C.S. Lewis**, **Judith Wright** and **J.K. Rowling** in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have found inspiration and example in the everyday context of their writing practice—in a materiality related to their physical, social and cultural worlds and in the material conditions of their play, learning, imitation and critique.



This conference will explore the material culture of juvenilia (youthful writing up to the age of twenty): the relationship between 'things' and literary imagination and practice.

Juvenilia Conference Registration

Full Registration includes:

Welcome Reception (Light Buffet Supper), Lunch, Morning & Afternoon Tea at UNSW, and the Brontë Juvenilia Sessions on Friday, 22 May.

Full Rate delegates

\$330 – early bird full conference registration (ends 29 February 2020)

\$380 – full conference registration (open from 1 March 2019 – 18 May 2020)

Student delegates

\$230 – early bird conference registration (ends 29 February 2020)

\$280 – full conference registration (open from 1 March 2019 – 18 May 2020)

Online Registrations close Friday 15 May 2020

Australian Brontë Association delegates – for Friday 22 May only

ABA members have the option of registering for the full conference (above) or for the one day that includes Brontë Juvenilia Sessions and book launch, sponsored by the ABA.

(Contact ABA representative Michelle Cavanagh for any queries.)

\$150 – early bird conference registration (ends 29 February 2020)

\$200 – full conference registration (open from 1 March 2019 – 18 May 2020)

Conference Dinner (optional)

Doyles on the Beach at Watsons Bay, Friday 22 May:

\$120pp including drinks (partners welcome)

Tickets

Buy Tickets for the conference and dinner on **Eventbrite**

Further details can be found on the Juvenilia Conference Website: juvenilia.conference@unsw.edu.au



OUR MEETINGS



The Australian Brontë Association meets in Sydney five times a year. Meetings are held at the Castlereagh Boutique Hotel, 169 Castlereagh Street (near Park Street) at 10:30am, though we serve morning tea from 10:00am. Those who wish to do so, have a light lunch at the hotel. At each meeting, a paper on some aspect of the Brontës' life and work is presented. There is a meeting charge of \$5 (members and non-members).

At the first meeting of the year, on March 14th, we will hold a very brief annual general meeting to elect the office bearers and committee for 2020.

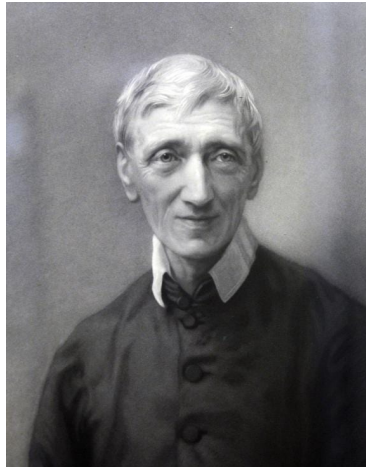
At the end of the year we will hold a Christmas

lunch in one of the dining rooms of the Castlereagh Hotel.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË AND SAINT JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

Adapted from the website www.annebronte.org

This is a special day for many in Britain, as today in the Vatican Pope Francis I is canonising John Henry Newman – better known as Cardinal Newman, but from today called Saint John Henry Newman. It's particularly historic as he is the first British person to be made a Saint in 43 years, and he is the first 'modern' Brit to gain that honour as our previous most recent saint lived in the 17th century. He is of interest to this blog for his connection to Charlotte Brontë, so we'll take a brief look at St. John (no, not St. John Rivers on this occasion), at how Charlotte knew him and why it's strange that Charlotte should have felt such an affinity to his teachings.



John Henry Newman

Part of Newman's great appeal is that he in many ways seems an ordinary person, for a saint. He is a man that it's easy to relate to, and also one that unites faiths. He was born in 1801 in London and was to become a towering figure in nineteenth century theology. For a Catholic Saint, however, it is perhaps surprising that he was born into a Protestant family and his mother Jemima (formerly Jemima Fourdrinier) was of a Huguenot refugee family who, like many other Huguenots (French Protestants) had had to flee France in fear of their lives and after persecution from the Catholic Church there.

As a child Newman impressed as a scholar, and he particularly loved to read the novels of Walter Scott – just as the Brontës did. At age 15, another strange event

occurred for a man who would be canonised, as he became a convert not to Catholicism but to Calvinism. Calvinism was the hardline branch of Protestantism, whose proponents believed in the elect and the damned. If you were elect, you would be pre-destined to heaven, whatever you did on earth. All others, however, were destined to the eternal torments of hell if they sinned once. Unsurprisingly, most Calvinist preachers recognised themselves as the elect and their parishioners as the damned.

Walter Scott was loved by Newman and the Brontës. It was a harsh doctrine that despised Catholicism and denounced the Pope as the anti-Christ. They preached of punishment and hellfire, and a perfect example of a Calvinist was Reverend William Carus Wilson, who ran the Clergy Daughter's School which tragically claimed the lives of the two eldest Brontë sisters Maria and Elizabeth. Charlotte revenged herself upon Wilson, and Calvinists in general, by depicting him as the cruel Mr. Brocklehurst in 'Jane Eyre', and Anne Brontë also attacked them in a poem which she entitled, 'A Word To The Calvinists' and which was later changed to 'A Word To The Elect'. In its opening we see Anne take aim at their hypocrisy and hit the target:

You may rejoice to think yourselves secure;
You may be grateful for the gift divine –
That grace unsought, which made your black hearts
pure,
And fits your earth-born souls in Heaven to shine.



Sir Walter Scott

But, is it sweet to look around, and view
Thousands excluded from that happiness,
Which they deserved, at least, as much as you, –
Their faults not greater, nor their virtues less?’

Newman, then, had become a proponent of the most fervently anti-Catholic sect of them all, and in 1825 he took holy orders and was ordained a priest in the Church of England, one who still held Calvinist views. Rather than becoming a parish priest, however, he became an Oxford academic (and de facto priest of the University’s St. Mary’s church), preacher and theologian and gradually over the next decade his views began to change. He wrote on the need to find common ground between Anglicanism and Catholicism, the ‘middle way’ that he gave a series of popular lectures on.

By 1842, with his views causing increasing controversy in the church, Newman had retreated from University life and created an Anglican monastery (it’s now Oxford’s Newman College), but he had embarked upon a path that would change his life.

In 1843 he resigned from his post at St. Mary’s and published an advertisement in an Oxford paper retracting and apologising for his previously stated views

on Catholicism. In 1845 the progression was completed as Newman was formally received into the Roman Catholic church, and a year later was ordained a Catholic priest. He now embarked on a further series of lectures in London and Birmingham called ‘The Present Position of Catholics in England’. In these lectures he denounced the anti-Catholic sentiment that was high in the country at that time, and the aggressive measures taken against Catholics.

During one such lecture Newman was said to have libelled a former Catholic who now vehemently preached against the faith, and he was arrested and expected to receive a prison sentence. Newman was found guilty, but escaped prison with a £100 fine and an admonishment from the judge about his ‘moral deterioration’ after his conversion to Catholicism. Newman’s response was ‘posterity shall be my judge’.



Newman’s notoriety increased, and he produced a series of works which sold in large numbers, as well as addressing large crowds wherever he went. In 1879 he was made a Cardinal of the Catholic Church, but as always he defied convention by not being a Bishop first and by refusing to be a Bishop



once elevated to the Cardinal rank. It was also usual then for Cardinals to live in Rome, but the now Cardinal Newman insisted on remaining in Birmingham.

When Newman died in 1890 the nation mourned, and in the century and more that has followed increasingly people saw him as a figure of devotion. Miracles were attributed to him, and it is this that led to his beatification by Pope Benedict XVI in 2010. I was one of many tens of thousands of people who filled Hyde Park to see the Pope celebrate this beatification, and it was an incredibly moving event. Nine years later, after a further miracle was officially recognised by the church, he has been given the ultimate accolade of Sainthood.

Newman was known across Britain and beyond throughout the nineteenth century. He was a passionate and brilliant speaker, and we know that one person who attended his lectures was none other than Charlotte Brontë. The lectures she saw were in London in 1850, and were tellingly entitled *Certain Difficulties Felt By Anglicans In Submitting To The Catholic Church*. She later told Elizabeth Gaskell about them, who reported in a letter to Catherine Winkworth:

Miss Brontë agreed with me in liking Mr. Newman's Soul, and in liking Modern Painters, and the idea of the Seven Lamps; and she told me about Father Newman's lectures at the Oratory in a very quiet, concise, graphic way.

It at first seems strange that Charlotte should profess such an admiration for Newman, and to attend his lectures, as some of her works express profound anti-Catholic sentiment. This was merely in common with many of the people at the time, but it can still be hard to read *The Professor* particularly, with its passages such as:

I long to live once more among Protestants; they are more honest than Catholics; a Romish school is a

building with porous walls, a hollow floor, a false ceiling; every room in this house, monsieur, has eyeholes and ear-holes, and what the house is, the inhabitants are, very treacherous; they all think it lawful to tell lies; they all call it politeness to profess friendship where they feel hatred.

Nevertheless, Charlotte was attracted to Newman, and possibly even to Catholicism itself. One startling scene in *Villette* sees Lucy Snowe heading in despair to a confessional in the Roman Catholic cathedral, and we know that Charlotte, in despair at her unrequited love for M. Heger, followed exactly the same course on 1st September 1843 in the grand St. Gudule's Cathedral. She disclosed this to Emily, her confessor of a different kind:

An odd whim came into my head. In a solitary part of the Cathedral six or seven people still remained kneeling by the confessionals. In two confessionals I saw a priest. I felt as if I did not care what I did, provided it was not absolutely wrong, and that it served to vary my life and yield a moment's

interest. I took a fancy to change myself into a Catholic and go and make a real confession to see what it was like. Knowing me as you do, you will think this odd, but when people are by themselves they have singular fancies... I actually did confess – a real confession... I think you had better not tell Papa of this. He will not understand that it was only a freak, and will perhaps think I am going to turn Catholic.

Was this a 'freak' as she called it, or was it something that deep down she had considered for a while and continued to consider? Was she considering it when she went to watch John Henry Newman deliver his lecture about Anglicans submitting to the Catholic Church? I think it shows that Charlotte was at heart not bigoted against Catholics, and in fact not bigoted in any way at all. She was always looking to understand people, to find a Newman-like 'middle way'.



Lucy Snowe is rescued by a kindly Catholic priest

Brontë Scholarship in Kurdistan

The Representation of Marital Abuse in the Brontës' Literary Writings: A Feminist Approach

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Abstract

This research paper examines the way that the Brontë sisters write about one of the most important issues in a person's life, the decision of marriage and how it can lead to a woman being abused by her chosen partner. This paper aims at proving how the Brontë sister's trilogy: *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* have been used by the authors themselves to criticize the Victorian repressive marriage which is lacking love. The subject matter within the paper claims that each one of the chosen texts shows how the sibling authors have similar opinions or tendencies regarding the above-mentioned issue and how they disapprove of the traditional marriage, by which women become oppressed. The selected texts are regarded as early feminist writings by critics and scholars for their depiction of marital abuse. By conducting research combining social backgrounds and close reading, the paper sets out to focus on the character's mistakes regarding marriage like Bertha in *Jane Eyre*, Isabella in *Wuthering Heights*, and Helen in *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. The study points out that the chosen females in the writings are depicted to be passive characters. To establish this identity, the study illustrates that how their mythical principles on which their marriage based leads to them being victims of marital abuse.



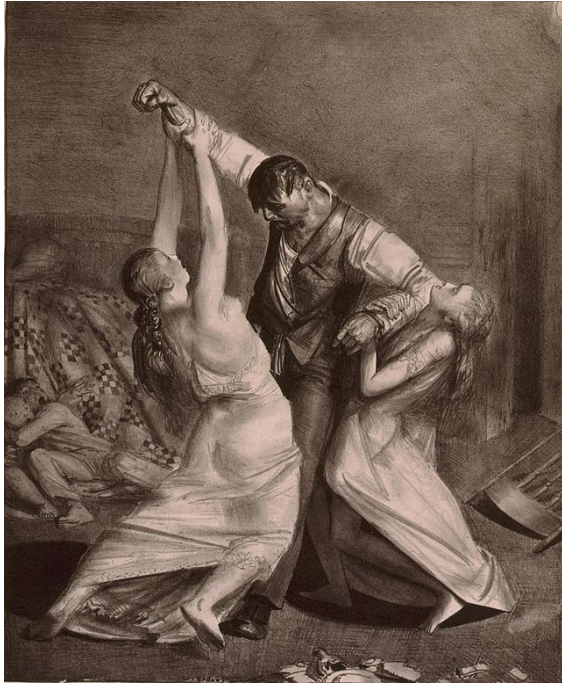
Introduction

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), and Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848) are three novels that examine the concept of marriage. During these times, there was a different idea regarding the aspects of marriage. The Victorian Era society largely based marriage on economic and social advancement and not on a romantic belief as it is clearly seen in modern times. As (Dobošiová, 2006: 8) points out, "marriage was primarily a contract between two families for the exchange of concrete benefits." Indeed, during the Victorian period, men and women had to get married

due to various crucial reasons. For women, marriage was necessary and a matter of importance because they did not have the right to education nor were they allowed to work. Therefore, (Nelson, 2015: 1) comments, "marriage was the primary concern for most women." This is why they needed husbands to support and protect them both socially and financially. For men, by contrast, the main reason for getting married was their need to have and raise children, especially male children to carry on the family name as well as for domestic duties their wives provided. In other words, they wanted to have a warm and well-ordered household. In light of this background of the Victorian period, the interpretation of

marriage abuse in these novels could be easier to understand.

Even though the sibling authors wrote about the seriousness of marital relationships, throughout the 1800s there were also numerous novels written by other authors about romantic marriages as fairy tales. In this research paper, I will attempt to analyze the best-known novels of each of the Brontë sisters such as *Jane Eyre* by



Charlotte, *Wuthering Heights* by Emily, and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* by Anne in which they portray how marriage would be impractical without love between couples. Additionally, I will explore the ideas that characters like Bertha in *Jane Eyre*, Isabella in *Wuthering Heights*, and Helen in *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* based their marriage on and how the false principles that they based their marriage on led to marital abuse. I will also use a historical feminist approach to analyze these texts and probe as to whether the chosen female characters followed traditional wife stereotypes. The aim of this paper is to show readers how passivity in one's personality could potentially lead to women making the wrong decision when deciding to marry and how the authors condemn marriage as a societal method to oppress women.

The Brontë Sisters' Biography

Indeed, as the present research paper will be about the sibling authors; it is very crucial to introduce them first before analysing their eminent selected literary works. Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë were three sisters who were in their early lives decided to devote themselves to literary writings, like novels and poems. As (Rehnuma, 2006, 19) gives more detail about their devotion to their writings: “[b]oth Patrick Bronte and Elizabeth Branwell were strict disciplinarians. Perhaps this is why the children were forced to take refuge in reading and writing.” Charlotte, the oldest after their two dead sisters, was born on 21 April 1816 in Thornton, Yorkshire, England, and Emily, best known for her masterpiece *Wuthering Heights*, was born on 30 July 1818. Anne (born on 17 January 1820) was the youngest female author and poet of the Brontë literary family. The three sisters were English novelists and poets. They grew up in patriarchal society the time where women did not have the right to attend schools and do outside works. Therefore, they were taught at home. Their experiences of living in a divided world of genders gave them the inspiration for most of their literary works; especially, the chosen ones. Because of the short life expectancy of the time, they could produce very few numbers of literary works. Charlotte wrote only four novels with some other unfinished works. Apart from some poems, Emily produced one novel and Anne two novels only.

Contextual Analysis

The three selected literary writings are set in the first half of the nineteenth century England or Victorian era. Even though the era named after a female queen figure that was on the throne at the time, the living condition of women was at its zenith of corruption. This is because during this period of time women had very few rights and privileges. Because life was really meant to be tough and hard on women, the main purpose of the women was thought to be that

they had to grow up and get married. Thus, it was socially and culturally supposed that women had no need for education that might make them be more masculine figures like or make them unfit wives and mothers in society. According to (Steinbach, 2005: p.5), “throughout the long nineteenth century women were seen as more emotional and less capable of genius or even of rational thought.” This quote might prove that women were not allowed to be educated or to take science subjects.

Another problem or issue that women faced was their domestic lives. The English poet Coventry Patmore gave the name of the „Angel in the house“ to women in one of his long narrative poems. Since that time, the women in the household were usually referred to as the „angle in the house“ by society, in which women were expected to be devoted and submissive to their husbands. They were also expected to look after their husbands and give birth to children. Not only this, but they were also wronged by the law of the time by which they would lose all their rights to any property or money which they own. As a result, their husband would be in control of all their possessions. Due to the fact that women were seen as their husband“s belonging and thing, they were abused mentally, emotionally, and physically. That is why it can be seen in *Wuthering Heights* how Elizabeth will be beaten by her husband severely in the kitchen. It could be said that women could not enter the outside world like business and education fields which led them to their ignorance. Thus, women can be seen as very oppressed, passive and burdened figures in the male dominated society i.e. the time where the Brontë sisters wrote their novels.

Feminist Approach

Throughout the course of the sibling authors“ selected writings, the chosen female characters have been depicted as the submissive, stereotypical helpless wives who have become trapped in an unhappy marriage. The three texts deal with feminist

issues related to motherhood, domestic violence and marital expectations. Thus, they have to be interpreted through a feminist theory because they focus on the position of wives and their treatment in the Victorian society.

To analyze the Brontë sisters“ trilogy writings as feminist texts, it would be better to provide a definition to the term „feminism“ in the first place. As (Freedman, 2001:1) defines it as follows: “feminisms concern themselves with women’s inferior position in society and with discrimination encountered by women because of their sex.” In simple terms, feminism is the only way which is used to describe any offensive messages or discrimination against women within male-dominated societies. Not only this, but feminism can also serve another purpose such as the empowerment of women through which women are independent in making their own decisions. This paper explains that even though the authors depict the chosen female figures as having free will in their choice of whom to marry, they have still become victims of the male-dominated societal norms.

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë

Jane Eyre is Charlotte Brontë“s outstanding novel in which she displays the model of traditional couple marriage in the Victorian society. Throughout the text, the author seems to tell the reader that marriage for material gains like fortune has negative effects on the process of marriage itself and the pairs; in particular females, who would be the victims. In doing so, Charlotte refers to the union of Edward Rochester and his first wife Bertha Mason. Indeed, because Bertha“s voice has been silenced in *Jane Eyre* by the author, readers learn Bertha“s marriage story to Rochester through her husband, Rochester. After the abolition of Rochester and Jane“s wedding, Rochester tells Jane the story of his earlier marriage to Bertha in the following sentence: “He endure that a son of his should be a poor man [...] he sought me a partner” (*JE*, 351) and “I was sent to Jamaica, to espouse a

bride already courted for me” (352). Rochester’s discourse with Jane demonstrates that his marriage is just like a kind of commodity done by both Rochester and Bertha’s fathers. In the words of (Calder, 1976:108), “in nineteenth century society marriage was a matter of trade, and the marriage contract was a commercial one”. Taking Calder’s speech into account, such marriage could be considered a business-like. (Eriksson, 2012:9) adds, “Rochester was tricked into marrying for money”. Significantly, through Rochester’s statement, Charlotte tries to draw attention to one of the facts in the nineteenth century which is the Victorian bond of marriage and how the Victorians had very much interested in and paid more attention to finance rather than in spiritual or emotional principle in such a mutual thing like marriage. Rochester also describes Berth’s behaviour to Jane when he first sees Bertha as follows: “Bertha flattered me, lavishly displayed for my pleasure her charms and accomplishments [...] I was dazzled, my senses were excited; and being ignorant, I thought I loved her” (*JE*, 352). This quote suggests that when



Rochester first meets Bertha, he loses his senses and he is attracted by her beauty. That is to say, Rochester has become deceived by the appearance of his first wife, which is her gorgeousness. Through Rochester’s description to Bertha, it can be said that Bertha is aware of this arranged marriage; therefore, she behaves in the way to flatter Rochester. The author might give free choice to Bertha in her marriage decision in order to present her as a feminist figure at the beginning of the story.

Women in the nineteenth century, after they got married, were expected to take the role of both a good wife and mother to comfort their husbands. Through Rochester’s telling the story of his

mysterious wife to Jane; the opposite could be noticed. (Diederich, 2010) comments on Bertha’s role as a wife as she is “not a beloved wife with the power to act or to run a household”. It can be said that Bertha is unlike a typical Victorian wife, who had to provide a warm and well-ordered home to her husband. Bertha’s failure in being an ideal wife could be regarded as another way to present Bertha as a feminist character by the author intentionally. Thus, Bertha refuses to follow the traditional female roles.

Living four years in a miserable life and marriage in the West Indies, Rochester decides to: “take the maniac with him to England; confine her [...] at Thornfield [...] let her identity be buried in oblivion” (*JE*, 356). This might illustrate that Bertha loses her independence by locking her away in a hidden room of Thornfield and as (Juplit, 1999) states, “Bertha’s life epitomizes oppression”.

Confined in a room may be viewed as a symbol of the repressed women in the patriarchal society and lack of their connections with the outside world. (Palsa, 2014: 9), for example, mentions the fact

that “Bertha is taken from the Caribbean to suffer and die in England”. Transforming locations could be observed in this quote, which might refer to changing Bertha’s identity as a sort of abused wife and lead to be treated as an alien creature by her husband. Rochester says: “Bertha’s vices sprang up fast and they were so strong, only cruelty could check them; and I would not use cruelty” (*JE*, 353). Rochester’s reference to cruelty is very crucial because although he does not abuse her physically, his mental abuse of her has destroyed her very harshly. That is to say, being ignored, condemned, and confined in an attic for some ten years, Bertha’s mental state deranged and damaged completely. This is implicit in Jane’s

description when she first sees her: “Whether beast or human being [...] strange animal” (*JE*, 338). This vicious animal description might be a metaphoric reference to the loss of humanity in women due to the abusive treatments which Charlotte wants to portray. It is interesting to note that Bertha seems to be a victim of her family’s will of her marriage. Therefore, in the end, she sets fire to Thornfield which is supposed to be her house, has become her prison and jumps to her death.

***Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë**

In Emily Brontë’s only novel, *Wuthering Heights*, the theme of marriage seems to be served as a separable and miserable phenomenon rather than a union between couples. This is because, throughout the book, it could be observed that most of the characters have misused marriage in a different way to achieve their personal or villainous goals. Therefore, it can be considered the appropriate novel among these three novels of the Brontë sisters in which almost all of its marriages are abused, especially the one between Heathcliff and Isabella. Focusing on Heathcliff’s evil intention marriage to Isabella, it is necessary to analyse Heathcliff’s character. Indeed, the story of *Wuthering Heights* can be divided into two parts. At the first half of the story, Heathcliff is presented as an orphan and ill-treated child, who is in love with Catherine Earnshaw. One day, Heathcliff hears Catherine says to Nelly: “It would degrade her to marry him” (*WH*, 58). This makes Heathcliff leave *Wuthering Heights* immediately with excessive anger and hatred. Three years of disappearance, the second half of the story starts with seeing Heathcliff as a villain person who wants to take revenge on Catherine’s surroundings. As (Watson, 1949: 91) states Heathcliff, “wrecks his vengeance on Hindley, Edgar and Isabella”. This might imply that Heathcliff aims to take revenge on Edgar, who has robbed his true lover from him, by marrying his sister, Isabella. That is to say,

using Isabella for his evil intention is a good means to destroy Edgar completely. For these reasons, Heathcliff’s marriage will be based on revenge rather than love, the marriage which is rejected and criticized by Emily.

On the other hand, it could be said that Heathcliff and Isabella’s marital abuse hardly resulted from Heathcliff’s malignant plan for taking revenge, but also from Isabella’s infatuation for Heathcliff. Isabella Linton is a pretty girl of high status, who is attracted to Heathcliff’s fake personality. In order to gain Isabella’s passionate admiration, Heathcliff has to visit Thrushcross Grange regularly and start to impress her, then tempt or seduce her, particularly when he “embraces her” (*WH*, 80). What Heathcliff tries to do here is to show his fake love to Isabella to deceive her into marrying him. Accordingly, Isabella seems to fancy and admire him blindly; therefore, she says to Catherine who wants to warn her: “I love him more than you love Edgar: and he might love me, if you would let him” (*WH*, 74). Noticing Isabella’s strong and blind affection, Heathcliff states she is: “picturing in me a hero of romance” (*WH*, 109). This might highlight the possibility of Isabella’s becoming infatuated with an idealized and romantic image of Heathcliff; that is to say, being misguided by his outward appearance due to her lack of knowledge of men’s intentions. Isabella’s mistaken assumption makes her imagine Heathcliff as (Haque, 2012: 19) states, “to be a romantic hero and a strong man”. Looking at this marriage, it could be learned that Isabella marries Heathcliff under a wrong impression and Heathcliff uses his marriage to her as a means of revenge which together bring about their marital abuse.

When Isabella knows that her brother, Edgar, will refuse grant her permission to marry Heathcliff and her strong infatuation with Heathcliff as well as misleading by his villainous plans and actions make her finally flee with Heathcliff. Isabella’s free will and independence in her decision will be clear when she decides to

elope with Heathcliff and defy her brother's will. Indeed, this makes Isabella be a feminist figure, who can stand against his brother's will. At the same time, it shows her foolish and ignorant personality because her elopement results in one-sided love marriage. This type of marriage can never be successful. As a result, Heathcliff becomes an abusive husband and Isabella becomes the victim of her blindly love and being tricked in a tormenting marriage. As Isabella states: "He left me by the kitchen door" (*WH*, 100), the reader led to learn that kitchen was the first place that Isabella was taken to and left there after her bringing to Wuthering Heights immediately. According to (Surrige, 2005: 3), this implies that "wife beating occurs in the kitchen". This might refer to Heathcliff's beginning of harsh treatment towards Isabella and hurting her physically such as beating her savagely.

Taking this argument further, Emily might refer to the common place where domestic violence appears in the Victorian spouses. Heathcliff's brutality seems to be increased gradually and Isabella's life is turned to be uncomfortable and miserable at Wuthering Heights. In particular, as Isabella asks to "see her bedroom" (*WH*, 104), she has been shown "the second garret" (*Ibid*). This quote might suggest that the person whom Isabella left her family for tries to abuse, degrade and treat her as a slave by not allowing her to sleep in his room. Further, her hopeless marriage to that villain leads to lose her high social caste as she clarified as follows: "My name was Isabella Linton" (*WH*, 100). The verb tense of the speech illustrates how women take the name of their husband by getting married and due to Heathcliff's lower class; Isabella's social high class has reduced.

Throughout the one-sided love marriage, Heathcliff abuses her physically and psychologically. The psychological abuse was very terrible; she was imprisoned at Wuthering Heights, like Bertha, by her violent husband. After some months of their

marriage, his cruelty gets worse towards her, especially by abusing her personal property like he "hangs up her little dog" (*WH*, 110). It could be noticed that Isabella reveals the true nature and personality of her husband and understands how savage and inhuman he is; therefore, she calls him: "monster" and "not human". In the words of (Traversi, 1959: 256): "The nature of Heathcliff is severe, gloomy and brutal". Realizing her mistake and unwise decision of marriage, she writes to Nelly and encounters her depressed living in such inhuman condition as well as expresses her regret and condemnation herself very outwardly as follows: "I do hate him- I am wretched" (*WH*, 106). Isabella's remark here might suggest that she grows to hate her vengeful and villain husband because of these sufferings that she received from him. Remarkably, Isabella has paid dearly for the marital abuse and due to the impossibility of getting divorced at the time, she decides to run away to an unknown destination and then die.

***The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* by Anne Brontë**

Anne Brontë produced her second and final novel, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, in the period where the discrepancy between men and women in the marriage life and women's lack of rights under various marriage and divorce laws can be observed vividly. Indeed, it is considered the boldest work amongst the Brontë sisters' literary works due to the representation of reality and truth of events of abuse directed towards women in the Victorian Period. Throughout the marriage between Arthur Huntingdon and Helen Lawrence, the author attempts to depict the danger of ignoring one's prudence in choosing a mate and other's advice before making the mutual decision of marriage. The question of marital abuse could be very obviously noticed through Helen's private journal.

After Gilbert beats and wounds Helen's brother severely, Helen gives him her journal in which she recorded the story of her marriage to Arthur and its negative results. It starts with her first meeting with the attractive and amusing Arthur, whom she infatuated with in spite of other's cautions and statements that the young boy is not suitable to start a family with. For example, once Mrs. Peggy Maxwell (Helen's aunt) notices that Helen falls in love with reckless Arthur and wants to marry him; therefore, she says: "He is a bit wildish [...] destitute of principle, and prone to every vice that is common to youth" (*TWH*, 136). Through Helen's aunt statement, the reader might let to learn that as a married woman and older than Helen, she might have more experience about marriage life and men's intention. Thus, when she gives comments regarding Arthur's personality and reputation as a careless and wild person, as well as his cheerful and witty way of talking could take women's attraction. That is to say, she wants to give her advice by telling her that she falls in love with dissipated Arthur unwisely and blindly. According to (Wingert, 2007: 21), "Helen would have saved herself a lot of heartaches and miserable marriage had she simply heeded the claims about Arthur's playboy ways before she married him". This might imply the importance of listening to or taking other's view into consideration about any single issue of one's life.

Responding to Mrs. Maxwell's worries, Helen says: "I shall consider my life well spent in saving him from the consequences of his early errors" (*TWH*, 150). It might highlight the possibility that Helen's marriage to Arthur will be based on

her mistaken belief which is reforming him and ignoring her prudence rather than love. As (Torgerson, 2005: 29) points out, "Helen hopes to reform her husband". Torgerson's speech might imply that despite Helen's inexperienced eye, she is aware of Arthur's some bad behaviours and she aims to reform them. In this way, Helen's rejection to listen to her aunt's advice and insistence to her will in choosing reckless Arthur as her husband might show her feminist personality. This is because during that time women should base their marriage on their families' will. Undeniably, because of the nature of Arthur's personality as a weak-willed and misguided man, he does neither want to nor make an effort to reform



Qui aime bien châtie bien.

himself, saying: "If God meant me to be religious, why did not he give me a proper organ of veneration" (*TWH*, 205). Considering this, it could be said that Helen's hope in reforming her husband becomes pointless. By my interpretation of the novel, Anne aims to convey one of the facts that one should follow in his/her marriage, which is avoiding

marrying someone in the hope of reforming him because there is not only guarantee in that change, but it will also led to marital abuse. It can be seen very clearly in Arthur and Helen's marriage abuse. According to (O'Toole, 1999: 717), Anne disapproves the ideology of "the wife as agent of reform".

After a short period of Helen's emotional and erroneous belief based marriage, like Isabella, she starts to admit and express her regret, saying: "If I had known him in the beginning as thoroughly as I do now. I probably never should have

loved him [...] I was wilfully blind” (*TWH*, 202), which depicts her being a victim of her husband’s brutal and disrespectful behaviour and highlights how unhappy she is with him. Helen has experienced almost every type of marital abuse in her marriage with Arthur such as emotional abuse, psychological abuse, and physical abuse. Indeed, Arthur was not that man that she was imagined. He was an adulterer, a drunkard, leaving his wife for months, treating her discourteously. This truth makes her look at their marriage as unhappy one and emotionally abused; thus, she states: “Arthur never will let me be satisfied with him. I have never, for a single hour since I married him, known what it is to realize that sweet idea” (*TWH*, 270) and “... two persons living together [...] with the mutual understanding that there is no love, friendship, or sympathy between them” (320). Helen’s expression makes the reader feel sympathy for her feeling of anxiety that she encounters due to the lack of love.

However, girls can be freed by getting married in the Victorian Era; (Dunbar, 1953: 17) declares: “A female’s real existence only begins when she has a husband”. Helen’s marriage would be completely opposite to this, as (Drewery, 2013: 341) states: “Helen is doubly bound to this marriage”. This is because, on the one hand, once a woman vows to marry a man, she has to live with him forever, just as Helen’s bound to live with Arthur, after revealing his unprincipled character. On the other, Helen’s artistic freedom as an unmarried girl is changed by her marriage to Arthur. The Public parlor is the location of her painting as a single girl. After her marriage, Helen writes library is “a secure retreat at all hours of the day” (*TWH*, 353) because of patriarchal society, she becomes unable to paint outwardly. As (Losano, 2008: 78) states, “Helen must paint in the library to be effectively hidden from Arthur and his debauched cronies”. Being confined in this corruption marriage and loss of freedom demonstrate her experience in psychological abuse.

The reference to physical abuse in

The Tenant of Wildfell Hall is different from the other two texts. The author represents “the physical violence” as (SurrIDGE, 2005: 76) states “by using the trope of the abused animal”. Helen explains this incident in her diary by telling Arthur: “by your throwing the book at him (dog)? but perhaps, it was intended for me?” (*TWH*, 212), which reveals the connection of physical assault between animal and wife. That is to say, wives have the same way of treatment as animals in the manliness society. However, (Trevelyan, 1944: 331) points out that in the nineteenth century “divorce was almost unknown”; Helen’s saying: “I could only live by thinking of Wildfell Hall” (*TWH*, 384) portrays Helen’s decision to run away from her disastrous marriage and tries to live far away from her abusive husband due to her being the victim of her wrong belief and lack of love marriage.



Conclusion

This research paper has attempted to explain the question of marital abuse in the Brontë sisters’ most eminent novels such as *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, with the reference to the historical contexts of the Victorian era where these novels are written. This study has also examined the causes and effects of marital abuse in each of the above-mentioned texts. In *Jane Eyre*, for instance, Charlotte Brontë represents the marital abuse between Rochester and Bertha as a result of financial security. In *Wuthering Heights* martial abuse results of one-sided love and revenge. Helen marries Arthur in the hope of reforming him, which means in *The Tenant of Wildfell*

Hall, false belief leads to marriage abuse. This paper has been able to make an observation of how wives suffered various kinds of marital abuse in consequence of one-sided love or incompatibility between the spouses. This paper has also looked at these three novels through feminist theory. Charlotte presents Bertha as a feminist woman by not celebrating her as a typical and submissive Victorian wife. Although she has represented as a feminist, she becomes the victim of her Victorian repressive marriage because she based her marriage on her family's will. Even though Emily presents Isabella Linton as a woman with free will and choice in her marriage to Heathcliff, she gives her a childlike and ignorant personality. In other words, she is a woman who often does make mistakes in her life, in particular in her marriage decision which leads to her being a victim of her one-sided love. Similar to Emily, Anne makes Helen a feminist figure by giving her free will in choosing her future husband and ignoring her aunt's advice. Like Charlotte, Anne makes Helen fail in being a good and a typical Victorian wife through her failure in reforming her reckless husband. Like Bertha and Isabella, Helen becomes the victim of her marriage decision because she based it on her wrong belief and lack of love marriage. The three sisters have negative views on feminism due to the unpleasant marriage experience. Thus, their novels can be anti-marriage novels in theme and in design.

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THE GREAT YORKSHIRE

SPICE CAKE

From *The Brontës' Christmas*, compiled by Maria Hubert, Contributed by Michelle Cavanagh.

The origins of Yorkshire Spice Cake, which Charlotte Brontë took to the homes of the parishioners in her father's, and later her husband's, parish are lost in the mists of time. Certainly it has connections with Tork Main Bread, which was well known throughout the country as early as the fourteenth century.

Served with a slice of cheese, the great cake was given to family and visitor alike, and no home would be without it. In *Wuthering Heights* we read that the grumpy puritan servant, Joseph, left his cake and cheese 'for the fairies'.

Not only in Yorkshire, but throughout Britain, great houses and farms would bake a huge batch of such cakes to give to those who could not afford the dried fruits and spices necessary to make their own.

Parsonages the length and breadth of the country were filled with the rich spicy fragrance, as dutiful wives, daughters and servants prepared the great Christmas cakes. It is the one custom which we can be sure was observed at the Brontë parsonage. The Brontës write about the baking of the cake in several of their novels. Here is a typical West Riding moorland recipe for Christmas Spice Cake dating from the early 1900s, which would be similar to that prepared by Charlotte Brontë.



THE RECIPE

2 lb flour
½ lb butter
1 lb currants
½ lb sultanas
4 eggs
¼ lb mixed peel
1 oz yeast
Half a nutmeg
1 teaspoon cinnamon
2 teaspoons salt

Crumble the yeast into a little warmed milk. Cover and let rise till frothy. Meanwhile put in the flour and two teaspoons of salt into a warm bowl. Rub in the butter, then add the risen yeast mix, and the rest of the warm milk, and mix. Cover with a clean cloth and leave in a warm place to rise for 20 minutes. Knead it as you would bread. The more you knead, the lighter the mix will be. Let it rise for a full hour or longer, then add the dried fruit and the eggs, which have been well beaten. Mix in thoroughly with your hand. Cover and leave to rise again until double the size – about another hour.

Meanwhile prepare cake tins with lining paper, double on the base, and then pour in your mixture to about two-thirds. If you want a level top, hollow the mixture slightly so that it will rise level and not to a peak. Bake in a well heated oven (160°C) until a knitting needle comes out clean. This takes about 1 hour if you make the mixture into two cakes.

THE BBC LIST OF THE 100 NOVELS THAT SHAPED OUR WORLD

There's no *Wuthering Heights*, no *Moby-Dick*, no *Ulysses*, but there is *Half of a Yellow Sun*, *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Discworld*: so announced the panel of experts assembled by the BBC to draw up a list of 100 novels that shaped their world.

The choices were made by Stig Abell, editor of the Times Literary Supplement, Syima Aslam, founder of the Bradford literature festival, authors Juno Dawson, Kit de Waal and Alexander McCall Smith and journalist Mariella Frostrup. The list is intended to mark the 200th anniversary of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, widely seen as the progenitor of the English-language novel. The books chosen by the panel are those that have made a personal impact on them, and are divided into 10 categories. These include "love, sex and romance", which features titles ranging from

Jilly Cooper's *Rivals* to Judy Blume's *Forever*; "identity", which moves from Toni Morrison's *Beloved* to Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*; and "adventure", which includes Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*, Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* and Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep*.

"So many amazing novels are not on the list," said Dawson. "As this panel of judges, we're not qualified to say this is the definitive list, but we are qualified to say these are our favourites. We knew right from the beginning that the role of these lists, almost, is for people to disagree with them ... and we could only pick 100 books."

So while there's no *Wuthering Heights*, the Brontë sisters do feature on the list with Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*.

Alison Flood

VALE

ELISABETH JEAN WARNER (nee Green)

14 November 1927 – 18 October 2019

I suspect that my mum was possibly one of your oldest Australian Bronte Association members here in Australia. Unfortunately, mum didn't attend too many meetings over the years as she was caring for my father for 15 years after he had a stroke.

Mum, grew up caring for others all her life. Mum was the eldest of 6 children, born in Lismore NSW. Her father was a Civil Engineer, and as a family they moved around NSW a lot from Grafton, to Gloucester and Toronto, where mum attended high school during WWII. During this time, Newcastle was bombed, and unbeknown to mum or my grandmother, mum set off to school! When she arrived she was greeted by one of the nuns: "Jean Green – what are you doing here – doesn't your mother know Newcastle was bombed last night!"

Mum left school and got a job at the Toronto Telephone Exchange – her father said: "I can't believe Jean has got a job where she is PAID to talk"!! Mum was never short on a word or two!

Mum commenced her nursing training at Mater Hospital in Newcastle in 1948 – which she loved; and up until a few years ago, would attend the annual Nurses Reunion. Mum then worked at Concord Repatriation Hospital, nursing men from the Korean War mainly. This is where she met her husband! Mum, pretty much went out

on a blind date, a patient Mr Stafford Warner asked her out, and after persistence, she agreed to go out with him! On their first date, they called each other Sister Green and Mr Warner!! They married at Lavender Bay in 1953 – and absolutely adored each other for 60+ years! They raised two children:

James – born in 1957; and myself, Joanne, born in 1961.

My parents travelled extensively through their married life. Even after my father's stroke in 1997, mum travelled around the UK with her four sisters in 2005. Mum flew out on her own at age 78 and made her way up to Haworth to attend Bronte UK Society AGM. She

LOVED it and the UK Bronte people made her so welcome! That was not the end of her travels! 2018, at the age of 90, four of us travelled to Prince Edward Island, Canada.

Mum LOVED books, and in particular – anything from history! Even from about the age of 10 mum would be found with her head in a book, and especially so with the Anne of Green Gables series! Mum lived a very full, active life!

Mum passed away quickly in the early hours of 18th October 2019 after having a respiratory infection. Mum knew her Creator – for which I am also very thankful!

**Mum's favourite Brontë?
Probably Charlotte – but I know she had
a very soft spot for Branwell!**

Joanne Warner (daughter)



Program for 2020

Saturday 14th March (AGM) Jacqueline Kent

A Possible Life With Rochester or Heathcliff:” The Tenant of Wildfell Hall”

Anne Brontë’s best known novel quietly subverts some of the romantic stereotypes promoted by her sisters, Charlotte and Emily. Award winning biographer, Jacqueline, examines one of the earliest feminist novels in English.

Saturday 9th May Christine Alexander

Exploring Juvenilia: the Brontës and other early writers

This talk will look at features of early writing in an attempt to provide insight into what led particular children to become authors and why we might find it worthwhile to read their juvenilia. In particular, the talk will focus on aspects of the material culture of selected children — in order to whet your appetite for the upcoming *Seventh International Literary Juvenilia Conference* that will be held at UNSW Sydney (20–23 May, 2020) and that will include an ABA sponsored day to celebrate Anne Brontë’s Bicentenary.

Saturday 4th July Susannah Fullerton

The Governess in Victorian England

Anne Brontë’s first novel is a moving and grim depiction of the life of a governess in Victorian England. It was also a plea for change – governesses needed to be treated more kindly, and usually desperately needed financial security. In Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* there are memorable scenes showing Jane’s lowly status as a governess when Rochester’s house party is held. And of course the Brontë sisters all knew from personal experience what it was like to be one of “the breed of governesses”. Susannah Fullerton discusses the position of governess and the ways in which the Brontës depict governesses in their fiction.

Saturday 12th September Carolynn Everett

The Temperance Movement in Victorian England

In November 1834 Branwell Brontë was a founding member of the Haworth Temperance Society and at this meeting he was appointed secretary. However after the break-up of his affair with Mrs Robinson he became heavily dependent on alcohol and this contributed to his early death. Carolyn, a senior member of the Salvation Army, will give a brief history of the ‘Sally’s’ and will explain where this organisation fitted into the Temperance movement in Victorian England.

Saturday 14th November Cindy Broadbent

The Birth of Childhood and “Agnes Grey”

Prior to the nineteenth century, children were considered to be half-formed adults rather than as comprising a separate section of society. Indeed many children had to grow up quickly when they were sent out to work as young as seven. The abolition of child workers, and the rise in the middle class, led to an increasing focus on the years of childhood. Commercially produced toys, and books written especially for children, began to be produced. In this talk, Cindy will discuss this change, and will relate it to Agnes’s dealings with the children in *Agnes Grey*.

**Saturday 5th December Christmas Lunch 11.30am for 12 noon
Adams Room, Castlereagh Boutique Hotel**

ANNE AND SCARBOROUGH

One of our members, Lyn Brompton, was recently in Scarborough and took these two unusual photographs. The left-hand one is Anne's grave and the right-hand one shows a portion of the Grand Hotel. This was built on the site of the boarding house where Anne died. It shows the blue plaque in memory of Anne.



CHARLOTTE'S 'LITTLE BOOK' BOUGHT BY THE BRONTË SOCIETY FOR £512,970

A book written by Charlotte Brontë at the age of 14 will return home after being bought by the Brontë Society at an auction at Sotheby's in Paris. The miniature work, called *The Young Men's Magazine* volume 2, will go to the Parsonage Museum in the Brontës' old home in Haworth, West Yorkshire. It was bought for €600,000 (£512,970) after a fundraising campaign by the Brontë Society, which runs the museum.

The museum lost out on the book when it last went under the hammer in 2011. The work is one of six 'little books' written by Charlotte in 1830. Five are known to survive, and the Brontë Parsonage Museum already holds the other four.

The works were created for Charlotte's toy soldiers and document an imaginary world created by the family called Glass Town.

The manuscript consists of 19 pages measuring just 35mm by 61mm (shown here life size). The manuscript includes a passage very similar to the scene in *Jane Eyre* where Bertha Mason sets fire to Rochester's bed curtains.



HAWORTH PARSONAGE

I thought this painting of Haworth Parsonage was rather lovely. Unfortunately I have lost the reference and am unable to name the artist.

