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MEMOIRE DE DEA

**The impact of feminist movement on the
British society as depicted in (*Wuthering
Heights*) by Emily Bronte.**

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work from the deepest of my heart

- *To my dearest and beloved husband, who gave me the inspiration to fulfil this dream with his support and encouragement.*
- *To all who supported and encouraged me especially my children.*
- *To all whom I love and respect.*

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My gratitude also goes to all the members of the Jury for their presence and for accepting to handle my dissertation.

May God reward every one of you according to your needs.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

UK : United Kingdom

GB : Great Britain

NOW : National Organization for Women

USA : United States of America

UN : United Nation

ERA : Equal Rights Amendments

NWP : National Women Party

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication	1
Acknowledgements.....	2
List of acronyms.....	3
Table of contents.....	4
Introduction	6
Part one: Theoretical framework.....	9
Chapter one: Identification of the study.....	10
1-1 : Problem statement.....	11
1-2 : Purpose of study.....	12
1-3 : Significance.....	13
1-4 : Scope and limitation.....	14
Chapter two: Literature review.....	15
Chapter three: Methodology.....	22
Part two: Critical analysis and concept of Feminism in Emily Bronte’s work.....	25
Chapter four: Definition and historical background of Feminism in UK.....	26
4-1: Definition of Feminism.....	27
4-2: Women and social condition in Victorian era.....	29
4-3: Feminism as Economic, Political and Sociological movement.....	32
4-4: Leadership and Feminism.....	34
Chapter five: Concept of Feminism in Emily Bronte’s work.....	36
5-1: Wuthering Heights and Feminism.....	37
5-2: Victorian social norm and Feminism.....	39
5-3: Thematic study and Setting.....	42

5-3-1:Thematic study.....	42
5-3-2: Setting.....	45
5-4: Characterization.....	47
Chapter six: Impact of Feminism on Victorian Patriarchy and Marriage.....	49
6-1: Victorian novel and Feminism.....	50
6-2: Feminism and Patriarchy.....	54
6-3: Feminism and Marriage.....	61
6-4: Feminism today.....	68
Conclusion	75
Bibliography.....	78



GENERAL
INTRODUCTION

Human civilization is made by and for both men and women. They both live in a coordinated social system. Both the species have their own rights and need to live with modest admiration. But the history of human society does not tell us the equivalent existence of both man and woman. Men always dominate women and women had no where to complaint. But in time gradually, a change comes into women's mind and they understand that they need to be conscious about their own right. So women move up their voice against women oppression. To do so, they had no way but to take some practical actions. All these actions are known as women's movement against oppression and the scheme to achieve the goal is called feminism.

Feminism is a discourse that involves various movements, theories and philosophies that are concerned with the issue of gender difference, which advocates equality for women, and campaign for women's rights and interests.

Feminism refers to the belief in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes; that each individual is a valuable human being in his or her own right. The goal of feminist work is broader than simply a stronger emphasis on women; the goal is to revise our way of considering history, society, literature, etc. so that both male and female are seen equally conditioned by the gender constructions of their culture. Feminists may differ in the importance they assign to sex, which is a biologically based in category, but the idea that gender norms can be changed is central to feminist theory.

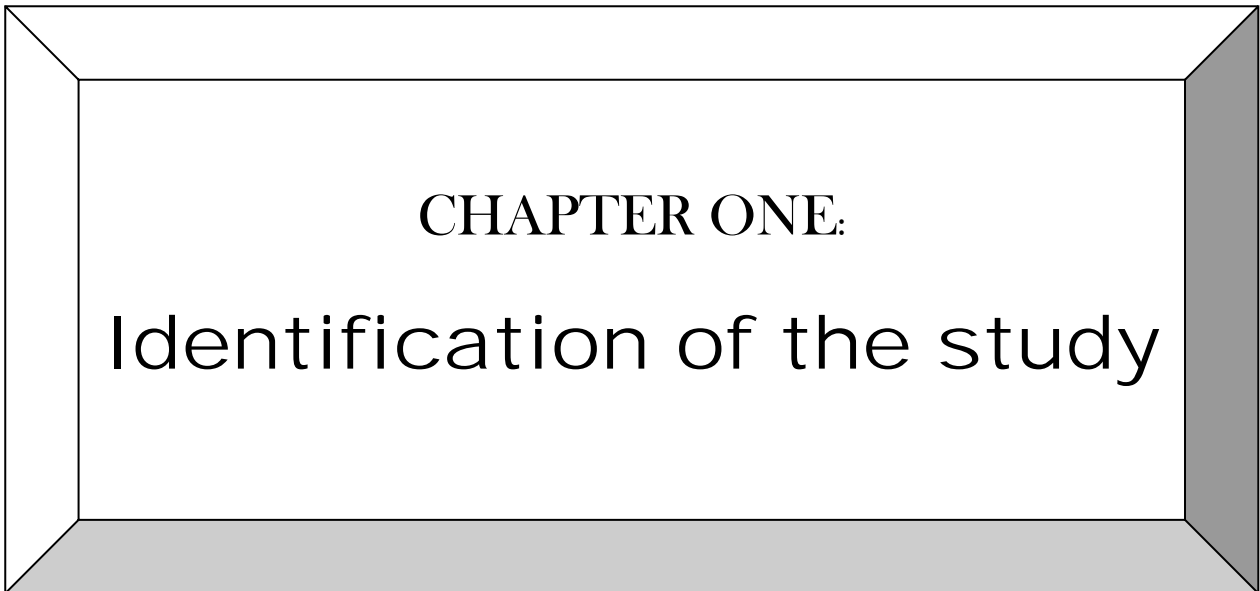
Feminism is a movement that seeks to enhance the quality of women's lives by impacting the norms and moves of a society based on male dominance and subsequent female subordination. The means of change in the work place, politically, and domestically, women have come a long way since the 19th century. Women have been trying to prove to the male dominant world that they are equal. They can perform and complete any tasks equal, or in some cases better than men. Feminism has changed the definition of men in many ways, where for example patriarchy is the power of the fathers: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law, and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labor determines what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male.

All these means of change are not without its consequences on the society and as far as my research work is concerned, I am going to work on impact of feminism in Britain, especially in *Wuthering Heights* and as you may know it is a novel of Victorian age and there, my research work will focus on the impact on patriarchy and marriage at that time and lead to today in Britain.

My work will be developed in two parts and six chapters, where I will deal with in part one the theoretical framework, in part two the critical analysis of the concept of feminism in Emily Bronte's work, in which I will develop deeply the impact of feminism in Britain from the Victorian age till today and at the end I will give a you broad idea of what is it concerned in Benin.



PART ONE:
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



CHAPTER ONE:
Identification of the study

1.1- Problem statement

Britain, till the 19th century is a society in which for all the time, woman is in submission and cannot give her point of view, or claim and defend her rights. At a given time, she has been in contact with education, I mean schooling. Hence, she has decided to break the silence by writing. Feminist's movement and activist through their works have denounced vexation from men and tried to prove that they are emancipated women able to go against men's decisions.

Indeed, women in British society prove to be feminist by going against men's decision, by claiming for better condition, by working and divorcing in some cases. However, women have not made a clear vision of what they want because there is a kind of amalgamation. Claiming for woman's right is not being rebellious; being a feminist is not being materialistic; woman must work hard to provide better life.

In Victorian period, parents according to their class choose for their daughters wealthy men just for better life style without love. And that behavior causes sometimes misunderstanding among couple. Therefore, the mistreatment of woman occurs because since the beginning the choice has been made according to the financial capacity of the man's family. I can say that she has been sold by her own parents. Hence I deduce that in fact the misery of the woman till today is somewhere a conspiracy of the whole society.

Consequently, by resolving women problems without any specific definition of what they want clearly, I can see through *Wuthering Heights*, the destruction of the society with revenge, hate, misunderstanding and death in some cases.

1.2- Purpose of the study

Feminist movement is today a subject of a big discussion and a great challenge of any country. Activists try to give different denominations and even despite the globalization in all fields, certain leaders continue to think that feminism is a danger for the humanity. However, all of us agree that with the evolution, women prove that they are “ABLE”, that they can even do better than men. The issue is not there, the necessity occurs in any area that we can see women at any workplace, where the interrelation between the two sexes I mean men and women is unavoidable. This interrelation needs the management of human resources and the need to improve it, in a fair and equal way is so important, because women in contact with education can easily claim for their right today.

Considering all this awareness and the way the approach is somehow imposed to the society, it is quite important for researchers to go through the different area in which this movement may be improved for the welfare of the whole society. Because as an African proverb has said “it is on the old rope that we weave the new one”, I mean we need to consider, the way the pioneers have dealt with the issue of feminism in the old time to move forward and to improve what is improvable. Whether we are in Britain, or anywhere else, the interrelation between women and men is compulsory and unavoidable. And the aim of feminists since the history is to reach the level of the equality in treatment between the two sexes.

Thus, as far as my research work is concerned, it is to inform researchers and the future generation about the clear view about feminism’s history and the impact of feminist movement on the British society during the 19th century, especially in couple or family life which is my area’s studies. Besides, it is to draw researchers’ attention to the need to take into account, the necessity of equal treatment considering man and woman and to stop stereotyping women. An approach for sure will have positive effect on the development of any country based on the management of human resources.

1.3 Significance

Feminism is a movement which takes its root in the denunciation of the woman's conditions, where she does not have the same right with the man. Since the Victorian age, and with the rise of the Industrialization of the UK, the need of labour introduces the woman at the workplace, where she has shown her capacity to work like a man and to even do better than man. No matter what, woman's education has been at that time and since she has started working, her eyes open to another sphere of life where she has realized that somehow she has been treated unequally and she has decided to fight for her rights.

However, despite the oldness of the struggle where she has gained a lot, many things need to be changed and to be improved. Women continue to suffer, to be mistreated and to be stereotyped according to her sex. And till today feminist movement is a centre of many debates, where the activists try to change names such as gender equality, but in fact, it is the same struggle, equality in treatment between men and women.

The point is so relevant because, it is the base of any development. When we consider the way women are becoming numerous, decisions makers have to know that, women are and must be the centre of any development. It is somehow, what we call the management of human resources which is very crucial for the success of enterprise, and a very major development's link of any country. I can imagine how compulsory this movement is, when fighting for the equality in treatment, considering workplace and any sphere where, woman and man are in interrelation.

1.4- Scope and Limitation

Feminism is still a real newsreel and I can realize that each activist gives its own definition but the real objective is for better condition of a woman which is based on equal treatment.

Wuthering Heights is unlike any other novel, the genre of Victorian literature which stands outside the social traditions of its time. Victorian literature characteristically regards the individual as a member of society. In *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Bronte describes the society from a completely individual point of view for the first time. While many of the great Victorian writers of the early to middle period deal more explicitly with moral and social concern than she does, *Emily Bronte* expresses more of the primitive and spiritual side of the human spirit in the novel, which is excessively concealed in this period of time. Catherine's persistent, daring struggle for the true love is a symbol of the awakening of women consciousness in love and in marriage.

Indeed, concerning my research work which is the impact of Feminism in British society seen through "*Wuthering Heights*", one must remind that it is a novel of Victorian age and taking into account the aspect of feminism in that novel I will focus on impact of feminism on Victorian patriarchy and marriage.



CHAPTER TWO:
Literature review

Chapter two: Literature review

This research work is neither a pioneer work, nor a new endeavor in a field of impact of feminist movement in British society as many others have already attempted to sound the alert. The status of women in the Victorian era is often seen as an illustration of the striking discrepancy between the UK's national power, wealth and what many, then and now, consider its appalling social conditions. During the era symbolized by the reign of British monarch, Queen Victoria, women have not suffrage's rights, the right to sue, or the right to own property. At the same time, women who have participated in the paid workforce are in increasing numbers following the Industrial Revolution

Feminist ideas spread among the educated female middle classes, discriminatory laws have been repealed, and the women suffrage movement has gained momentum in the last years of the Victorian Era. Consequently many women writers have started writing to denounce their suffering, many evil and fact in the society and the strategies they have used to reach the best goal as independent women. That lead Charlotte Brontë, in *Jane Eyre* to declare:

It is in vain to say human beings ought to be satisfied with tranquillity: they must have action; and they will make it if they cannot find it. Millions are condemned to a stiller doom than mine, and millions are in silent revolt against their lot. Nobody knows how many rebellions besides political rebellions ferment in the masses of life which people earth. Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts, as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, to absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex. ¹

¹ -www.literaturepage.com/read/janeeyre-pp127.html

To cope with this situation, women decide to express themselves, to denounce their sufferance and especially educated women. So, when they can read and write it gives them a kind of assertion of their personality that leads to what we call feminism which impacts British society in different areas. Women who have the opportunity to write, denounce their sufferance and consequently warn the future generation about experiences and give them reflection in advance to struggle all evil elder women have passed through.

In the field of impact of feminism we will focus on impact on patriarchy and marriage. We can have its positive aspect where for example men reconsider the image of a woman that lead Alexis de Tocqueville, in *Democracy in America* to say:

As for myself, I do not hesitate to avow that although the women of the United States are confined within the narrow circle of domestic life, and their situation is in some respects one of extreme dependence, I have nowhere seen woman occupying a loftier position; and if I were asked, now that I am drawing to the close of this work, in which I have spoken of so many important things done by the Americans, to what the singular prosperity and growing strength of that people ought mainly to be attributed, I should reply: To the superiority of their women.²

This point of view changes men who are no more narrow-minded persons. Moreover, it helps men, no matter what to accept certain situations and not to be at any time a centre of the life. Moreover, it creates a dialogue where the society can hear women voice. Hence, women assert themselves and express their feeling that lead Emily Bronte in *Wuthering Heights* :

The thing that irks me most is this shattered prison, after all. I'm tired, tired of being enclosed here. I'm wearying to ... I'm wearying to escape into that glorious world, and to be always there: not seeing it dimly through tears, and yearning for it through the walls of an aching heart, but really with it, and in it.³

The issue is that when a woman wants to assert her personality, she faces all kind of difficult situations, where she has to struggle and in doing so she is affected psychologically with even many diseases because of men's resistance and that lead Lynn Hersha in *Secret Weapons* to declare:

² history.hanover.edu/courses/.../pp165tocqueville.html

³ <https://www.goodreads.com/.../quotes/1565818-wuth...>

To the men and women who changed Cheryl Hersha's life, she was a continuation of the research that had first been conducted in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by Dr. Morton Prince. He encountered a woman named Miss Beauchamp, a nursing student who was referred to the psychiatrist because of health problems. As he worked with her, Prince discovered that she had four separate personalities (dissociated ego states) that existed independently of one another within the same body. Though he tried, Dr. Prince never understood Miss Beauchamp, nor was he able to help her. When he died, his wife had the woman committed to an insane asylum for the rest of her life. However, Prince's careful documentation of Beauchamp's symptoms, actions and family history (extreme child abuse beginning before the age of seven) provided information needed to develop the techniques for contemporary, routinely successful treatment of what would be called Multiple Personality Disorder.⁴

We can see Catherine in her reaction during the entire novel, who wants to assert her personality by misbehaving. She is impolite with everybody in the novel, she has developed many characters and it even seems that she has been in contradiction with her will and finally she loses her life because of mental instability. Furthermore, Catherine has been somehow unfaithful and even has used marriage as a business matter to reach her goal. The proof of that is the new approach of feminism, where the Victorian period is also noteworthy for new beliefs upon a number of things in human life, including, social environment, perception of personality and individual as such. The period has been even more significant due to the changes in women's lives. This led Emily Bronte, in *Wuthering Heights*:

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 so he shall never know how 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.⁵

Here, we can remark a woman with quite an independent view of life. She might have been slightly spoiled as a child who led to this independent view of things. She puts herself in a position to have just as much control as many of the men in her life. So, she says that she wants to marry Edgar in order to use his money to help Heathcliff. Hence, woman has her freedom to choose the man she wants and also to use a man to reach a high level in the society.

⁴ www.goodreads.com/author/.../230140.Lynn_Hersha

⁵ www.wuthering-heights.co.uk/novel/.../chapter_09.p

In observing the historical context of the Victorian Era, marriage has been first with the contentment of parents and meant a loss of legal identity for women. Taking into account the situation as far as impact of feminism is concerned, the common point is the independence of women, where the society has given the same chance to men and women.

Woman's consciousness in marriage is a result of women's emancipation because woman is not in fact an angel in the house. She has feeling and she encounters certain difficulties which she has not even denounced and has kept in her heart. She even behaves like a hypocrite and with the accession of feminism; woman has the possibility to express herself, to take decision, to make a choice and to even use her femininity to reach a high level in the society. Therefore, she may be considered as unfaithful woman and Isabella has been one figure who shows her assertion as a feminist by marrying Headcliff despite the opposition of her brother.

Indeed, after the marriage, when being conscious of what she has been encountering with her husband she has refused to be called with her husband's name and leave the conjugal bed. At last, Isabella is liberated as she escapes the confines of the Heights. The point, is that she dares to escape from the husband and to free herself from the cruelty because at that time, it has not been easy for a woman to leave the husband, whatever she has been going through.

Moreover, we can talk about Focusing on female characters in Anne Bronte's *Agnes Grey* and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, where the novel denounces how female has encountered orthodox criticism of Victorian literature. The latter highlights a pattern of male dominance and female oppression, reflecting the widespread belief that women are victims of male hegemony and possess very little power in both their relationships and in their place in society. On the contrary, through their strong wills, purposes and desires, female characters in these novels have considerable power in their own lives as well as in the lives of others. This power is both constructive, enabling self-actualization and independence, and destructive in terms of negatively affecting relationships with male characters. Constructive power is demonstrated in both *Agnes Grey* and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. In the former, the protagonist, Agnes and the other female characters prove their economic independence and ability to make decisions independently of men. In *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, Helen exemplifies woman who is empowered to defy socially established laws and norms by leaving her husband, taking her child, posing as a widow and embarking on an artistic profession.

Though, feminist movement impacts Great Britain's society, we can consider the fact that most of feminist's writers of the 19th century work, comes from their personal life and suffering; they write on their autobiography. For my personal point of view the impact is not every time favourable for the evolution of the family or the society since the Bible or the Koran which is the first book legalizes the submission of women to men. Besides, we must consider the relationship of women and men as a complementarity in which human beings female or male are interrelated in any field and this leads Boubker Benomar to say in *La Nature Humaine est une Culture*:

So is the complementarity of the sex. All the question is to know if we can reduce human being to the biological dimension? Certainly no, that all the difference we can have between human being and animal. The animal is a product of the nature; the humanity is born of what it produced from its nature and it what the culture is consisting of. Only the nature institute a complementarity between genders or between roles assigned to sex. However, the complementarity of sex is natural necessity with the view of natural procreation, when the complementarity of role is a cultural fact, fruit of a convention, a contingency that we can adopt, reprove or surpass ⁶ my own translation.

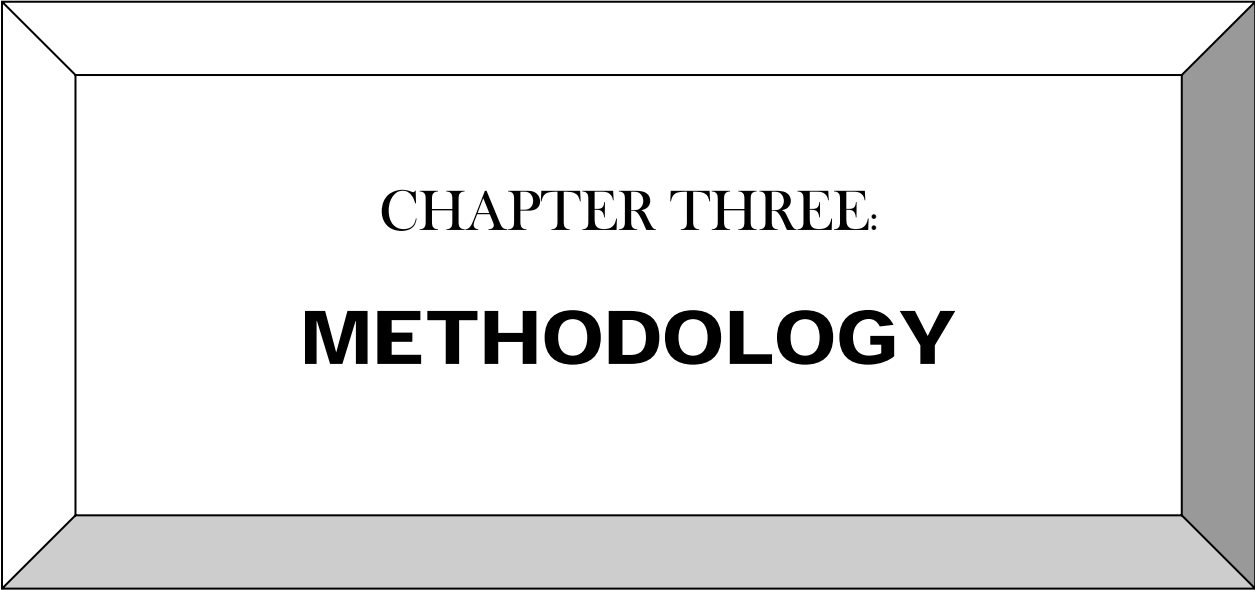
It is true there are many evils and misbehaving to be denounced. However, the reasons for this seem to be more psychologically motivated than socially. By this, I mean that, despite there being no real reason why women can only have equality through the destruction of the traditional family unit (Mother, Father, and children) feminists have been forceful in rejecting a life in the traditional family as a choice for women. Certain feminists said that being a housewife is an illegitimate profession. Being a family-maker is a choice that shouldn't be and the heart of radical feminism is to change that.

However, I do not agree with this statement, because being a housewife is not a profession. A woman is considered as the mother of the humanity, a woman is born with love and to transfer love to children. Therefore, we can consider the fact of staying at home to take care of children is an inner passion for raising a child to whom she is a mother. This assertion by the feminist explains the deep and seemingly endless feminist animosity to the family, and an apparent distrust of men in general. Who can ever know for sure, but the extent of the damage done to society by the feminist movement's undermining of the family unit? This topic is far beyond the scope of this research's work. One thing is for sure, the devastating

⁶ Boubker Benomar. effrontees.wordpress.com/la-nature-humaine-est-une-culture-par-leffr.

effects of family breakdown are many and well documented perhaps the main victims of feminist movement are children.

On a BBC documentary shown in May 2009, Rosie Boycott founder of the feminist magazine Spare Rib has admitted that she and other feminists have failed to think through the effect that feminism have on children. This can be seen in *Wuthering Heights* with the three girls who were traumatized by the death of their mother. Hence, the presence of the mother at the children side is very important. The feminist movement shall not be selfish they shall find a kind of agreement, equality and a complementarity in considering the education of children taking into account women and men as full member of a society, where each member has its role to build a peaceful society.



CHAPTER THREE:
METHODOLOGY

Chapter three: Methodology

Once again, let me remind you that Feminist movement is a struggle which has played an influential role affecting societies throughout history and as far as impact of Feminism is concerned in Great Britain, especially in *Wuthering Heights*, it has impacted differently the society as a whole. However, what we can say today, is that another question or problem raised by this movement might be solved. Anyway, as my title sounds we are going to explain our methodological approach.

Indeed, a methodological approach is a set of step by step procedure that is employed to arrive to a solution and for the purpose; we may use one or two approaches simultaneously. The first one is called quantitative approach which is particularly useful when you wish to discover for example, how common a particular form of behaviour is for a particular age group. The second one is qualitative approach which is particularly useful when you wish to find out why a given group of people engage in such behaviour.

However, as far as my research work is concerned in *Wuthering Heights*, I am going to use a qualitative approach because, the impact of feminism in British society itself focuses actually on people's behaviour.

To reach this goal, I have collected information by different ways: I have gone first, through interviews with resource persons, whom I choose among my lecturers of the Faculty of Letters, Arts and Human's Sciences. Besides, I have read many novels of British and I have collected much information from internet.

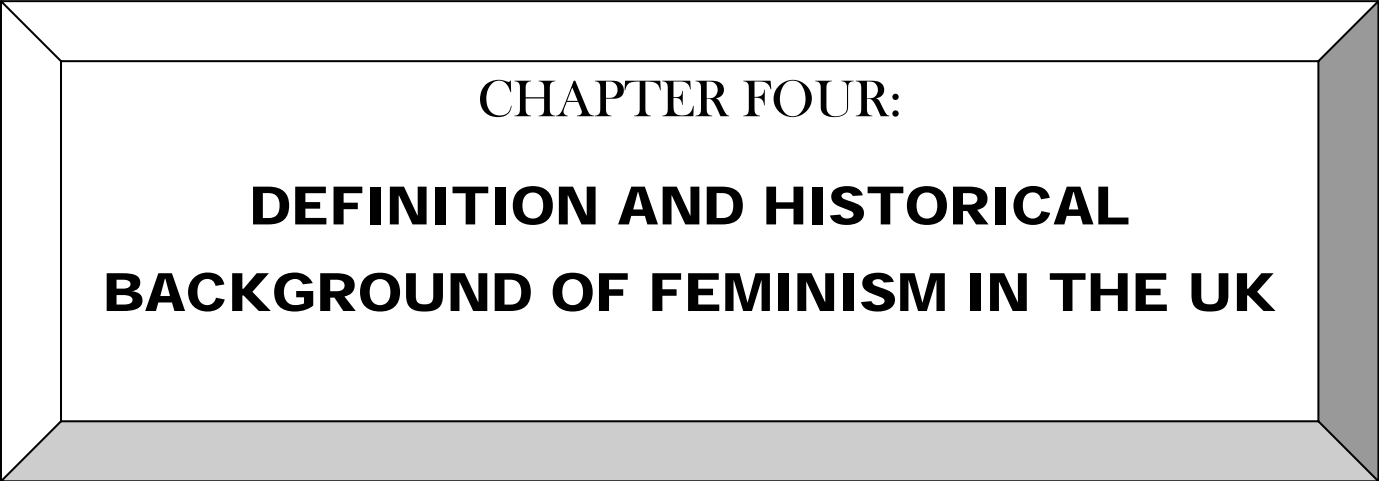
The sample itself focuses on GB, because I am in British study and my work takes into account the UK and moreover, the work first specificity is that it focuses on British novel written by a British and the second one is that the feminist ideas is among educated and bourgeois women.

The final step of this approach is the analysis of the data which consists in syntactic and semantic analysis. The syntactic analysis is a sentence or a group of a verbatim of interview or observation note (syntactic method of GHIGLIONE, MATALON, 1985. It may be a verbal unity or linguistic (principal word of a sentence) a lexical unity (key word, adjective, verbs and name etc..) or a psycholinguistic unity(the manner of saying, intonations, interjections....). Instead of cutting of text in syntactic analysis, in semantic analysis, we may choose to take into account only on the passages which have "key word". Semantic unity is composed of the ideas expressed by the interviewers or writers and to withdraw the meanings from the rules of opposition and contrary.

According to the objectives, the data have been analysed and I have looked for information on many themes, used during the collect and I have described and evaluated in detail a situation, phenomena or decision. Finally, I have compared, put in relation, explained the causes and predicted behaviours, factors of success and failure.

PART TWO:

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE
CONCEPT OF FEMINISM IN
EMILY BRONTE'S WORK



CHAPTER FOUR:
**DEFINITION AND HISTORICAL
BACKGROUND OF FEMINISM IN THE UK**

4.1- Definition of Feminism

According to Medical Definition, Feminism *is* the presence of female characteristics in males

According to encyclopedia, it is a social movement that seeks for equal rights for women.

Feminism is defined by different feminist. They define feminism according to their own point of view. As they think differently their definition too is different from others. But all the definitions are almost the same in the main point. Here I am going to put some definition of the most popular feminist in the world.

According to “COLLINS Dictionary of Sociology”, Feminism is a sociological theory and practice which aims to free all women’s global oppression and subordination to men.’

Estelle B. Freedman said in his book ‘No Turning Back’, - “Feminism is a belief that women and men are inherently of equal worth. Because most societies privilege men as a group, social movements are necessary to achieve equality between woman and man.”

According to ‘The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology’, Feminism is a “Doctrine, originated in the eighteenth century, suggested that women are systematically disadvantaged in modern society and advocates equal opportunity for men and women.”

Rosalind Delmar said in her book ‘What is feminism’ that, “Feminism is usually defined as an active desire to change women’s position in society.”

Kamla Basin and Nighat Khan said that feminism is, “An awareness of women’s oppression and exploitation in society, at work and within the family, and conscious action by women and men to change this situation.”

Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runvan said in their book ‘Global Gender Issues’ that, “Feminism is an orientation that views gender as a fundamental ordering principle in today’s world that values diverse ways of being and knowing, and that promotes the transformation of gender and related hierarchies.”

According to Estelle Freedman, Feminism is a belief that although women and men are inherently of equal worth, most societies privilege men as a group. As a result, social movements are necessary to achieve political equality between women and men, with the understanding that gender always intersects with other social hierarchies.

According to Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale, Feminism is that part of the progress of democratic freedom which applies to women.

For Adrienne Rich, Feminism means finally that we renounce our obedience to the fathers and recognize that the world they have described is not the whole world. Feminism implies that we recognize fully the inadequacy for us, the distortion, of male-created ideologies, and that we proceed to think, and act, out of that recognition."

Although the word "feminism" had been used during the mid-19th century as a synonym for "femininity," it was first used to describe a political movement in 1894, when a British newspaper warned of "feminists" who had begun to achieve power in the French legislature.

No matter the definition is, we should take into account that feminism is generally broken down into several historical "waves":

First-wave feminism, which lasted from the 18th century until World War II and was centred on securing basic civil rights, such as the right to vote and to own property ;

Second-wave feminism, which lasted from the end of World War II until the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in the 1980s and centred on achieving equality in the workplace, protecting reproductive choice, and attempting to pass the ERA ; and

Third-wave feminism, which incorporates racial justice, LGBT rights, and class oppression into the feminist worldview and seeks real, practical equality for all women.

There are also different kinds of feminism, the most common being:

Liberal feminism, which seeks equal rights through policy change but does not focus on cultural issues;

Radical feminism, which seeks the abolition of gender as we know it; and

Cultural feminism, which seeks to establish competing female power, structures, traditions, and norms.

4.2-Women social condition in the Victorian era

The condition of women in the Victorian era is often seen as the one of a minor of the society. Women do not have suffrage rights, the right to sue, or the right to own property. At that time women were seen, by the middle class at least, as belonging to the domestic sphere, and this stereotype required them to provide their husbands with a clean home, food on the table and to raise their children. Women's rights were extremely limited in this era, losing ownership of their wages, all of their physical property, excluding land property, and all other cash they generate once married. When a Victorian man and woman are married, the rights of the woman are legally given over to her spouse. Under the law the married couple become one entity where the husband represents this entity, placing him in control of all property, earnings money.

In addition to losing money and material goods to their husbands, Victorian wives become property to their husbands, giving them rights to what their bodies produce; children, sex and domestic labour. Marriage abrogates a woman's right to consent to sexual intercourse with her husband, giving him 'ownership' over her body. Their mutual matrimonial consent therefore, becomes a contract to give herself to her husband as he desires. One can make a connection between slavery and marriage, waiting on their husbands and giving in to their every caprice and desire. Rights and privileges of Victorian women have been limited. Both single and married women have hardships and disadvantages. Victorian women have disadvantages both financially and sexually, enduring inequalities within their marriages and social status. Distinct differences in men and women's rights take place during this area, providing men with more stability, financial status and power over their homes and women. Marriages for Victorian women become contracts one of which is extremely difficult if not impossible to get out of during the Victorian area. Besides, many Victorian women endure their husbands' control, cruelty targeted against their wives; including sexual violence, verbal abuse and economic deprivation and are given no way out. While husbands participate in affairs with other women wives endure infidelity as they have no right to divorce on these grounds and their divorce are considered to be a social taboo.

The image most of us have of the Victorian woman is home loving and devoted to family; one dressed in the finest fabrics encumbered under half a dozen crinolines and laced tightly in a corset. She is sympathetic, unselfish and sacrifices herself daily to be her husband's best friend and companion, never his "competitor", mindful and striving for the

same goal as her husband. It is her job to take care of the children and run the household maintaining it as a tranquil refuge for when her husband returns home from work; innocence and purity are her virtues.

Yet, for a countless number of families, the above scenario are not the case as many wives and unmarried daughters also have to go out to work daily in order to provide for the family. These are the women of the working class and those who live in poverty who are very often overlooked when talking about the Victorian age.

Women's roles and their position in 19th century's society have been as much the result of the church's teachings as it was the biological differences between men and women. Not only are women given the job of being the bearers/teachers of religious moral values in the family, a role which empowered them, they are also restricted by it as it relates to the context of the family.

However, with the advent of the Industrial Revolution and as new technology developed and the nation began to industrialize, the economy begin moving away from agriculture and the home to industry (factories), workhouses and sometimes, the streets surrounding the cities from which develop a clearer separation of work and home.

This shift in labour, however, does not come without its controversies. The division between the "domestic" female and the "public" male is not the reality for many and practicing it is deemed burdensome. Women who go on to fight for women's rights believe that manipulating its principles will prove more successful than a total rejection of the ideology. The argument of women's moral superiority becomes the leading edge for the women's rights movement during the period. Women's demands for participation in public life present the challenge of separating the "sphere ideology". With the increase in workplace where the presence of women has been inescapable, women's eyes open and they realize that they can do even better than men, situation which leads to leadership and even Union Trade for the defence of their rights in workplace. Gradually, a change comes in women's mind with the schooling and their presence in workplace, women have started claiming for their own rights in many fields. Women's rights groups fight for equality and over time make strides to change rights and privileges.

As early as the 1850s, the Langham Place circle of feminists developed campaigning committees, the first feminist periodical as well as a library reading room for women in

London's West End. Debating groups and social clubs exclusively for women came shortly thereafter. These activities also encompassed the social element where diaries and letters told of teas, soirees and at-homes held by women most of whom come from well-to-do middle-class backgrounds. Many also have experienced in philanthropic work among the poor and have acknowledged the needs of the working class women rather than fear them.

4.3- Feminism as economic, political and sociological movement

The term feminism can be used to describe a political, cultural or economic movement aim at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. Feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference, as well as a movement that advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests. Although the terms "feminism" and "feminist" did not gain widespread use until the 1970s, they are already being used in the public parlance much earlier; for instance, Katherine Hepburn speaks of the "feminist movement" in the 1942 film *Woman of the Year*.

Feminism has altered predominant perspectives in a wide range of areas within Western society, ranging from culture to law. Feminist activists have campaigned for women's legal rights (rights of contract, property rights, voting rights); for women's right to bodily integrity and autonomy, for abortion rights, and for reproductive rights including access to contraception and quality prenatal care; for protection of women and girls from domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape; for workplace rights, including maternity leave and equal pay; against misogyny; and against other forms of gender-specific discrimination against women.

In fact, the Industrial Revolution in part has been fuelled by the economic necessity of many women, single and married, to find waged work outside their home. Women mostly find jobs in domestic service, textile factories, and piece workshops. They also work in the coal mines. For some, the Industrial Revolution provides independent wages, mobility and a better standard of living. For the majority, however, factory work in the early years of the 19th century results in a life of hardship.

The West's Industrial Revolution has changed the situation of women in many ways. Some of the changes have occurred more recently in other civilizations, others were particularly characteristic of the 19th-century West. Industrialization cut into women's traditional work and protest roles for example, in spearheading bread riots as attention shifted to work-based strikes, but it has tended to expand educational opportunities and some new work roles and protest outlets.

Important changes have occurred in the home as well. New ideas and standards at once elevate women's position and set up more demanding tasks. Relations among women are

also affected by the growing use of domestic servants the most common urban job for working-class women and new attitudes by middle- and lower-class women alike. The first document that follows, sketches the idealization of middle-class women; it comes from an American moral tract of 1837, anonymously authored, probably by a man. The second document, written by a woman in an English woman's magazine, shows new household standards of another sort, with a critical tone also common in middle-class literature. Finally, a British housewife discusses her servant problems, reflecting yet, another facet of women's lives.

All this achievement, is not without the political commitment of feminist movement really dates from 1848, when for example Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Coffin Mott, and others, in a women's convention at Seneca Falls, N.Y., have issued a declaration of independence for women, demanding full legal equality, full educational and commercial opportunity, equal compensation, the right to collect wages, and the right to vote. Led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan Brownell Anthony, the movement spread rapidly and soon extends to Europe.

Little by little, women's demands for higher education, entrance into trades and professions, married women's rights to property, and the right to vote are conceded. In Britain, after woman suffrage has been won in 1920, women have been divided on the question of equal standing with men advocated by the NWP versus some protective legislation; various forms of protective legislation have been enacted in the 19th cent., e.g., limiting the number of hour's women can work per week and excluding women from certain high-risk occupations.

In 1946 the UN Commission on the Status of Women have established to secure equal political rights, economic rights, and educational opportunities for women throughout the world. The NOW, formed in 1966, has had over 400 local chapters by the early 1970s. NOW, the National Women's Political Caucus, and other groups have pressed for such changes as abortion rights, federally supported child care centres, equal pay for women, the occupational upgrading of women, and the removal of all legal and social barriers to education, political influence, and economic power for women.

4.4- Leadership in feminism

Talking about leadership, we shall take into account the period before the nineteenth century. Before this period, we have had many feminist leaders who beacons the land of women struggle. For those who mark the period as a leader we can talk about Anne Hutchinson, who has challenged the authority of Puritan clergy and has been excommunicated for her outspoken views and controversial actions.

Another one is Anne Askew, a well-educated, out-spoken English Protestant, who has been tried for heresy. Her denial of transubstantiation has been grounds for her imprisonment. She has been eventually burned at the stake for her refusal to incriminate other Protestant court ladies. Elizabeth I ascended to the throne in 1558, a woman who has contradicted many of the gender roles of the age. She is well educated, having studied a variety of subjects including mathematics, foreign language, politics, and history. Elizabeth is an outspoken but widely respected leader, known for her oratory skills as well as her patronage of the arts.

Despite the advent of the age of print, the literacy rate during this period remained low, though the Bible has become more readily available to the lower classes. Religious study, though restricted to "personal introspection," has been considered an acceptable pursuit for women, and has provided them with another context within which they can communicate their individual ideas and sentiments. In addition to religious material, women of this period often expressed themselves through the ostensibly private forms of letters and autobiographies.

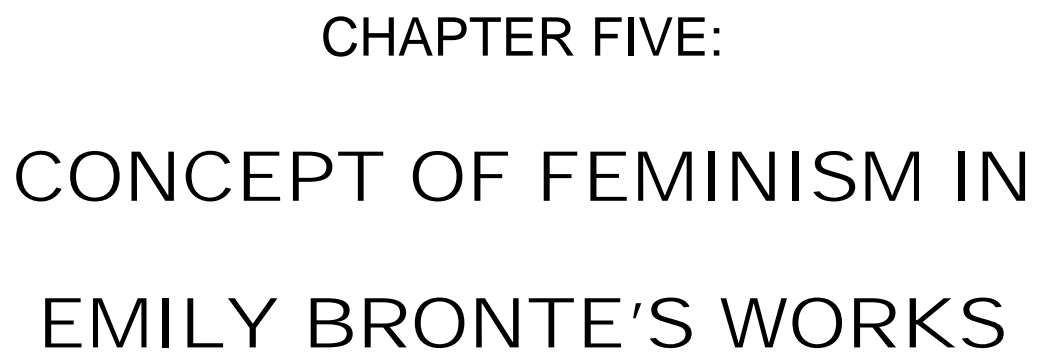
Besides, the fact that Women have been discouraged from directly expressing political views counter to their husbands' or to broadly condemn established systems, many women have been able to make public their private views through the veil of personal, religious writings. Again, women who have challenged societal norms and prejudices risk their lives as Mary Dyer who has been hanged for repeatedly challenging the Massachusetts law that banishes Quakers from the colony.

Indeed, we can also talk about certain pioneer such as Mary, who has been called the mother of feminism and the first feminist. She has identified it with the revolutionary of 1789. To this writer, women have been no less capable of intellectual achievement than men. In her novel the "*The Vindication of the rights of women*" published in 1752 addressed to Talleyrand, she protests against the exclusion of French women from citizen rights. As a

leader, she has advocated the equality of the sexes and has ridiculed the prevailing notions about women as helpless, charming and foolish where she has emphasized on the fact that women have been educated in “slavish dependence” and has criticized the sentimental and foolishness of women.

This text is a protest against women’s subjugation and as leaders they have denounced the fact that education hold the key of achieving self-respect and make women able to achieve a better life, not only for themselves but also for their children and their husbands. In the same way women will provide education to their children, that is why education is so important. This point, even if it has taken more than a century before her ideas have been put into effect, it has caused enormous controversy because they have been so many revolution and improvement all over the world.

With the leadership of women such as Bella Abzug , Betty Friedan , and Gloria Steinem , the Equal Rights Amendment have been pushed through Congress in 1972, but by 1982 it falls short of ratification. While Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 has prohibited discrimination based on sex, the Roe v. Wade court decision, legalizing abortion, energized an antiabortion, antifeminist backlash. Nevertheless, the movement has begun in the 1960s resulted in a large number of women moving into the workplace (59.8% of civilian women over age 16 were working in 1997, compared to 37.7% in 1960) and in broad changes in society.



CHAPTER FIVE:
CONCEPT OF FEMINISM IN
EMILY BRONTE'S WORKS

5.1- *Wuthering heights* and the issue of feminism

Wuthering Heights has more feminism than you can shake a stick at; however, let's look at it more closely. First of all, Catherine has quite an independent view of life. She might have been slightly spoiled as a child who led to this independent view of things. Catherine put herself in a position to have just as much control as many of the men in her life. For example, she says that she wants to marry Edgar in order to use his money to help Heathcliff. Bronte constructs this character with much flare and outspokenness, a trait not uncommon to female characters in books written by female authors. Catherine's act of feminism can be remarked through her hard rebellion against her father during his life and going against the social law. This behaviour is divided in three aspects: the offense against her father, the negligence of her father's power, and the replacement of him by others. Indeed, when her father lives, she loses favour with him. Here's an example:

His peevish reproofs wakened in her a naughtiness to provoke him; she was never so happy as when we were all scolding her at once, and she defying us with her bold, saucy look, and her ready works; turning Joseph's religious curses into ridicule, baiting me, and doing just what her father hated most, showing how her pretended insolence, which he thought real, had more power over Heathcliff than his kindness. How the boy would do her bidding in anything, and his only when it suited his own inclination.⁷

Indeed, this passage demonstrates Catherine's offense against her father, her disobedience and the old Earnshaw's resentment towards her. In her father's eyes, she is not as a good girl as others; she refuses to obey her father's wishes and even retorts. But we can see a kind of assertion of her personality because through the novel Catherine Earnshaw is 12 years old when her father died. After the death of her father, Hindley, Catherine's brother, inherited everything from old Mr. Earnshaw. Unlike her father, Hindley has no affection for Catherine and hate Heathcliff. Hindley degrades Heathcliff to a servant; he flies into a temper if Catherine shows any affection for Heathcliff.

Without any doubt, Hindley turns the family into one imbued with indifference, liveliness, dread and disorder. For example: "*He drove him from their company to the*

⁷ www.library.utoronto.ca/utel/fiction.../wh_ch5.html

*servants, deprived him of the instructions of the curate, and insisted that he should labor out of doors instead, compelling him to do so, as hard as any other lad on the farm. ”*⁸

Thus, under such an adverse situation, both Catherine and Heathcliff show strong and implied yearns to be together, to be joined and unified. All this kind of decision and conspiracy expressed a character of a feminist girl who wants to assert her personality and to brave the social law. As Catherine says herself, her love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Also the love suffers her brother's strong opposition. Despite his objections, Catherine still refuses to give it up; and she joins her hands with Heathcliff to rebel against Hindley, for the reason that the latter's practice deprives her of the exclusive privilege to enjoy the freedom to be herself. It is her bottom love that enables her to realize her self-identity.

Another aspect is Catherine's Rebellion to her Husband before marrying Linton, Catherine says to Nelly that she loves Edgar Linton, because he is civilized and well-mannered. And afterwards, she acts as a docile wife until the reappearance of Heathcliff. Then it could be proved that only when Catherine feels robbed of the rights to enjoy her natural love that she begins to rebel against her husband. From Catherine's point of view, the Lintons are never unlike the Earnshaws, for she is constantly under the tense control of the head of families. Thus, a traditional woman cannot refuse to accept the destiny of being controlled. Catherine is not an exception. Locked in Thrushcross Grange, Catherine expresses a deep depression and a discomfort of being deprived of freedom and privileges. Catherine, thus, goes a different way. Strictly confined by the family and somewhat deprived of the freedom to love, Catherine tries her best to resist the authority of a patriarchal institution and to surpass it to realize her own individual validation. Here, a woman does not mean to draw her husband to an internalized kingdom, but show her distinctness. And, a woman is confronted with him: each side refuses to yield to the other, and intends to control the other.

⁸ ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/b/bronte/emily/.../chapter6.h

5.2- Victorian Social Norms and *Wuthering Heights*

Wuthering Heights is unlike any other novel in the genre of Victorian literature in that, it stands outside the social traditions of its time. Victorian literature characteristically regards the individual as a member of society. In *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Brontë describes the society from a completely individual point of view for the first time. While many of the great Victorians of the early to middle period, they deal more explicitly with moral and social concern than she does. Emily expresses more of the primitive and spiritual side of the human spirit in the novel, which is excessively concealed in this period of time.

Catherine's persistent, daring struggle for the true love is a symbol of the awakening of women's consciousness in love and in marriage. Though she marries Edgar to get a better life, her love is left on Heathcliff. She dares to rebel against the tyranny as she clearly knows who her real love is. Catherine speaks out Victorian women's ambivalence she longs for freedom and her true self. Whenever she wants to escape the shackles, those who put them on her will hold them tight and punish her painfully enough to make her surrender.

For Brontë's, equality is a very important foundation for happiness in love and marriage. Equality between men and women is the sublimation of personal independence and freedom. In Catherine's opinion, equality between men and women does not only refer to equal position and equal rights in the society, it also means the spiritual equality and soul similarity in heaven. Thus, keeping self-integrity is of utmost importance to Catherine. This is really a bold voice in 19th century England and as some feminists have pointed out, Catherine is like the turning-point of the era. She endures the change of the ideas, that's why she endures a lot of tortures in the novel.

The prospect of women's consciousness for the ideal love and marriage is not gloomy, and it is certain to be tortuous and even sometimes it will suffer the tragic failure. Though, sometimes women's struggle will encounter some unexpected setbacks and even tragic failure, however, women have never stopped their exploring steps. After experiencing so many hardships, they grow more and more mature and experienced, which enables them to prepare for the future struggle beset with more difficulties on their love journey.

Wuthering Heights, as I have mentioned before, is a novel of 19th century. Taking into account the status of women and the moral era, we can only talk about a kind of awake of women consciousness and at that time women cannot write and those who dare to write use a pen name of men. As far as the social norm of Victorian period is concerned in the novel, Catherine the heroine of the novel is showing a kind of rebellion hidden with a strong personality, a person who wants to assert his personality. Since the beginning she has been going against the domination of father authority, where at any time, she is behaving like an impolite girl, she dares to go every time against his father's will. She is also going against religion's oppression, whereas docile child, you have to read the bible and even the maid who is a man is using his authority to harm her despite his position.

This entire situation harms the little Catherine who wants to go against the social law of that time. The climax of the novel is where she lost her father whom she loves despite the discord. She faces her brother the only heir of the family because he is a man, and who uses abusively his authority as the social law has recommended at that time. To harm her brother she decides to once again have a boyfriend without the consent of her brother because at that time you have to consider the social class, where it is the parents who choose to their daughter the fiancé.

Indeed, to brave the social law Catherine gets in love with an adopted child of a very lower class and illiterate. She has planned no matter what to pursue that forbidden love by going through somehow a so audacious plan which is to get married with a person of his parents' choice and her social class but in order to maintain another love relationship with Headcliff her true love. She dares to continue this by going against the social law of that time because she wants her husband to accept the fact that she is still in love with Headcliff until her husband told her to choose between him and Headcliff. You can see a woman who is no more hypocrite and can express freely her feeling, and considering the era and the moral of Victorian age, you can imagine how costly this behaviour can be for her, until it costs her life and she died.

In the same way, we can talk about Isabella, who also dares to brave the social law of this period where without the consent of her parents marries Headcliff. The only person she has to approve her relationship with Headcliff is her brother, who is a protagonist of Edgar. And as I said before, she dares to brave the social law by marrying Headcliff until she loses her rights as a family member. When it occurs that Headcliff has been mistreating her, the

brother said “unfortunately I’ve lost her, she is now for Headcliff”. The feminism view there is that she makes her choice as a woman of Victorian age, who marries despite the opposition of her brother. Another point is that, when Headcliff has been mistreating her, she dares to keep her family name and she even runs away from her husband. It is another very audacious decision from a woman of Victorian age because a woman are not permitted to ask for a divorce because even the law is shaped in the way that, it only favours men so that women cannot sue their husbands to the court.

Another character who behaves exactly like her mother, is Cathy second generation. She also shows a kind of strong personality, she braves her father to go with Linton, Headcliff’s boy, despite the opposition of her father. And what is impressed in her character is that she learns by herself and she even teaches Hareton to know how to read and write. This action is another aspect of feminism, a woman who knows that if she reads and writes, she can be aware of her right. The novel aspect of feminism is a kind of women awareness of consciousness which is the cornerstone of all type of feminism we are dealing with all over the world. Those writers have sounded the alert through the denunciation of sufferance and all this, lead to what we call first wave feminism, second wave feminism and third wave feminism. So this awareness of consciousness leads to a practical solution to women’s issues in the entire world.

5.3- Thematic study and Setting

5.3.1 Thematic study

Here I am going to talk about seven major themes which followed

Literacy, and through all the novel, reading and literacy are shown to be sources of both power and pleasure. Heathcliff purposely keeps Hareton uneducated as a way to control the young man and to get revenge on Hareton's father, Hindley. Likewise, Cathy gives books to her servant, Michael, to convince him to deliver her love letters to Linton. The graffiti at *Wuthering Heights* at the beginning of the novel also serves as a kind of dominion; by carving their names into the wall, Catherine Earnshaw and her daughter ensure that their spirits will always preside over the crumbling house. However, the characters also derive significant pleasure from reading; it is one of Cathy's few solaces during her miserable first months at *Wuthering Heights*, and it eventually serves as a pretext for her to bond with Hareton.

Solitude draws its plot from the vicissitudes of interpersonal relationships; it is notable how many of the characters seem to enjoy solitude. Heathcliff and Hindley both state their preference for isolation early in the novel and Lockwood explains that solitude is one of the reasons he chooses to move to the remote Thrushcross Grange. Each of these characters believes that solitude will help them get over romantic disappointments: Heathcliff becomes increasingly withdrawn after Catherine's death; Hindley becomes crueller than ever to others after he loses his wife, Frances; and Lockwood's move to the Grange was precipitated by a briefly mentioned romantic disappointment of his own. However, Brontë ultimately casts doubt on solitude's ability to heal psychic wounds. Heathcliff's yearning for Catherine causes him to behave like a monster to people around him; Hindley dies alone as an impoverished alcoholic; and Lockwood quickly gives up on the Grange's restorative potential and moves to London.

Doubles, shows the symmetrical structure of *Wuthering Heights*, it follows naturally that Brontë should thematize doubles and doubleness. Catherine Earnshaw notes her own "double character" when she tries to explain her attraction to both Edgar and Heathcliff, and their shared name suggests that Cathy Linton is, in some ways, a double for her mother. There are also many parallel pairings throughout the novel that suggests that certain characters are doubles of each other: Heathcliff and Catherine, Edgar and Isabella, Hareton and Cathy, and even Hindley and Ellen (consider the latter's deep grief when Hindley dies and that they are

'milk siblings'). Catherine's famous insistence that "I *am* Heathcliff" reinforces the concept that individuals can share an identity.

Self-knowledge Brontë frequently dissociates the self from the consciousness that is; characters have to get to know themselves just as they would know another person. This becomes a major concern when Catherine Earnshaw decides against her better judgment to marry Edgar Linton; she is self-aware enough to acknowledge that she has a 'double character' and that Heathcliff may be a better match for her, but she lacks the confidence to act on this intuition. Self-knowledge also affects how characters get to know others; Isabella knows how violent Heathcliff is, but is unable to acknowledge this because she believes herself capable of controlling him.

Disease and contagion specifically consumption, or as it's known today, tuberculosis are inescapable presences in *Wuthering Heights*. Isabella becomes sick after meeting Heathcliff, and Catherine Earnshaw indirectly kills Mr. and Mrs. Linton by giving them her fever. Even emotional troubles are pathologized much like physical illnesses; consider how Catherine's unhappy marriage and Heathcliff's return contribute to the 'brain fever' that leads to her death. Perhaps most importantly, Lockwood falling ill is what motivates Ellen to tell the story in the first place. The prominence of disease in the novel is a physical indicator of the outsize influence that individuals have on each other in Brontë's world getting too close to the wrong person can literally lead to death.

Siblings' relationships are unusually strong in the Earnshaw and Linton families. Indeed, the novel's most prominent relationship the love between Catherine and Heathcliff begins when the two are raised as siblings at *Wuthering Heights*. It is never entirely clear whether their love for each other is romantic or the love of extremely close siblings; although Catherine expresses a desire to marry Heathcliff, they are never shown having sex and their union seems more spiritual than physical. After Catherine's death, Heathcliff gets revenge on Edgar for marrying Catherine by encouraging Isabella to marry him and then mistreating her. Given that Emily Brontë is thought to have had no friends outside of her own family (although she was very close to her brother Branwell and her sisters Anne and Charlotte), it is perhaps unsurprising that close siblings' relationships are a driving force in her only novel.

Humanity versus nature Brontë is preoccupied with the opposition between human civilization and nature. This is represented figuratively in her descriptions of the moors, but

she also ties this conflict to specific characters. For example, Catherine and Heathcliff resolve to grow up "as rude as savages" in response to Hindley's abuse, and Ellen likens Hindley to a "wild-beast". The natural world is frequently associated with evil and reckless passion; when Brontë describes a character as 'wild. That character is usually cruel and inconsiderate and as for example we have Heathcliff, Catherine Earnshaw, and Hindley. However, Brontë also expresses a certain appreciation for the natural world; Linton and Cathy Linton's ideas of heaven both involve peaceful afternoons in the grass and among the trees. Likewise, Hareton is actually a very noble and gentle spirit, despite his outward lack of civilization and his description as a "rustic".

5.3.2 Setting

As far as setting is concerned, 'Wuthering' means stormy and windy in the local dialect. The setting of a gothic novel has been described as, "usually a large mansion or remote castle which is dark and foreboding: usually isolated from neighbors" *In Wuthering Heights*, Bronte has used Thrush cross Grange and *Wuthering Heights* to depict isolation and separation.

The dark and foreboding environment described at the beginning of the novel foreshadows the gloomy atmosphere found in the remainder of the book. *Wuthering Heights* is an ancient mansion perched on a high ridge, overlooking a bleak, windy Sparsely inhabited wasteland. The harsh, gloomy characteristics of the land are reflected in the human characters. In *Frankenstein*, Victor's country house near Geneva is described as isolated, dwarfed by massive, snow-capped mountain ranges and hunted by the emptiness of a calm lake. Victor also describes it as "an unusual tranquillity" this effect of isolation and tranquillity lead directly into the dreary element of mood. Victor's apartment at the university also conveys a feeling of dread with its piles of books, scattered equipment, dust and unkemptness. Shelley's novel takes us on a tour of the wildest, most isolated geography in Europe: the Swiss and French Alps, the Rhine valley, the Outer Hebrides of Scotland, Northern Ireland, Russia and the Arctic. In these places, where humans are dwarfed by uncontrollable nature, the protagonist is helpless and alone.

The element of mood in a gothic novel has been described as, "gloomy, dark, terror, death, revenge, hate, mystery, horror." In *Wuthering Heights*, the two most convincing elements of mood are death and revenge. Every character in the Linton and Earnshaw family tree dies at a young age, with the exception of Hareton Earnshaw and Catherine Linton. With his driving hate for the Lintons and Earnshaws, Heathcliff executes his revenge on both families from the first to second generation. In *Frankenstein*, there is a direct relationship between death and revenge. In both novels, the isolated setting plays a major role in creating mood. The raw, uncontrolled geography dominated the human characters, whose emotions are almost directed by their surroundings. Setting and mood are closely intertwined, and throughout the novel one senses that the humans are helpless in the face of nature and their own uncontrolled emotions are impelled toward downfall determined by something other than themselves. The protagonists struggle against their

fate with sheer power of will, but they must almost consciously sound their own destruction.

The passionate and calculated revenge of Heathcliff and Frankenstein's creature wreak havoc on those around them, but does nothing to help these two characters enhance their own existence. Few novels provide a better example of the close relationship between setting, mood, and characters than *Wuthering Heights* and *Frankenstein*.

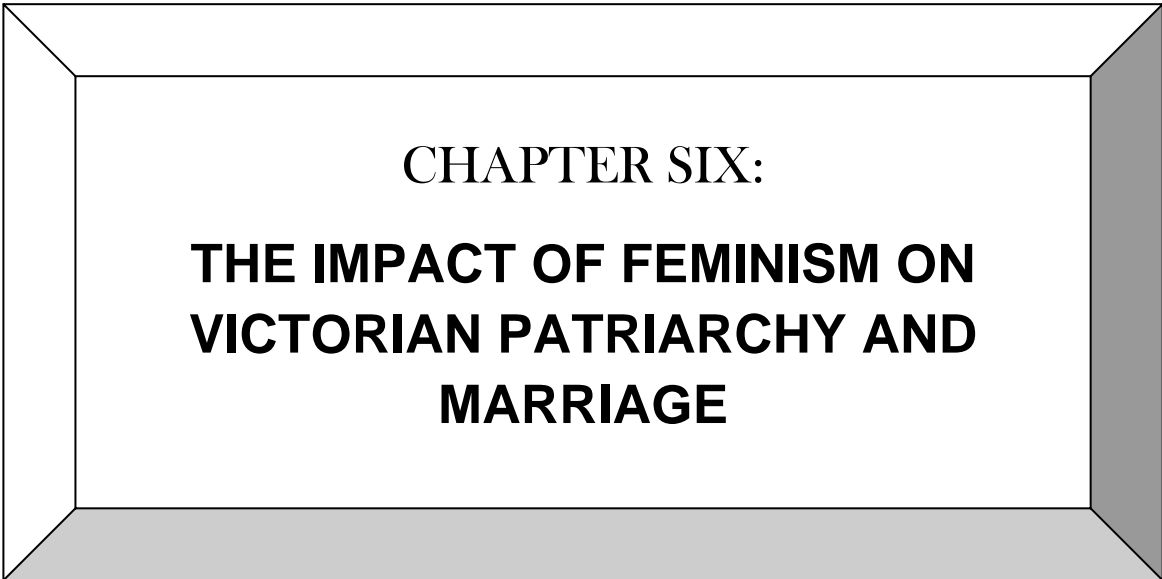
5.4- Characterization

We can have six main characters as followed :

- 1- Catherine Earnshaw is Mr. Earnshaw's daughter and Hindley's sister. She is also Heathcliff's foster sister and love interest. She marries Edgar Linton and has a daughter, also named Catherine. Catherine is beautiful and charming, but she is never as civilized as she pretends to be. In her heart she is always a wild girl playing on the moors with Heathcliff. She regards it as her right to be loved by all, and has an unruly temper. Heathcliff usually calls her Cathy; Edgar usually calls her Catherine.
- 2- Cathy Linton is the daughter of older Catherine and Edgar Linton. She has all her mother's charm without her wildness, although she is by no means submissive and spiritless. Edgar calls her Cathy. She marries Linton Heathcliff to become Catherine Heathcliff, and then marries Hareton to be Catherine Earnshaw.
- 3- Mr. Earnshaw a plain, fairly well-off farmer with few pretensions but a kind heart. He is a stern father to Catherine. He takes in Heathcliff despite his family's protests.
- 4- Edgar Linton Isabella's older brother who marries Catherine Earnshaw and fathers Catherine Linton. In contrast to Heathcliff, he is a gently bred, refined man, a patient husband and a loving father. His faults are certain effeminacy, and a tendency to be cold and unforgiving when his dignity is hurt.
- 5- Hareton Earnshaw, the son of Hindley and Frances; he marries the younger Catherine. For most of the novel, he is rough, rustic, and uncultured, having been carefully kept from all civilizing influences by Heathcliff. He grows up to be superficially like Heathcliff, but is really much more sweet-tempered and forgiving. He never blames Heathcliff for having disinherited him, for example, and remains his oppressor's staunchest ally.
- 6- Hindley Earnshaw is the only son of Mr. and Mrs. Earnshaw, and Catherine's older brother. He is a bullying, discontented boy who grows up to be a violent alcoholic when his beloved wife, Frances, dies. He hates Heathcliff because he felt supplanted in his father's affections by the other boy, and Heathcliff hates him even more in return.
- 7- Heathcliff a foundling taken in by Mr. Earnshaw and raised with his children of unknown descent. He represents wild and natural forces which often seem amoral and

dangerous for society. His almost inhuman devotion to Catherine is the moving force in his life, seconded by his vindictive hatred for all those who stand between him and his beloved. He is cruel but magnificent in his consistency, and the reader can never forget that at the heart of the grown man lies the abandoned, hungry child of the streets of Liverpool.

- 8- Isabella Linton Edgar's younger sister, who marries Heathcliff to become Isabella Heathcliff. Her son is named Linton Heathcliff. Before she marries Heathcliff, she is a rather shallow-minded young lady, pretty and quick-witted but a little foolish (as can be seen by her choice of husbands). Her unhappy marriage brings out an element of cruelty in her character: when her husband treats her brutally, she rapidly grows to hate him with all her heart.



CHAPTER SIX:
**THE IMPACT OF FEMINISM ON
VICTORIAN PATRIARCHY AND
MARRIAGE**

6.1- Victorian Novel and Feminism

According to what we've said before, we can notice that in the nineteenth century, women live in gender inequality, they cannot enjoy a legal and social right and the society has been shaped to expect them to remain submissive to their husband or father. However, Victorian period is a period of progress and reform, industrialization and social agitation in which England has witnessed changes, which have influenced the society in culture, politics, economy and social norms. That's why it is important to notify that this period is a period of fundamental changes taking place in the world, meant progress, and is a source of hope and optimism. Books are always an important force in the women's movement, possibly because the book is a medium that women have relatively unobstructed access to as authors and as readers.

For the majority of writers and thinkers, the inequality present in Victorian society is a kind of illness that can sooner or later come to its tipping point. Many intellectuals see it as their duty to speak out against the injustices of this new and frightening world. Thomas Carlyle railed against the abuse he saw happening all around him. He sees machinery and the Industrial Revolution as engines of destruction, stripping people of their very humanity. The level of social consciousness and immediate relevancy one finds in much of Victorian writing is something not witnessed before in English letters. Rather than turning inside or escaping into fantasy, essayists and novelists chose to directly address the pressing social problems of the day. These problems have ranged from atrocious labor conditions and rampant poverty to the issue of women's place in the world what contemporaries have referred to as "The Woman Question." Elizabeth Barrett-Browning's long-form poem "The Cry of the Children" represents an attack on mining practices in England, specifically the employment of young children to work deep in the mines. Barrett-Browning has been outraged by a report she read detailing the practice and felt compelled to make her voice heard on the issue. Indeed, she is certainly not alone in this feeling; novelist Charles Dickens has made a cottage industry out of addressing social ills in a light-hearted, optimistic tone. Each of his many novels called attention to real-world problems that others might just as soon have swept under the rug. Dickens is also noteworthy for his "rock star" status, attaining popularity that will not have been possible in the previous generation. He writes with a voice that is very accessible to the ordinary reader of the time, and yet has couched within his fiction where essential questions that society will sooner or later be forced to confront. One cannot say exactly how much

influence Dickens and others have had on their society, but the fact that they have tried to change their world is what is important. Writers of the preceding era do not speak to a popular audience nearly as much as the Victorians, or at least not as self-consciously. The Romantic Movement is marked by introversion and abstraction; they are much less interested in commenting on, much less altering the course of world events. Furthermore, the Romantics do not see leadership as a primary objective for art. Victorians, on the other hand, tacitly agreed that encouraging society toward a higher good is a righteous, noble occupation for any artist.

Women in the Victorian world hold very little power and have to fight hard for the change they want in their lives. What one thinks of as feminism today, has not yet taken form in the Victorian period. The philosophy of female emancipation, however, becomes a rallying point for many female Victorian writers and thinkers. Though their philosophies and methods are often quite divergent, the ultimate goal of intellectual women in the nineteenth century was largely the same. Poets and novelists frequently have to be coy when addressing their status in society. Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" combines early feminist imagery with many other concepts in a fairy-tale like world of imagination. Her use of religious symbolism is especially fascinating, though not as highly regarded; Letitia Elizabeth Landon is also an accomplished and popular female poet. Charlotte and Emily Brontë have crafted novels that have stood the test of time and taken their place as literary classics. These women are exceptions to the rule. Patriarchy has been firmly entrenched in Western society for so long that women writers have faced an uphill climb to gain any level recognition and acceptance. Some authors, like Mary Ann Evans, feel the need to work under a male pseudonym in order to receive recognition, that is the one of the first mean women use to let their voice be heard. Evans published her first two novels, *Adam Bede* and *Scenes of Clerical Life*, under the false name of George Eliot. Interestingly, even today Evans is more commonly known by her pseudonym than her real name.

Though English literature is at its highest level because of the growth of literacy in Victorian era and many women writers write to denounce women's sufferance, which is a period of women's awareness conscience about their rights. *Wuthering Height* like any novel of the Victorian area, which has dealt with feminism, the assertion of the autocratic male dominance, is the culture of that society at this time, and here the author is going against that

law, behaviour which is not an uncommon ideal in Emily Bronte's time and her novel *Wuthering Heights*, is thus no exception to the influence of Patriarchal oppression.

Considering *Wuthering Heights*, the author at the beginning writes under a Pen name of Ellis Bell and the patriarchal oppression women have been facing. This oppression, is a kind of domination from first the father and secondly brother and finally husband. The author is showing a woman, who dares to go against the social law, because the way things went at that time, a girl cannot even choose her own partner, it is with the contentment of the parents. When she is suffering she cannot utter a word. There is any law to protect the woman in case of divorce and you can see Bronte, who has shown another face of a woman who can choose her own partner, who can use her partner to reach her goal at any level. Another aspect is a woman who can run away from the house in case of mistreatment from her husband.

Besides, in this novel we can consider the fact that it is a period of awareness of women consciousness, who want to assert their personality and to struggle for their better life. Catherine goes against the expectations and morals of her gender in this time period, a period a woman is like a weak minor who depends on his male relative, it may be father, brother or husband. And here, Catherine Earnshaw is introduced as a wild child who disobeys her father, brother, and goes against their wishes for her to become more ladylike. Catherine has a strong desire, passion and freedom to leave the oppressive home life. Because of the long-term responsibilities ascribed to fathers with regard to their adult daughters, Romans have placed a high value on the father-daughter relationship. Cicero said, "*What has nature wanted to be more pleasurable to us, what has nature wanted to be more dear to us than our daughters*" (quoted in Hallett, p. 63).

Another book of that period is "*The Feminine Mystique*" of Betty Friedan which comes out around the same time as many other books that have an unusually immediate impact on public policy. In all these cases, it can be said (about Friedan, "Books don't become best sellers because they are ahead of their time." But people like to be able to point to a book as the cause for a new frame of mind, possibly for the same reason that people prefer anecdotes to statistical evidence. A book personalizes an issue. It has an Erin Brockovich effect: it puts a face on the problem; it sets up a David and Goliath drama. It's not irrelevant; therefore, that three of these books are written by women, outsiders almost by definition in the early nineteen-sixties, and the others are by men largely unknown to the general public. Harrington is a socialist, who, to his subsequent regret, and much like Friedan, chooses to

elide that fact when he has written his book. But these books become totems. They even acquired reputations for policies and ideas they never proposed. “The Feminine Mystique” does not recommend that women pursue full-time careers, or that they demand their legal rights. It only advises women to be prepared for life after the children left home. These are books whose significance exceeds anything they actually said. For many people, it doesn’t even matter what they have said or why they are written. What matters is that, when the world turned, they have been there. That what we are facing today in feminism movement with all its impact on British society

6.2- Feminism and Patriarchy

At the beginning of the 19th century, England has been a typical patriarchal society. Women, as well as the proletariat, have been oppressed: no matter in which class the women born, legally they are equal to the men criminals, madmen and minors. And this background influences the *Wuthering Heights* a lot. Catherine's assertion of feminism is described as rebellion against the patriarchal society and this later can be seen from her rebellion against her brother. After the death of her father, Catherine's brother Hindley inherited all the family's fortune, and became the master of the Heights. On the contrast, Catherine got nothing. This is just the product of the patriarchal society. Since then, Catherine had to rely on her brother and live under his control. For example, on Sunday evenings they used to be permitted to play, if they did not make much noise; now a mere title was sufficient to send them into corners.

In fact, as a master, Hindley was a tyrant, Catherine was hurt deeply by this tyrant, she wrote that: "how little did I dream that Hindley would ever make me cry so! "My head aches, till I cannot keep it in the pillow; still I can't give over." In Hindley's eyes, Catherine should be an obedient, lovely and gentle lady rather than a stubborn and wild savage who spent the whole day with the under bred servant. Here, we can see a woman who expresses her willing, her sorrow and feelings. It awakes women consciousness against men domination to denounce men mistreatment and here, it was described as the wild and unconventional personal that is Catherine Earnshaw-Linton (Cathy), presents the epitome of Bronte's ideal perception of individualism. "A haughty, headstrong creature, she was also perceived to be a "wild, wick slip", which is fundamental to her development into a character which values not social conformity, but adheres to her own personal desires and emotions. For that reason, emphasis is placed on her character as the portrayal of the outstanding individual; an element revered in Romanticism. As Plyer-Fisk states, Cathy is a "true child of nature, she prefers to pursue intellectual knowledge outdoors, thus, her untamed, emotional and highly passionate nature indicates further links to the central Romantic tenets in that Cathy, through her nature, presents an emotional and spiritual liberation; an indication of Bronte's image of the ideal. The good side of this assertion of her personality is that it helps her to write and to read and to be more knowledgeable and as I said before the 19th is more the awake of women conscious. Going in the same way, I can confirm that in the nineteenth century, England, as in any patriarchal society, the construction of gender identity was reinforced by institutions and systems subject to male control. Education, religion, morality and the family where means by

which the values and doctrines of the dominant ideology was continually inculcated into individuals, both male and female. In the first half of the nineteenth century, for example, “the practice of educating middle-class girls resembled a kind of decorative packaging of goods for display in the marriage mart”. Girls were educated for a life of dependency; they were trained to be homemakers, denied the opportunity to develop skills which would enable them to claim a place in a man’s world. Any departure from this was considered to be dangerous. Women might be “unsexed,” and traditional notions of the female role might be undermined if they were granted equality of opportunity in education. Once safely installed in the marital home, the culturally-constructed notions of specifically female purity and morality were used to restrict women’s sphere of activity to the domestic. In the home, women received family values continued to promote the concept of the male as the source of authority, sustenance and protection, with the female as his submissive companion. As Alfred Tennyson wrote:

Man for the field and woman for the hearth:

Man for the sword and for the needle she:

Man with the head and woman with the heart:

*Man to command and woman to obey;*⁹

Throughout the nineteenth century, feminist activists sought to achieve the emancipation, George Eliot was sympathetic towards feminism has exercised many literary critics. In her work, uphold ward traditional notions of gender identity, or does it censure them. Newton, seeks to contribute to the critical debate by examining George Eliot’s attitude towards cultural constructions of female gender identity in the *Mill on the Floss*.

In doing so, the paper focuses upon Eliot’s treatment of the way in which Victorian society constructed the identity of men and women in line with preconceived notions of appropriate male or female behaviour. It demonstrates how through her representation of the siblings Maggie and Tom Tulliver, Eliot illustrates the Victorian practice of leaving girls uneducated and ignorant whilst educating boys to play an active role in society. That is, Eliot reveals how the culture of patriarchy not only debases Maggie’s identity, but also, by depriving her of the opportunity to receive a formal education comparable to that given to her brother, denies her the opportunity to reap the benefits of such an education. The novelist represents Maggie and Tom Tulliver as constrained by patriarchal ideology to the extent that

⁹ mikehowelleng264.blogspot.com/2008/.../princess.ht

they are brought up to play pre-ordained roles in society. Society strives to adjust Maggie and Tom to their respective roles by instilling into them the perception that there is no alternative or, in the case of Maggie, that there is no escape. Although, she struggles profoundly to find her own voice and to bring meaning into her life, ultimately Maggie is defeated and conforms to the norms laid down for her by patriarchal society.

The paper argues that, although George Eliot does not radically challenge the dominant patriarchal culture of Victorian England in the *Mill on the Floss* in the sense of providing a prescription for change, nonetheless, the novelist clearly questions the validity of the masculine hegemony which constructed every aspect of a woman's life in that period. The family environment in which Maggie Tulliver and her brother Tom grow up in *The Mill on the Floss* are the one in which whatever is "customary and respectable" is valued, and where no "breach of traditional duty or propriety" may be countenanced. The dominant ideology is patriarchal, and gender-specific notions and models of behaviour are presented to children at an early age. Moreover, the process of indoctrinating children into their culturally-determined male and female roles is carried out unquestioningly by the adult members of the Tulliver family, whose own gender he doubts the practical value of his schooling, the ideological formation he has received from his earliest childhood leaves Tom with no questions about his ultimate destiny. If he receives more money than Maggie at Christmas, it is because he will be a man, and she is only a girl. Likewise, if he must endure his lessons, he does, so in line *The Mill on the Floss*, Maggie is constantly torn between the imperatives of self-fulfilment and duty.

For Maggie, the fulfilment which she occasionally finds in daydreams, books, music and romantic love is an absorbing experience, in which time is suspended and memory excluded. But in the contrast all this pressure on women and women opposition help her for sure to let her voice being heard, to denounce and to prepare the future in the way women are considered. Unfortunately, it exposes women to more violence, whether verbal or physical and it encourages familial quarrel. There, you can see through all the novel of Emily Bronte, all the women at least since Catherine, Cathy and Isabella. Indeed, the heroine Catherine embodied rebellion spirit against her father and brother, which is the cause of familial quarrel and this is illustrated with Catherine guiltiness. Thus after behaving as badly as possible all day, she sometimes came fondling to make it up at night.

Nay, Cathy," the old man would say, "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 faults, and beg to be forgiven.¹⁰

You can see she has recognized that, she was going against the social norms of patriarchal system. Furthermore, the heroine, Catherine, embodied the rebellion spirit against the religion oppression in that age vividly. As a child, Catherine was wilful and perverse. She couldn't bear anybody's control. In *Wuthering Heights*, Joseph was also using his patriarchal power even if he is a servant. He was the honest servant in the Heights, and every Sunday, he arranged the children to the church and read the bible, even in the rainy day, the children had to get up the congregation in the garret. He was responsible for this duty. This can be seen from the following:

I (Catherine) had just fastened our pinafores together and hung them up for a curtain, when in comes Joseph in an errand from the stables. He tears down my handiwork, boxes my ears and croaks:" 'T' maister nob but just buried, and sabbth no o'ered, und t'sound o't' gospel dtill I' yer lugs, and ye darr be laiking! Shame in ye! Sit ye down, ill childer! There are good books enough if ye'll read'em!"¹¹

From what Joseph has said, we can get the impression that he has been staid, strict and rude. For the words he used was almost old words which were not popular until that time. And the manner was very bad, although he was only a servant in the heights while Catherine was, to some extent, his master.

However, Catherine never compromised to his religious oppression. Catherine just hurled the book into the dog kennel, vowing she hated a good book. From Catherine's behaviour, we get the idea that she has been deeply rebellion against Joseph, in other words, the religious oppression. As the young generation of the time, due to the development of the science and technology, Catherine has disillusioned, she loves freedom and she needs religious emancipation. However, Joseph turned to be the spokesman for the controlling force.

They thought and behave habitually in the traditional puritan way. They have had high moral standard and view pleasure-seeking as the symptoms of sin. So, there is no doubt never ending deep contradiction between them. As for Catherine, she neglects his power and

¹⁰ www.literature.org/.../wuthering-heights/chapter-03.h

¹¹ www.pagebypagebooks.com/.../Wuthering_Heights pp 19.

rebels against him. She loves freedom, and wanted to shake off the shackles of the bible. You can see what all these can cause in the mind of a little girl, who is going through frustration because of her strong personality.

The impacts of Edgar's Patriarchal constraints have had a detrimental effect on Cathy. Plyer-Fisk reinforces this idea in saying that in adulthood, she adheres to the social constraints, and, she becomes, in the end, a victim of these constraints. Her imprisonment in the mannerly, yet, suffocating nature of Victorian society, through her marriage to Edgar, has led to the deterioration of her physical, mental and emotional state. Edgar, as the oppressor in this circumstance impedes Cathy's yearning for peace in her life. He exerts further dominance by discouraging Cathy's ecstasy at Heathcliff's return, "Don't strangle me for that try to be glad without being absurd" illuminating Edgar's dictating control over Cathy's true nature and a suppression of her spirit. Here, he burdens her with the constraints of conforming to her gender role, in that her actions of greeting Heathcliff with enthusiasm do not adhere to the "rules" of propriety, thus, "Catherine's childhood and adolescent freedom as a girl is constrained by the social pressure to conform to the gender expectations of her Patriarchal society".

Consequently, in anger and frustration, he forces Cathy to choose between himself and Heathcliff. "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 one you choose" or, in the context of this discussion, Edgar's forceful encouragement for Cathy to choose between her wild, unconventional desires and their strict, and constraining societal values, rendering her to much emotional pain and eventually a terminal illness through her overwhelming sense of entrapment, as she "had seasons of gloom and silence". Crouse hold the view that; "while imprisoned in her room, her delirium conveys the powerlessness and emotional confinement in her life affirming the negative effect of Edgar's patriarchal influence, and germs the recognition of social pressures affecting female gender roles . As such, Catherine seeks death as a release from the undesirable tension created by her inability to synthesize the fragmented segments of her personality, a fragmentation necessitated by the constricting environment which provides no outlet for her psychic energy. Many perceive Edgar to be a weak and submissive character, yet, Edgar is a bullying husband and brutal landlord who discharges his 'autocratic hostility' by using cultural capital to deprive Catherine of her desirous self, and her independent will thus, his influence on Cathy was great in that through his patriarchal values, his dominance over Catherine's emotional and spiritual

liberation was attained. At her death, no longer was she a product of her true nature, rather, she was a victim of social conformity (losing her individualism), and emotional oppression.

Edgar's span of control continues even after his wife's death, which raises questions about his relationship with his daughter Catherine (Linton, second generation). Quite simply put, he asserts his authority over Catherine in restricting her to wander only within the bounds of the Grange. This over expression of the Pater Familias, only spurs Catherine's nature and her curiosity to go beyond her instruction: "Ellen, how long will it be before I walk to the top of those hills? I wonder what lies on the other side –is it the sea?"

Consequently, Edgar's repressive dictation establishes a sense of "daughterly disempowerment", as it restricts the nature of Catherine's curiosity. On the other hand, her wilful decision to maintain her relationship with her ailing cousin Linton, despite her father's prohibitions, only demonstrates her individualism to rebel against the paternal power by which she leaves the Grange to visit *Wuthering Heights*, and then falling under an even greater patriarchal force that is Heathcliff. So, in the same way to Catherine second generation, in *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff's unrestrained patriarchal dominance leaves Catherine expose to its fury, which then has fostered feelings of emotional distress as well as physical bruises as a result of physical assaults through the terrific slaps to both sides of the head and verbal abuses she has experienced. Like her mother, Catherine's persona initiates an image of Bronte's ideal, as she demonstrates an individual nature through her passionate rejection against the constraints placed upon her by her oppressor. Submission to the will of Heathcliff is only a last resort for Catherine, as such; she is driven to the edge of emotional torture as the prospect of never seeing her father alive before his death becomes a very probable outcome. Heathcliff thus dominates Catherine's physical and emotional status; oppressing her nature, and rendering her to take part in an almost hopeless predicament through his abuse of her individualism. Heathcliff's vengeful tact's and oppressive nature, makes his character a very dominant personage. In his ability to manipulate other characters in *Wuthering Heights*, the extent of his power becomes ever more patriarchal. Selfishness and anger cloud his moral judgment as he cunningly lures his niece, Catherine Linton, to *Wuthering Heights*. To Catherine's demise, she finds herself trapped under Heathcliff's tyrannical rule, almost unable to escape his predetermined arrangement of her marriage to Linton (her cousin); As to your promise to marry Linton, I'll take care you shall keep it; for you shall not quit the place till that is fulfilled. Her imprisonment at the Heights leaves her estranged from the comforts of familiarity, and her beloved father, as she is subjected to the

violent and oppressive nature of her uncle. All this is a result of the patriarchal system in which the Victorian age is.

6.3- Feminism and marriage

Once again, the word feminism is stated in the dictionary as the belief in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes and the movement organized around this belief. Many individuals will understand the word feminism in different ways. There is no true set way to describe feminism for everyone has experienced it in a different way. The only one important thing to remember about feminism is that, it has impacted many things in society like marriage and patriarchy system.

In 1966, R.B. Martin stated that *Jane Eyre* has been the first major feminist novel, "although there is not a hint in the book of any desire for political, legal, educational, or even intellectual equality between the sexes." Rather, Martin supports the idea that Jane (Brontë) merely wants recognition that both sexes are similar in "heart and spirit." Nowhere, in the novel is this sentiment more obvious than in the passage in chapter 23, when Jane responds to Rochester's callous and indirect proposal:

Do you think I am an automaton? a machine without feelings?...Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong — I have as much soul as you, — and full as much heart...I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom, conventionalities, nor even of mortal flesh; — it is my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God's feet, equal, — as we are¹²

Indeed, according to the description of Catherine's rebellion against the society in *Wuthering Heights*, the patriarchy system and the moral system, Emily Bronte vividly has expressed her view of the rise of feminism. Under the patriarchy society, women can't make their own decisions about their marriage. All of their fate has been controlled by their parents. If the daughter refuses the husband that their parents choose for her, it is common that she will be held in captivity and strap, situation which will not surprise anybody at all. At that time, marriage has been none of love's business; instead it has been about the family's future. So, influenced by the patriarchy system, Catherine has made the wrong choice and has married the rich Linton.

However, when she has been dying, she met with Heachcliff. They have criticized each other angrily, while they have reached the soul's agreement at last. Through this, Bronte

¹² www.cliffsnotes.com > ... > Jane Eyre > Chapter 23

has proofed that women have been desired for true, and at the same time, they value the idea that the spirit and the soul shall be confirmed.

At the same time, Emily Bronte insists that women are not the appendix of the marriage; they have the right to pursue their own happy. They also have their own conscious; they don't want to be the victim of the patriarchal system. This can be seen from Catherine's betrayal to her marriage. Somebody has said that: *Wuthering Heights* is a great novel which refuses the heroines compromise on the predicament and social custom. It is really true, Catherine is a typical woman Bronte created to be a great feminist.

Through Catherine, Emily expresses her view of feminism. There shall be three important factors for women to be free from the patriarchal society. Firstly, women shall have independent personalities. Women shall no longer be one of men's possessions; instead, she shall enjoy the half sky. Secondly, women shall own free individuality. Women shall not be commented as good or evil just according to men's judgment. They need to live in accordance with their own will. At last, the foundation is the fair between men and women. And this is on the basis of independent personalities and free individuality.

Catherine's choice about her marriage and the intensification of her emotion has embodied the value of love of the new women in Victorian age. They are pursuing the unification of their physical body and the soul. Hindley insists that Catherine shall marry an upper class gentleman, just like Linton, who intends to be the representative of the civilization. Through this kind of marriage, both the family fortune and social status shall be improved greatly. However, Catherine cannot agree with his view very much. She has her own choice and decision. She would like to pursue her true love, to be directed by her nature, and to be her real self. Catherine clung to Heathcliff and they have promised to grow up together as rude as savages, unfortunately she cannot reach his goal without using her side of feminism. In that age, marriage was an economic necessity for women, and a wife was looked on only as her husband's housekeeper and her children's nurse and teacher. The life of the married women has been dull and unbearable. Catherine cannot bore this boring life, though it seemed Catherine is completely out of control under the influence of Heathcliff. "They both promised fair to grow up as rude as savages" states the narrator Nelly Dean. There again, Catherine is in a situation, where she has fought for her love. And because she loves, she is ready to brave all her parents to express freely her feeling.

A Victorian girl of the upper and middle classes has been generally carefully chaperoned and are not allowed to be alone with young men. They meet men at parties and dances and other social occasions. If a young man likes a girl, he must ask for permission to 'call' on her at home. They are allowed to talk together, with a chaperone at a discreet distance. If a young man wants to ask a girl to marry him, he will ask her father's permission either before or after asking the girl. This is generally just a formality though, since it will be unlikely that a man are allowed to know a girl well enough to ask her to marry him unless her parents approve him in the first place. Indeed, despite the norm of Victorian society, Catherine as she does not have many opportunities to go out the first person, she fell in love with, is a child of her house with whom she has been closed and this situation upsets too much his brother. Another aspect is Catherine, despite of her love to Headcliff, is under the burden of the society, where Headcliff is a person of lower class. There again Victorian society Courtship has been considered more a career more than a romantic interlude for young men, as all of a woman's property has reverted to him upon marriage. Therefore, courting has been taken very seriously by both sides.

From the time she is young, a woman is groomed for this role in life-dutiful wife and mother. Properly trained, she learns to sing, play piano or guitar, dance and be conversant about light literature of the day. She also learns French and the rules of etiquette as well as the art of conversation and the art of silence.

The courtship is like a ritual and coming out meant a young woman has completed her education and is officially available on the marriage mart. Financial or family circumstances must delay or move up a girl's debut, though typically, she comes out when she is seventeen or eighteen. She has purchased a new wardrobe for the season, in order to appear her best in public. A girl is under her mother's wing for the first few years of her social life. She uses her mother's visiting cards or that of another female relative if her mother is dead. This same person usually serves as her chaperone, as a single girl is never allowed out of the house by herself, especially in mixed company. Courtship is advanced by gradations, with couples first speaking, and then walking out together, and finally keeping company after mutual attraction has been confirmed. But a gentleman has to take care in the early stages of courtship. If he is introduced to a lady at a party for the purpose for dancing, he cannot automatically resume their acquaintance on the street. He has to be re-introduced by a mutual friend. And then, only upon permission of the lady, Cathy says she is unhappy.

Great care has to be taken at these public affairs, so as not to offend a possible suitor or his family. Following are some rules of conduct a proper female must adhere to:

- She never approached people of higher rank, unless being introduced by a mutual friend.
- People of lesser rank are always introduced to people of higher rank, and then only if the higher-ranking person had given his/her permission.
- Even after being introduced, the person of higher rank does not have to maintain the acquaintance. They can ignore, or 'cut' the person of lower rank.
- A single woman never addresses a gentleman without an introduction.
- A single woman never walks out alone. Her chaperone has to be older and preferably married.
- If she has progressed to the stage of courtship in which she walks out with a gentleman, they always walk apart. A gentleman can offer his hand over rough spots, the only contact he is allowed with a woman who is not his fiancée.
- Proper women never ride alone in a closed carriage with a man who is not a relative.
- She will never call upon an unmarried gentleman at his place of residence.
- She can receive a man at home if she is alone. Another family member has to be present in the room.
- A gentlewoman never looks back after anyone in the street, or turns to stare at others at church, the opera, etc.
- No impure conversations are held in front of single women.
- No sexual contact is allowed before marriage. Innocence is demanded by men from girls in his class, and most especially from his future wife.
- Intelligence is not encouraged, nor is any interest in politics.¹³

All this point can be remarked in *Wuthering Heights* the day Catherine and Headcliff have entered the Lintons house. As a people of same class, Headcliff is chased but Catherine has stayed there for about three weeks and is taught to be well dressed. It is somehow a kind of arrangement of new courtship between people of the same class. Anytime Edgar visits Catherine, she is supervised by Ellen her chaperone, and there, you can see because she does not appreciate the way her true love is treated, she has become upset until she pinches her chaperone and flogs her boyfriend. You can remark that Catherine is asserting her hard personality which hides somehow a character of a feminist because a woman in a Victorian

¹³ <http://www.angelpig.net/victorian/courtship.html>

period is like an angel, weak and who can't kill a fly. She let know her anger, but which is in one way her own choice and in other way the burden placed on her by the society. It is in fact Because she does not love Headcliff and he is for the lower class. She cannot marry him but she dares to keep on her own plan which means marrying Edgar to be financially powerful and use Edgar Linton to raise Headcliff up. That lead "It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now; so he shall never know how I love him; and that, not because he's handsome, Nelly, but because he's more myself than I am."

Edgar has asked her to marry him, and she has accepted; she asked Nelly what she shall have answered. Nelly has asked her why she loves Edgar; she says she does for a variety of material reasons and that he will be rich, and she shall like to be the greatest woman in the neighbourhood, and she shall be proud of such a husband. Nelly has disapproved, and Cathy has admitted that she has been sure she has been wrong: she has had a dream in which she has gone to heaven and has been unhappy there because she has missed *Wuthering Heights*.

Cathy said that she has no more business to marry Edgar Linton than she has to be in heaven; and if the wicked man in there had not brought Heathcliff so low that she shouldn't have thought of it. You can realize that this is another aspect of awareness of woman by using marriage as business which in fact is not good for the society, it is another aspect and wrong one of feminism which lacks of honesty and dignity for woman as a teacher of humanity.

Besides, after the marriage of Catherine and Edgar, Headcliff has returned back to the Grange and pays a visit to them. Catherine has been overjoy and wants her husband to share her joy with her. This one is not at all a characteristic of a woman of Victorian age. It is a kind of feminism which let a woman expresses her feeling in any circumstance and any situation. Another aspect is when a woman is caught for adultery; she is sent away from her household. You can see Catherine who still wants to come over her plan and has been even jealous when she heard that Headcliff has kissed Isabella. She has been defended to talk to Headcliff by her husband and this character has nothing with woman of Victorian age. Catherine expresses her anger in front of her husband and Heathcliff. She dares to say that she cannot keep Heathcliff as her friend if Edgar will be jealous, and she will try to break their hearts by breaking her own.

Another awareness of women conscious is the case of Isabella who has married Headcliff despite the disagreement of her brother. As I said before in Victorian period it is the parents who arrange first the marriage and as her father and mother died, her direct tutor is her brother. Indeed, she has escaped from her house to rejoin Headcliff for this marriage. You can imagine a woman who is aware of her consciousness about her own decision to engage oneself in marriage. Unfortunately, this marriage is a failure because at that time a woman cannot divorce from her husband. However, with determination, she come up with a plan and escapes the cruelty of Heathcliff, which is not possible for a woman of that time to dare to run away from the mistreatment of a husband. Moreover, she dares to keep her first name instead of her husband's, what is not common in Victorian society

Another character is Cathy, who despite the interdiction of her father to visit Linton, keep on doing; behavior which is exactly Catherine's one. One may say that it appears that book-learning is not enough to make a person good, but that the lack of it is enough to make someone ridiculous. Literacy is, in short, a basic and essential quality to any human being. So, as women start being in contact of education and book learning it awakes their conscious.

Considering what I have been saying before, we can see some positive aspect of feminism where a woman is able to brave parent to choose her own partner and a woman who dares to escape from the cruelty of her husband. However, there are certain bad side because one thing is to choose one's own partner to engage oneself into marriage; one thing is to make it successful. Meanwhile, if you win, you reach the best goal, but if you lose, what will be the drawback? This is seen through the case of Isabella when she has been going through sufferance and cruelty. She cannot come back to see her parents I mean her brother. Whether we are in the western world or in Africa you come from a family and you need your parents' blessings in any circumstances. When you brave parents and your marriage is not successful who can you see to complain? This situation causes many sufferance and it cultivates violence in the society as a whole.

Furthermore, it is the cause of the breakdown of family, cause of mental and affective health. Isabella dares to escape from her husband cruelty but mentally she is not able to brave the entire situation. Considering even her brother's reaction she is like a disinherit daughter and learning of Isabella's misery with Heathcliff, Edgar says only, *'Trouble me no more about her', and refuses, with self-righteous mildness, to help: "I am not angry, but I'm sorry to have lost her. My communication with Heathcliff's family shall be as sparing as his with*

mine" (chap19). Clearly to Edgar, that Isabella now belongs to Heathcliff and is no longer his concern. You can imagine when a woman goes against the social law by running away from her household because of the mistreatment of her husband what she can really appreciate her status. Similarity in *The tenants of wildfell hall* where Helen escapes the mistreatment of her husband Arthur and run away with her child to find refuge in a village. In the same way Helen is described as a woman with a strong personality. In the household of her husband she has encountered humiliation, the unfaithfulness of her husband and at that time women resign themselves. However, with women awareness she dares to escape and hires a house where she stays for a long time and try to remake her life by reaching a so high level than her husband.

This audacious decision, and because of jealousy and the fear to lose his wife, the husband review his way of considering women and finally has re-joined Ellen finally. Once again, those points are some positive aspects of feminism which help men to reconsider women not like an object or a maid but a full human being with feelings and who are able to take a step to make decisions of their married life no matter what the social law is in the society.

6.4- Feminism in Britain today

Talking about feminism today, it is what we may call the third wave feminism and their today in nowhere else in the western world and especially in Britain it has impacted the civil rights.

Through all I said before and considering the area in which we are working, we have to consider the change in education, where women can really go to school and have the right to make their own choice in marriage. This situation may affect positively and negatively the whole family. If women are no more submissive to her father or husband when you consider the structure of the family in the 19th you can see that we can no more talk about patriarchal society. Woman has the right to choose her own partner without the contentment of parents; it means that all the power is granted to her as far as marriage is concerned. She can officially ask for divorce, she can get married or be single, because she can work and decide what she wants for her life, she has the same right with the boy talking about inheritance and all these affect negatively and positively the whole society.

Feminism on a whole has had a positive impact on society. It has been a dramatically successful social movement. It has changed women's expectations and perspectives on their lives. In the past, women would have married to gain financial security and stability. Women are now working and more independent than ever, by earning their own living, they do not need to rely on a man for stability. Sue Sharpe has conducted research into this area and in the first edition of her book *Just Like A Girl* she has interviewed girls to know about their future plans, which were to get married and have children. A career is seen neither important nor a high priority. She has later repeated her research in the 1990s and has founded that the girl's priorities has changed; their careers come first and marriage and children are not as important anymore. Women now have far more choice, variety and opportunities compare to the past.

Feminism has also transformed what men expect from sharing their lives with women and how they will behave towards women. Children growing up now simply take for granted feminism's messages about sexual equality and justice when only 30 years ago such messages are widely opposed as extremist and threatening to the social order. No other movement has so rapidly revolutionized such deeply held patterns of behaviour

Finally, in response to wider social shifts, the aspirations of girls may have also increased. Thus girls now may have their sights set on university and a career and this may translate into increased engagement with school. Recent reforms have opened opportunities to women most notably the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, which has made gender discrimination in employment illegal.

Besides, talking about marriage, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, the recent U.S. census provides a snapshot of the condition of American families. In 1970 traditional family households made up 81 percent of all households, but this percentage has dropped to 68 percent in 2003. Single-mother families increased from 3 million in 1970 to 10 million in 2003, and the number of single-father families grew to 2 million in 2003 from less than half a million in 1970. Nearly one-third of all American children are born out of wedlock, and more than half will spend some portion of their childhood in never-formed or broken families. Roughly, one American child is born outside of marriage every twenty-five seconds. One estimate posits that up to 70 percent of American children will live at some point with a single parent. Single-parent homes make up a significant portion of the American sociological landscape.

The decrease in traditional family households coupled with the increase of single-parent homes corresponds to several other cultural trends. First, the divorce rate has risen rapidly through the 1970s into the 1980s, but has levelled since the 1990s. Divorce rates has spiked dramatically between 1970 and 1975. On average, since the late 1970s, 20 out of 1,000 women divorce in a given year. According to most indicators, the trend of divorce has subsided toward the end of the twentieth century. The median duration of marriages that end in divorce is about eight years as of 2001. Although marriages tend to remain intact longer than in the 1970s, the decline in the divorce rate may at least in part be attributable to the fact that many couples are now avoiding marriage altogether.

The number of births by unmarried women relative to those of married women increased rapidly between 1970 and 1990. Delays in marriage have also been an observable trend among American adults. The median age of adults who marry for the first time rose from age 20 (women) and 23 (men) in 1970 to 25 and 27, respectively, in 2003. The general number of adults who have never married has also continued to grow during the last thirty years. Since 1970 the proportion of women who have never married between the ages 20-24 has more than doubled, and has tripled for women 30-34. Overall, men and women who have

never married and/or are divorced composed a larger share of the population in 2003 than they did in 1970, while the proportion of those currently married have declined.

A final observable trend away from the traditional family model in America is the increase of cohabitation. Between 1960 and 2000 the amount of couples living together has increased tenfold or 1000 percent. In 2003, 4.6 million households have been classified as unmarried-partner households. The proportion of cohabiting couples increased from 2.9 percent of all households in 1996 to 4.2 percent in 2003. About 9.2 million men and women are cohabiting, and 41 percent of them have children under the age of 18. The rising trend of cohabitation is directly linked to the decline in the number of Americans who marry. Research has indicated that, many, if not most families, composed of cohabiting couples with children intend to marry, although few actually do. Interestingly, mothers, rather than fathers, in a cohabiting relationship are more hesitant about pursuing marriage. The traditional nuclear family of a husband, wife, and children no longer serves as the paradigmatic model for a great number of Americans.

In addition to these statistics, alternative lifestyles and families have produced a national discussion on what constitutes a family. During the 1990s, the theme of "family values" and what constitutes appropriate values entered the political discourse. On the one hand, Dan Quayle famously has criticized the values of the television show *Murphy Brown* when the main character has decided to have a child out of wedlock. Al and Tipper Gore, on the other hand, hope that their reassessment and redefinition of family values will boost Gore's presidential campaign. In their book *Joined at the Heart* the Gores survey the statistical data and discover: "The classic nuclear family of our childhood is not gone, but is very much a minority of families now. Alongside it today are two-income families, single-parent families and a host of other types. "They affirm that the true "essence" of family is captured in the definition that it is a "group of people who love and care about each other, regardless of blood relation or marital status." Thus homosexual and lesbian couples with children are assumed to constitute a genuine family with conventional families. These examples illustrate the larger phenomenon that in recent history Americans have become increasingly divided with regard to the proper definition of marriage and a family, including the question of the legalization of same-sex marriages.

The decline of the traditional family corresponds to the rise of feminist ideology. This is the case despite the frequent claims by feminists such as Rosemary Radford Ruether, who emphatically states that "First, we need to be clear that feminism is not the cause of the crisis

in the family." Instead, she avers, "The crisis in the family is caused by a patriarchal ideology of female subordination and separation of men and women into mutually exclusive spheres of child raising and paid work, forged in the Victorian age." Barbara LeBey posits that the sexual revolution, women's liberation, lenient attitudes toward divorce, and increased mobility are all contributing factors to the demise of the family. In particular, she contends that the former two movements have freed women to pursue education and careers also have changed the traditional notions concerning motherhood and family that put children first. A woman must be free to determine her own identity, role, and goals. No man or patriarchal construct shall ever interfere with women's choices, desires, and ideals.

In keeping with the feminist credo of women's unfettered personal freedom, marriage, on account of its contractual basis, is often devalued as an instrument for oppressing women's personal freedom. This is evidenced by the way in which feminists have championed "no-fault" divorce laws. Young children are increasingly placed into day care where they spend most of their waking hours without interaction with their mothers. The traditional and biblical model of family operates on the basis of giving up personal freedoms for the benefit of others within a loving, caring, and faithful relationship. As women began to put their rights and ambitions ahead of husbands and family, homes began to crumble. Thus, as Linda Wood head rightly notes, "Amongst the barrage of attacks on the family which have been launched since the mid-1960s, the feminist critique stands out as one of the most powerful."

One of the many ways in which feminism has contributed to the demise of the traditional family is by reassigning or obliterating gender role distinctions. The family values campaigns have an antifeminist tinge. There is a lot of emphasis on the selfish career woman, the self-indulgent woman or the promiscuous woman. .At first, it was all about the decline of motherhood and then recently the emphasis has begun to shift from motherless America to fatherless America. It's really about restoring the father to his rightful place as head of the household, the centre of authority. That is what the problem is and restoring sharply differentiated roles of mothers and fathers.

The notion of differentiated gender roles constitutes a major part of feminism's critique of the traditional view of marriage and the family. If women are completely equal to men, they shall not have any gender expectations impose upon them. Susan Cohen and Mary Katzenstein have isolated the primary concern as a "woman's autonomy within and outside the family." A woman, they say, must not be restricted by any traditional, social, and religious

guidelines suggesting that she must act within certain parameters to fulfil her role as a woman.

Feminism has also contributed to the demise of the traditional family by deconstructing the definition of family. The feminist movement has railed against the traditional definition of family as "the nuclear family of a heterosexual married couple with its natural and adopted children, together with family branches consisting of all nuclear families descended from common ancestors." Instead, feminists have championed a more open and encompassing definition, which has found acceptance even among some evangelicals. Thus Diana Garland and Diane Pan coast advocate a broader, "ecological" definition of family as "the relationships through which persons meet their needs for intimacy, sharing of resources, tangible and intangible help, commitment, responsibility, and meaningfulness over time and contexts," including friendships, roommates, workplace "families," communal groups, and, it appears, same-sex marriages as well.

To be sure, feminism does not stand alone as the cause for the decline of families in America. It shares culpability with: secular humanism, which asserts the self as supreme; atheistic naturalism, which maintains that humans are nothing more than a collection of chemicals and instincts; and postmodernism, which rejects all notions of authority and overarching meta-narratives. Thus feminism is one of several worldviews and ideologies that have contributed to a paradigm shift redefining the nature of truth and morality. The one common element in all of these systems of thought is the fundamental rejection of truth based on the Old and New Testaments of the Christian Scriptures.

Radical and reformist feminist interpretation has consistently subverted the teachings of Scripture in order to accommodate its particular point of view. Early on, Elizabeth Cady Stanton averred that the emancipation of women is impossible if the teachings of Scripture are accepted. Mary Daly has suggested a "castration" of the biblical language, because its core symbolism is patriarchal and therefore fails to liberate women from the sexist confines imposed upon them. Others, such as Rosemary Radford Ruether and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, have focused on the concerns of biblical interpretation related to social justice as a means of promoting a liberationist reformist brand of feminism.

The feminist experience relegates the notion of scriptural authority to a secondary and subservient position. As Ellen K. Wondra has observed, "in sharp contrast to the uniquely normative character of scripture, white feminist theologians view scripture as only

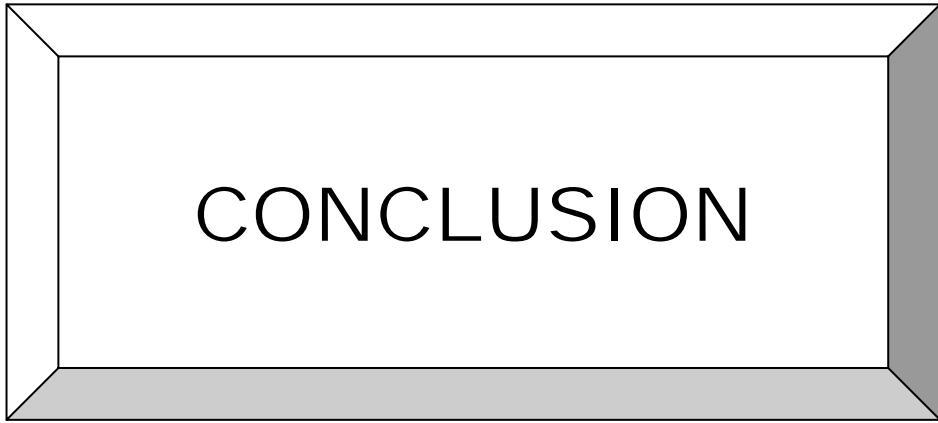
secondarily normative, subjecting scripture, with other sources, to another norm: the liberation of women from oppressive, patriarchal structures, of which scripture and its interpretation is one." Consequently, feminists exclude large swaths of the biblical record and replace it with extra biblical documents more favorable to their own feminist viewpoint. The result of this procedure is the redefinition of gender and familial roles in keeping with the cultural ideology that has contributed, and is continuing to contribute, to the overall breakdown of American families. If the structure of the traditional family has changed and children are kept outside because both parents are working you can imagine if we can still talk about patriarchy because women have all the rights, it means that men are no more owner of the power, as far as the relationship between father and children is concerned. If mum is not submissive to father I don't know how the girl can be submissive to her father or her brother. In term of possibility women have gained a lot. What has characterized the modern women's movement has been its ability to put everything up for discussion and many research Suggests that to some extent, both women and men perceive feminism to be in conflict with romance, studies of undergraduates. Older adults have shown that feminism has positive impacts on relationship with health for women and sexual satisfaction for men, and found no support for negative stereotypes of feminists.

However, I don't agree with such point of view because we are assisting to the breakdown of the family which rebounds on the society in whole with all its violence where the children are no more in the centre of the life. However 'women still suffer many injustices, discriminations and sometimes even outrages but there is no longer a coherent picture of male advantage and female disadvantage. Gender remains a crucial division in society but in a much more fractured and inconsistent way.

The key message of feminism in the 21st century society shall highlight choice in bringing a personal meaning to feminism is to recognize others' right to do the exact same thing. Women all over the world nationally, regionally and globally shall be able to embrace this powerful message of feminism and be able to create a positive meaning of their own womanhood and femininity. Furthermore, despite feminism being a strong successful movement, inequality and exploitation of women still exist and sadly there are women today, who are trapped in a society which doesn't value them and leaves them neither choice nor freedom to express their views and rights.

Throughout the impact of feminism in Britain today the key message is that things have changed with the time. Comparing to the one of Africa, especially my country Benin, I will simply say that feminism is not our concern. Before the colonization, certain women have the position more than the one of a man. Even in the ethnic of Ajatado, it is the woman who decides everything and, they are not considered as minor or there are very powerful. Those powerful women are tanyinon, yaalatchè, dayonou etc....

However, despite the presence of those powerful women, there are certain behaviours which are similar to the one of Britain in the 19th where, actually it is the parents who choose the partner to the girl and even the boy too. There are certain behaviours that influence negatively the freedom of a woman where, she cannot be the heir of her father or when she is married her wealthy become the one of her spouse. So it is after the colonization that feminism becomes our concern and for sure it improves positively the situation of women. With the new code of the family of 2004, women can choose their own partner, they can inherit like the boy, they can remain single, and they can sue their husband to the court and ask for divorce. Moreover, the children born out wedding have the same right with the legitimate ones.



CONCLUSION

In all and all, feminism has its positive and negative impact on British society. First of all, it has raised at the Victorian period, woman consciousness, where she can denounce her suffering and let her voice being heard. With the rise of feminism women can go beyond their ancient capacity not forcing to be the equal of men but to discover their ability in another domain where they can do better than men. Women can escape mistreatment and at the end, ask for a divorce to free themselves from men cruelty and to remake their life. The result is that, men reconsider their way of seeing women.

However, I helpfully pinpoint the postmodern and pluralistic roots related to the shift in American families observes, when the opinions and convictions suddenly undergo dramatic alteration. Although, nothing new has been discovered and the only thing that has dramatically changed is the spirit of the age, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that, spirit has had an important role to play in the shift. The rise of feminism with its emphasis on individualism and personal autonomy has led to a radical alteration of gender roles within the family. Women no longer view themselves as the created complement to their male counterparts. Instead, gender roles are perceived as socially constructed patterns of power designed by men to oppress and restrict women and the real issue is that of authority. Are humans and society the authorities that govern all of life, behaviour, and morality? If so, a change in the spirit of the age would indeed warrant a change in social institutions such as marriage and the family. In this case, attempts at redefining sex, marriage, and family are part of human evolution. The Bible, however, stands in radical opposition to such a notion. According to the Scriptures, God not humans or society is the ultimate authority, because he is both the Creator and Sovereign Lord of the universe. He alone determines what is right and wrong, true or false, moral or immoral. God is also the Creator and Lord of the family. He established marriage as a covenantal bond between one man and one woman intended to last a lifetime. He, in his ultimate wisdom, ordained the relationship between man and woman as two distinct sexes who are equal in status, worth, and dignity, but who function according to specific, distinct roles.

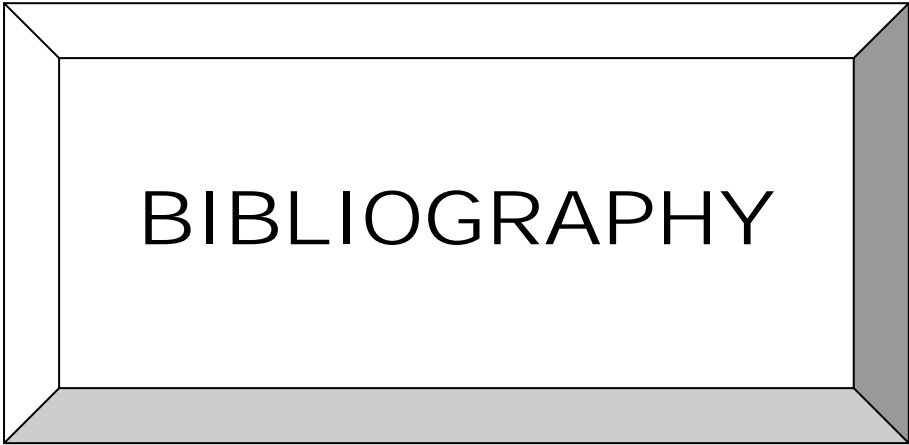
The above-surveyed data support the notion that, when men and women abandon the scriptural, divinely ordained sex roles; a breakdown in society inevitably ensues. Homes splinter apart, leaving behind children to sift through the rubble in an attempt to mature into functional adults. Couples delay or even avoid altogether a stable commitment to each other by opting to cohabit instead. Economic security becomes the motto to justify decisions

made by women who decide to pursue careers that take them out of their homes. Self-fulfilment is touted as the highest goal, and anything perceived as an obstacle to personal self-interest must be overcome. The feminist assault on biblical principles for marriage and family has indeed succeeded on many fronts, but at what cost?

As women struggle defines their role and identity in American society, it is imperative that they look to the Bible as their guide rather than to feminism. Feminists desire the complete liberation of women from any perceived gender bias based on antiquated models shaped by men. To be sure, no woman should be discriminated against on the basis of her sex, yet, in the end, if feminism has its way, women may wake up to find themselves enslaved to societal pressure, professional ambitions, and broken homes. The Bible alone, rightly has interpreted and put into practice, has offered true liberty to women who desire to live up to their God-designed potential. God's word provides the perfect template for true liberty and equality for men and women alike. British men and women must decide on what foundation they will build their homes. Should they choose the feminist approach that rejects biblical authority and demands that individual rights reign supreme? Or should they choose the biblical foundation, assigning to men and women complementary roles through which both genders are able to work together in mutual love and respect?

Furthermore, despite what we have been told for 40 years, men are not all bad and women are not all good. Despite what feminists like Anne Oakley have told us, if women ruled the world it would not automatically be a utopia; leaders like Margaret Thatcher and criminals like Rose West should be evidence enough of that. We are all human beings struggling to survive in an imperfect world. Men have been given a bad name in the past 40 years, and no doubt some men will feel resentful that they have suffered unjustly because of this. The voices of normal everyday women often get left out of discussions on feminism, but it might be fair to say that those who want feminism don't really want equality, and those who want equality really don't want feminism.

But I will leave my closing words to a quote from someone who never had anything bad to say about women or feminism, Bill Hicks: "The eyes of fear want you to put bigger locks on your door, buy guns, close yourself off. The eyes of love instead see all of us as one" (from the biography *Love all the People*). Maybe if we can have a feminism that sees us all with the eyes of love, the 21st century will be a better experience for all of us.



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