

Nature of Love and Marriage especially in relation to Wuthering Heights: An Analysis

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Abstract

The general public and intelligentsia are perpetually fascinated by the subject of love. Love is an endless source of issues and conundrums. It provides a sense of purpose. It helps to give one's life a shape. Wuthering Heights presents the extremes of love and emotion. Love is a primary motivation in the novel. Love has two sides; one is bright and the other is gloomy. Bright side has vibrant energy. In Wuthering Heights, love is an intense passion that turns to violence and can also blossom in the unlikeliest of conditions. In this piece of writing, the definition of love is examined in relation to Wuthering Heights. This article's main goal is to explain how Greeks define love and what role it plays in marriage.

Keywords: Love, Passionate Love, Compassionate Love Greek Love, Marriage, True Love

Introduction

Love is described as sentiment, feeling or an emotion. It is an emotion that is largely perceived by people as a heart-warming emotion. It is a relational property. It is a relation that exists between two kinds of behaviour. Love is a desire for happiness. According to Aristophanes myth there were three genders: male, female, and androgynous, and each person was twice what they are now. Males are from the sun, Females are from the earth, and those who are androgynous are from the moon. They were very powerful and strong and made threatening attacks on the gods so Zeus (supreme god) decided to cut each person in two. From then onwards people kept trying to find their other half and reunite with it. Love is the name that we give to our want for wholeness. Aristophanes' myth suggests that love is directed at one's "other half". Male who desires male partnership are halves of the original man. They are not inclined to marry or beget children. Pederasty (sexual relationship between an adult man and a boy or youth) and male homosexual love are praised as noble forms. Male to male love is thought to be the superior type of love, exceeding male to female love. For the Greeks, education was the key to love. The boyfriend must want to learn and become wise, and the lover must be able to help him grow in understanding and virtue in general. According to the second edition of Webster's New International dictionary (1959) Love is a feeling of strong personal attachment and ardent affection. Love is altruistic in nature. Here one wishes good things for the other's sake. Love which induces two adolescent persons to contemplate marriage is likely to be more romantic. Romantic love unites two individuals in a union transcending the grave. It is an emotion which can inspire deep feelings even at an initial contact. Romantic love can propel a man or woman towards self-inflicted death if the

object of love renders marriage as impossibility. Love between husband and wife is regarded as true love by Greeks. True love demanded from the wife a greater sacrifice than the loss of life. Greeks considered love between brother and sister as true. They believe the brother and sister relationship had a romantic quality. Nowadays love between brother and sister hardly qualifies as romantic love.

Greeks' impression of Love in Wuthering Heights

Love has a special charm all its own. It is a shared emotion that sustains human life. It is an emotive reaction. Love is innate, flexible, and unending. It doesn't have a formal definition with all the requirements. Dictionary definition of love is "an intense feeling of deep affection." Love has a prototype structure. Trust and caring were considered more prototypical than uncertainty and butterflies in the stomach. Love has been categorized into two types - Passionate love and Compassionate love. Passionate love is a state where a person has an intense longing for union with another person. It is linked to strong goal directed strivings. Attraction, Sexual desire is associated with passionate Love. Compassionate love refers to the affection we feel for those with whom our lives are profoundly intertwined. Trust, caring, attachment, intimacy, commitment are some features of compassionate love. Ancient Greeks were the first to give a detailed account on the concept of love. They offered a unique outlook on love. They had given seven types of love. The first type of love is Eros. This type of love is gender blind and may be felt towards any gender. In Greek eyes it is a form of insanity. The second type is Philia refers to love between friends and requires fondness and appreciation of the other. In Philia one wishes good things for the other and here love is reciprocated. It is an altruistic desire for the well-being of the other. The third type is Agape, an unconditional love that a person feels for their children, parents, spouse, and community. In Christian theology, Agape refers to the paternal love of God for man. The next is Ludus It is used to describe the exciting "puppy love". It is a childlike flirtatious love commonly found in the beginning stages of a relationship. Storge is the next type and is unconditional in nature. It is known to be a solid and steady love. Philautia refers to self-love. It means caring for yourself, seeing yourself as valuable, or practicing self-awareness. It is a healthy form of love where you recognize your self-worth and don't ignore your personal needs and the last type is Pragma, it is an eternal love between a couple that chooses to put equal effort into their relationship. Eros can become Pragma with time, or commitment, in a relationship. In Symposium Socrates argues "Love is the desire to possess what is good and beautiful." Heathcliff and Catherine's relationship passes through different phases. The First Phase expands from the time of Heathcliff arrival at Wuthering to the incident of Thrushcross Grange. Traits of Agape can be noticed in their first phase. Agape is an unconditional love where a person accepts an unattractive person. It manifests unselfish giving of the self. It creates value. It establishes a relationship in which faithfulness is generated within the relationship. In Agape love transfers from the main relationship to others. According to the New Testament Agape has its source in God: "Agape is of god, and he who manifests agape is born of God and knows God." In the first phase of their relationship Catherine and Heathcliff show a willingness to abandon pleasure and endure pain for each other. The second phase begins with the visit to Thrushcross Grange. In the second phase both agape and eros can be found in their relationship. In this phase she learns values of outside the world. Eros seeks value in another person. It is unforgiving towards offenses of the beloved. It has a source in human nature. It is ephemeral in nature. It seeks attractive objects. After her return from Thrushcross Grange she laughs at Heathcliff's physical appearance. Her sense of dignity disappears and mucky pride takes its place. The final phase begins with Catherine's death. His attempt to see

Catherine after her death is an example of Agape. Agape can also be seen in the relationship of younger Cathy and Hareton. Her ability to accept the unacceptable Hareton is an example of Agape. Agape exists as a redemptive force in human relationships.

Love in Wuthering Heights

Wuthering Heights is a novel published by Emily Bronte under the pseudonym Ellis Bell. Wild and broad nature of love is depicted in the novel. The novel presents two opposite types of love and their respective fruits. Lovers (except Cathy and Hareton) in Wuthering Heights are self-centred and ignore the needs, feelings, and claims of others. There are two love centred tales in the novel, the tale of Catherine and Heathcliff love and the tale of younger Catherine and Hareton. The tale of Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw shows love as a destructive force and the tale of younger Catherine and Hareton shows love as constructive force. Catherine in the novel loves two men and she is of the view that she is neither betraying Edgar Linton nor Heathcliff. Her love for Edgar Linton is superficial. External beauty of Edgar attracts Catherine. Her Love for Linton is shallow. Regarding Linton she says, "I Love the ground under his feet and the air over his head, and everything he touches, and every word he says - I love all his looks and all his actions, and him entirely, and altogether". (Chapter IX) Catherine and Heathcliff Love is deep and transcends the boundary between life and death. Heathcliff has undying love and desire for Catherine. His words after Catherine's death:

"And I pray one prayer--I repeat it till my tongue stiffens--Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest as long as I am living! You said I killed you--haunt me, then! The murdered do haunt their murderers, I believe. I know that ghosts have wandered the earth. Be with me always--take any form--drive me mad! only do not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! God! Oh! It is unutterable! I cannot live without my life! Cannot live without my soul!" (Chapter XIV)

Their love brings them to their knees. Their love is critiqued by the narrator Nelly. She sees their love as amoral and blasphemous. These Lovers in this novel behave in a peculiar way. How can two people in love torture each other so cruelly as Catherine and Heathcliff do. They have no tenderness for each other. Both are egoistical in nature. They constantly accuse each other of betraying their love.

"You have killed me- and thriven on it "Catherine tells Heathcliff and Heathcliff replies, "You loved me-then what right had you to leave me." (Chapter XV)

Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship shows that love can be Capricious and its consequences devastating. There is an unusual bond between Catherine and Heathcliff. They are alike by nature. According to Gilbert and Gubar, Heathcliff is Catherine's doppelganger (Bible of Hell"17) She neither feels erotically attracted towards him nor wishes to marry him. She values him more than anyone else on the earth. She considers him as her equal. Her statement 'Nelly, I am Heathcliff implies equality'. Her famous description gives a glimpse of love she has for Edgar Linton and Heathcliff:

"I cannot express it; but surely you and everybody have a notion that there is or should be an existence of yours beyond you. What were the use of my creation, if I were entirely contained here? My great miseries in this world have been Heathcliff's miseries, and I watched and felt each from the beginning: my great thought in living is himself. If all else perished, and he remained, I should still continue to be; and if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn to a mighty stranger: I should not seem a part of it. My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods: time will change it, I'm well aware, as winter changes the trees.

My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath: a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, I am Heathcliff-he's always, always in my mind: not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself, but as my own being.” (Chapter IX)

Catherine loves Heathcliff yet she chooses to marry Edgar Linton because after her return from Thrushcross Grange she sees no chance for a secure future with him and she wants to be the greatest woman of the neighbourhood and she also thinks by marrying Edgar she and Heathcliff can escape from the repressive world of Wuthering Heights. Catherine tells Nelly she loves Linton because he is handsome, young and cheerful and loves her. Nelly points out to Catherine he won't always be handsome and young, and may not always be rich. Catherine says, ‘He is now, and I have only to do with the present’ (Chapter IX). Catherine love is different from Younger Catherine. Catherine's love is fierce. She seeks mastery over others whereas Younger Catherine love is deep and tender. She doesn't seek mastery over others. Unlike Catherine Younger Catherine has the ability to forgive. She is interested in the welfare of others.

Marriage in Wuthering Heights

For the people of the Victorian era marriage was the main goal. Stability, morality and duty are most important Victorian values and the concept of marriage came from the most important Victorian values. The novel reflected the problems of a Victorian marriage and denounced the hypocrisy which was typical for that time. Marriage of convenience was common in those times. According to McCabe, marriage of convenience was usual for both men and women. For men, it was the creation of a home, help in establishing ties between relatives and friends. There were also those who wanted to get fortunes - women could be interested in the class and monetary component, climb the social ladder, and men could get the woman's property, since it passed to him by right after marriage (McCabe, qtd. Davidoff and Hall). There are many marriages in the novel. Marriage delineates the main ideas in the novel-oppression, love, class issues, dignity, chastity, madness and sin. Catherine and Edgar's marriage is not a companionate marriage. She loves Heathcliff but she doesn't want to become a beggar with Heathcliff so she decided to marry Edgar. By marrying Edgar, she thinks she will rise to the level of Linton and have wealth. Her behaviour is anti-Victorian. She is not a “perfect” woman- loyal, faithful and domesticated. Her position in marriage is not the guardian of the home, she is served by everyone in the family. Neither comfort nor warmth in the house is created for the benefit of Edgar, but according to Catherine's behaviour. Catherine's love for her husband Edgar is like the attitude she had towards her parents. She has such a strong faith in Linton she says “I have such faith in Linton's love, that I might kill him, and he would not wish to retaliate.” Marriage of Heathcliff and Isabella Linton is the most contentious marriage in the novel. Their marriage is built on the principles of exile, revenge and calculation. By marrying Isabella, Heathcliff receives status, a class promotion. Catherine and Heathcliff affection is manifested from early childhood. Their union is never legally registered. Gilbert and Gubar suggest in the chapter “Bible of Hell” that their relationship is incestuous. A happy and successful marriage requires a woman's heart to be free, but Catherine 's feelings do not change. Never-ending connection with Heathcliff will not let her be anyone's wife or love. Her relationship with Heathcliff was unprecedented at that time. Their union is the strongest and unbreakable; only death can separate them.

General notions of Love and Marriage

Marriage is generally viewed as the union of two individuals, yet their relationship is not one of equality. Woman is subordinate; man assumes a dominant position. Happiness, satisfaction, care, and altruism are neglected as crucial relationship factors in marriage. The main justification for marriage is love and a commitment for a lifetime. Romantic love is linked to freedom and liberty. It is disconnected from social, familial, class, and religious obligations. It has to do with sexual freedom and unrestricted love. Duty and social norms have no connection to love. It is linked to concepts of liberty, equality, agency, and progress. Love plays a crucial role in a happy and prosperous marriage. According to Frank Sinatra, Love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage. There are innumerable explanations why love is crucial in marriage. Marriage is, after all, not always a straightforward arrangement. Without love, you would not have the drive, concentration, selflessness, and patience required to build a lasting relationship. In many cases, a marriage is held together by love. Love in marriage is growing and dynamic. A person progresses from the honeymoon and puppy stages of love to a maturing love. Romantic love alone is inadequate to support marriage. It needs to be based on compatibility, friendship, and sexual affection. Love can affect a view on life, your moods, and even your health. It makes people happier. Romantic love can occasionally be thought of as a weak foundation for marriage. The foundation of a happy marriage is a set of shared values and beliefs, as well as stability and financial security. Marriage can't thrive on love alone. Accepting someone as they are demonstrates true love.

Conclusion

Emily Bronte's unconventional view of the world became a part of *Wuthering Heights*. The novel is a full-length study of human nature. Love is a most individual, exclusive and complex of emotions. Love lies outside oneself and beyond one's control. Everybody wants love, seeks love and hopes for love. Love is blind, unreasonable and unpredictable. Mutual respect, care, and the desire to please are some characteristics of romantic love. The active character of love amounts to giving. Love in *Wuthering Heights* has a superhuman strength. Lovers in the novel change their minds and turn away. It is Heathcliff who overrides the action in the novel and is at last successfully united with Catherine who has died midway through the book. Heathcliff and Catherine share a unique bond. From the beginning Heathcliff is deprived of love. Catherine is the only person who loves him. She too deserted him by marrying Edgar. His life is shattered. His unconditional love towards Catherine brings him to his knees. In Victorian society, there is no connection between marriage and love. Marrying a person and loving a person are two different things. Marriage is a social institution which is arranged by elders. Loving is an individual action.

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