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The novel *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë can be seen as an exploration of fear through the prevalent themes of violence, the supernatural and elements of melodrama. The idea of fear can also come from the references to both God and social constraints which largely affect the main characters Heathcliff and Cathy; here Brontë also closely links love and fear in the tragic love story;

The first exploration of fear presented in the novel is that of physical violence to which Heathcliff would "stand Hindley's blows", immediately addressing Hindley to be the character who instills fear due to social class and therefore power over the lower classes including Heathcliff as a "gipsy brat". However although Brontë introduces violence early in the novel, we never see Heathcliff cower in fear from those other than Cathy, whom arguably has the greatest impact upon Heathcliff. Brontë portrays Heathcliff as a typical gothic protagonist, strong and silent "he bore his degradation pretty well at first" which highlights the definite divide of those from different social origins, and for him then to break free of boundaries overcoming any fear from society to become "a gentleman in dress and manner". And so, this situation can be looked upon as Heathcliff being above the braveness of others overcoming fear in vengeance to actually attain wealth and take over their heights from Hindley's ownership or to be an exploration of contextual change, the industrial revolution and advancements in science cause the lower classes to rise; reflected by the character of Heathcliff. *Clear integration of context*

Leading on from this, Brontë utilises the character

of Heathcliff to explore the ~~few~~ characteristics of the gothic protagonist, one of which being fear and its impact upon society and the reader. Brontë initially creates a sense of mystery and darkness surrounding Heathcliff with the words "you ~~are~~ must take it as a gift of God, but treat it dark almost as if it came from the devil"; the use of the word "devil" may be used to indicate the potential power of Heathcliff and how he can ~~be~~ partake in vengeful sinister acts foreshadowing his treatment of the submissive female Isabella, in hitting her, hanging her dog and taking control, in effect consuming her soul claiming "you aren't fit to be your own guardian now!". Alternatively the juxtaposition between "God" and the "devil" may be used to highlight the change and conflict in society; to obey a wrathful God or turn away, which coincides with the emotional conflict with the character of Heathcliff; to hate and install fear or to love alongside Cathy. *In depth argument*

Another way in which Brontë installs and explores fear is through the use of the supernatural which not only affects the two main characters, but the outside character of Lockwood which arguably makes the transgression between the physical world and the life after death more plausible. Brontë ~~is~~ uses shifts in time to emphasise the fear within the novel as it lasts over a new generation; the fear is almost bound to the heights alongside Cathy's ghost. Lockwood begins to dream "almost before I ceased" to be sensible of my locality" suggesting a confusion between sleep and reality which can be fearful in itself, however then dreams of Cathy, here described as a "banshee". The use of Cathy's ghost can be used to explore the fear of the devil rising over the Catholic Church, or the literal fear felt by the society when faced with issues



of the supernatural kind; the use of Lockwood takes away from emotional torment leaving simply fear as after the event he fears to be alone in the room. However we can also explore the fear of the supernatural in relation to the character Heathcliff. "I've been tormented, I've been haunted" can be the suggestion of his own emotional torment in losing Cathy to wealth, and once he attains it she soon after dies, or to be the literal haunting of Cathy. If so, then Brontë uses the characters to suggest that true love breaks all boundaries, even those regarded as impossible and so love can be seen as a force to be reckoned with, stronger than the attitudes of society; their love can be feared by hierarchical figures whom try to deny the intergration of classes. *fully developed argument*

In contrast to this, in life and reality Brontë explores the fears of Cathy in her love to Heathcliff when she claims "it would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now" suggesting her fear of society leads her to suppress her true feelings, the word "degrade" giving a very negative view of lower class people. This can arguably be the case as Cathy chooses to marry Linton, suggesting the fear of social constraints has great impact upon all. Although the emotional torment of Cathy shows that her heart lies with Heathcliff but her head with social norms to a certain extent. Cathy although ~~fearful of~~ *is* fearful of social attitudes overcomes the fear of religion, "heaven did not seem to be my home and I broke my heart with weeping to come back to earth" highlights this, suggesting her fear of being separate from Heathcliff is greater than that of being away from or worthy of heaven; Cathy desires to be bound to Heathcliff and <sup>the</sup> heights as she feels a belonging <sub>there</sub>.



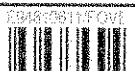
This is further emphasised by Cathy claiming "I am Heathcliff" and that her love for them "resembles the eternal rocks beneath", here the use of the word eternal suggests that love ~~is~~ is unbreakable and provides a source of "light" and hope; she cannot stop loving Heathcliff no matter the consequence. Here, Cathy is also "bold" by her claim to be Heathcliff as she presents herself to be equal which is contextually unusual as she rejects the role of the quiet submissive woman.

Evaluates context percept

An alternative viewpoint on fear is provided within the novel by the character and narrator of Nelly Dean, whom can arguably be seen as the voice of reason throughout. Firstly, although she is female and lower ~~is~~ class she breaks fears of society through her confident narration and clarity of speech in contrast to the dialect of Joseph, which suggests intelligence and education. This is further emphasised by the revelation of her to have read every book in the library as well as through her sense of morality she denies the idea of marrying for wealth asking "do you love Edgar Linton?" suggesting she can see the sole reason for marriage as apart from the criteria of society. This idea is further emphasised by ~~her~~ her separation from a male romantic figure; an absence of love has hardened her to reality. Leading on from this, Nelly Dean also shows her separation from the fear of transgression and the unknown by saying "we're dismal enough without conjuring up ghosts and visions to perplex us" thus bringing elaborate fears and questionable events to be grounded in reason. ~~is also the~~

~~suggestion that~~ Alternatively however, this could be the suggestion that the rejection of true love leads to ~~the unknown and what~~ I could have been in "light of courage".

Yellow  
Heathcliff  
Context



In conclusion, the novel *Wuthering Heights* can be seen as largely to explore the notion of fear in a range of different ways. Brontë explores both fears of society and its constraints, the Church and the supernatural and the separation and pain involved in feeling love, and therefore allows for a highly complex novel addressing many issues as well as allowing for alternative interpretations depending upon individual readers.

Band 1 - 35 A fluent, often perceptive argument in which a number of interpretations are developed and evaluated

2 5 ~~1~~ The genre of gothic literature often shows the significance of the theme entrapment in both setting, morality and its connection with the main characters within each text. This is present in the novel *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë, the play *Macbeth* by Shakespeare and the collection of short stories titled *The Bloody Chamber* by Angela Carter.

① Firstly the play *Macbeth* explores the theme of entrapment through the gothic setting of the castle as well as the entrapment of characters through the hierarchy of society and the right of kings, which is contextually significant in regards to the function of society and the extreme moral wrong doing of regicide. However Shakespeare indicates there to be a moral breaching of boundaries and attempt at escape by saying "the raven himself is hoarse that marks the fatal entrance of Duncan"; the use of the word "hoarse" suggesting weakness, a potential for change and vulnerability which emphasises the immorality of regicide as



