THE INCEST TABOO IN WUTHERING HEIGHTS:  
A MODERN APPRAISAL  

DISSERTATION  

Presented to the Graduate Council of the  
University of North Texas in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements  

For the Degree of  

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  

By  

Kathryn B. McGuire, B.A., M.A.  
Denton, Texas  
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A modern interpretation of *Wuthering Heights* suggests that an unconscious incest taboo impeded Catherine and her foster brother, Heathcliff, from achieving normal sexual union and led them to seek union after death. Insights from anthropology, psychology, and sociology provide a key to many of the subtleties of the novel by broadening our perspectives on the causes of incest, its manifestations, and its consequences. Anthropology links the incest taboo to primitive systems of totemism and rules of exogamy, under which the two lovers' marriage would have been disallowed because they are members of the same clan. Psychological studies provide insight into Heathcliff and Catherine's abnormal relationship—emotionally passionate but sexually dispassionate—and their even more bizarre behavior—sadistic, necrophilic, and vampiristic—all of which can be linked to incest. The psychological manifestations merge with the moral consequences in Bronte's inverted image of paradise; as in Milton's Paradise, incest is both a metaphor for evil and a symbol of pre-Lapsarian innocence. The psychological and moral consequences of incest in the first generation carry over into the second generation, resulting
in a complex doubling of characters, names, situations, narration, and time sequences that is characteristic of the self-enclosed, circular nature of incest. An examination of Emily Bronte's family background demonstrates that she was sociologically and psychologically predisposed to write a story with an underlying incest motif.
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INTRODUCTION

Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, since its publication in 1847, has been admired as a novel of near mythical proportions. The primitive, passionate atmosphere of Wuthering Heights contrasted with the cultivated tranquility of Thrushcross Grange, the larger-than-life characters, and the disturbing theme are presented with meticulous structural organization, intricate narrative points of view, and delicately counterpoised time sequences. Emily Bronte matter-of-factly lures the reader into a world at once unfamiliar but vaguely comprehended, disturbing but attractive, repelling but seductive. Yet, despite the many aesthetic strengths of *Wuthering Heights*, readers inevitably remain puzzled by and dissatisfied with the outcome. Who or what is the mysterious foundling, Heathcliff? Why is Catherine Earnshaw so wildly attracted to him that she joins him in rebellious alliance against the rest of her family? Why does their mutual passion remain unfulfilled when there is no apparent obstacle to their union? Why is their consuming physical attachment to each other superseded by a morbid fascination with union after death?

One way of arriving at a satisfactory reading of this novel and satisfactory answers to these questions is to re-appraise the tragic love affair of Heathcliff and Catherine
in light of modern studies of incest—its causes, its manifestations, and its devastating consequences. An unconscious incest taboo would explain why the two lovers despaired of normal sexual union and why they spiritualized their attachment to each other, eventually coming to believe that they could find union only after death in a paradise of their own making.

For this analysis to be valid no conscious awareness of the Oedipal complex, the incest taboo, or any of their resulting dynamics need be present in the mind of Emily Bronte or her characters. The novel was written when science was virtually unaware of the tremendous complexities of the human psyche. Yet, as is evident in mythology and folklore, literature has always provided a narrative for our deepest unconscious fears, desires, and guilt. Long before Freud provided a means of examining the unconscious, the sensitive artist was delving into the universal secrets of the human heart.

Criticism of *Wuthering Heights* has characteristically taken one of two approaches when the question of incest has been raised. Some critics have suggested that Heathcliff was the illegitimate son of Mr. Earnshaw, but no textual evidence exists to support the hypothesis that Heathcliff and Catherine were blood brother and sister. In any case, for an incest taboo to exist, it is irrelevant whether Catherine and Heathcliff are blood relatives. What is
essential is that they were reared as brother and sister. Heathcliff entered the family when he was seven and Catherine was six. They shared all living arrangements as brother and sister, including sleeping in the same bed. That Catherine would consider herself Heathcliff's foster sister is understandable when Nelly Dean calls herself Hindley's "foster sister" because she was raised with him, although she was the family servant (106, 221).

Other critics have viewed Heathcliff and Catherine's relationship as a search for the lost paradise of sibling unity, citing the nineteenth-century nostalgic regard for the family as a refuge from public life; but this perspective fails to account for the sexual tension in the novel. Neither does it explain the return of the ghosts of Heathcliff and Catherine as adults rather than as children.

Chapter one examines the origin of the incest taboo and its relationship to totemism and exogamy. The incest taboo, as anthropologists have shown, is independent of "reproductive causality, let alone of genetic complexity" (Twitchell 11-12). Studies of the incest taboo in both primitive and modern cultures disclose that societal sexual restrictions are varied; sometimes they are illogical, and often are impractical. But the incest taboo is universal; almost all societies designate certain members as forbidden sexual partners to certain other members. Primitive societies, for
example, denied sexual relations between members of the same clan because they shared the same totem.

The incest taboo's early association with totems accounts for Bronte's choice of metaphors—Wuthering Heights is bear, bull, wolf, dog, fire, storm, and wild furze and heather; Thrushcross Grange is bird, mouse, lamb, leveret, cat, ice, sunshine, and flowers. Even though there was no legal obstacle to Catherine and Heathcliff's marriage in nineteenth-century England, primitive rules of totemism and exogamy would have disallowed their union because they were members of the same totem. The younger Cathy and Hareton's romantic relationship, however, is a resolution of the incestuous relationship of their first generation counterparts, since they were not members of the same totem.

By its very nature, any taboo is doomed to be broken. Chapter two takes up the serious consequences attending the violation of the incest taboo, universally the most heinous of sins. At the turn of the twentieth century, Sigmund Freud's theories of the unconscious, of sexual repression, and of the Oedipus complex gave us a means of discussing the devastating consequences to the psyche of the offenders.

Since Freud, various psychoanalytical interpretations have reshaped his theory of the Oedipal conflict, but few deny its importance in understanding human behavior, especially abnormal behavior. Psychological studies provide insight into Heathcliff and Catherine's abnormal relation-
ship—emotionally passionate but sexually dispassionate—and their even more abnormal behavior—sadistic, necrophilic, and vampiristic—all of which can be linked to incest.

The psychological manifestations of the urge to incest and the devastating consequences of giving way to it merge with the moral consequences in Bronte's inverted image of paradise, our discussion in chapter three. I argue that Bronte clearly draws on John Milton's *Paradise Lost* with its archetypal incest figure, Satan, whose incestuous relationship resulted in the birth of Death. Heathcliff is a metaphorical Satan, whose incestuous fixation results in his descent into bestiality and his propensity to wreak suffering on those around him. Adam and Eve are the first example of earthly incest, for after their sin they became aware of lust, sin, and death; however, they represent a kind of pre-Lapsarian innocence that Catherine hopes to recover, paradoxically through incest, but an incest that is not taboo in a world with no evil.

The moral consequences of incest in the first generation are carried over into the second generation. Heathcliff, unable to marry his beloved Catherine, marries her sister-in-law, then forces his son to marry her daughter, and so on, resulting in a complex doubling of relationships, names, resemblances, and personalities. Critics have generally conceded that the second half of the novel lacks the power and craft of the first; however, the doubling—of
characters, situations, narration, time sequences—is characteristic of and indicative of the self-enclosed, circular nature of incest. The device of literary doubling, I argue in chapter four, becomes an integral part of the novel's underlying incest theme.

The incest taboo certainly affords a plausible explanation for Heathcliff's perplexing character, for Catherine's inability to form a successful relationship outside the family, and for their mutual obsession with each other which ends in death for them both.

The question arises, though, as to how a youthful female writer who lived on the isolated moors of England and who was apparently uninitiated into the subtleties of sexual relationships could anticipate by some seventy-five to one hundred years what modern studies identify as the dynamics of unconscious incest desire and guilt. In chapter five, an examination of the writer's psychological biography addresses this question by demonstrating that Emily Bronte's family background predisposed her to write a story with an underlying incest motif.

The incest theme, though only implicit, moves the modern reader no less powerfully than it moved Bronte's contemporaries. The artist, whose role is to revitalize myths so that humanity can learn to know itself, is uniquely qualified to express the unconscious and gratify repressed
wishes through literature, at the same time satisfying the reader, who is also subject to the laws of the unconscious.
NOTES

1Throughout, I will use Catherine to designate the mother and Cathy to designate the daughter.

2For example, Herbert Dingle's "The Origin of Heathcliff," Bronte Society Transactions 16 (1972): 131-38; Eric Solomon's "The Incest Theme in Wuthering Heights," Nineteenth Century Fiction 14 (1959): 80-83; William R. Goetz, "Genealogy and Incest in Wuthering Heights," Studies in the Novel 15 (1982): 359-76. More recently, James B. Twitchell makes the claim in Forbidden Partners: The Incest Taboo in Modern Culture, New York: Columbia UP, 1987. These critics' argument is based solely on their skepticism that the "ungenerous" Mr. Earnshaw would give an orphan a home and the name of his previously deceased son (his detractors seem to discount his rigid religious nature and his "kind heart" [77]); and Nelly Dean's comments that Mr. Earnshaw was "furious when he discovered his son persecuting the poor, fatherless child, as he called him" and that he "took to the child strangely" (79). Twitchell takes the liberty of italicizing the words I have underlined, although the author doesn't, which may bolster the critic's case but does an injustice to the author's intentions and the reader's acceptance of the criticism.
All quotations from the text of *Wuthering Heights* are based on the 1965 Penguin Classic, edited and introduced by David Daiches.


CHAPTER I

THE INCEST TABOO AND TOTEMS

Why have things reached such a state at Wuthering Heights? What has happened to break down all the barriers that normally exist between man and nature, man and animals, and man and the supernatural realm? Why do the inhabitants behave as though they are more savage than socialized?¹

The depiction of the primitive, natural setting of Wuthering Heights, the emphasis on animalism, and the violence of the natural elements imply that the Heights has reverted to a state of pre-cultural existence. Bronte constructs its antithetical site, Thrushcross Grange, which is as purely civilized as Wuthering Heights is primitive, to underscore the ascendancy of the natural world and the corresponding loss of humanity at Wuthering Heights.

Most anthropologists and sociologists put the incest taboo "at the heart of our humanity" (Levi-Strauss 56). "If, the argument goes, man had not at some time or other instituted the ban on intra-familial sex, then there would have been no culture, no society; man would have remained in an incestuous animal-like state" (56). Many psychologists as well, taking their lead from Freud and Jung, agree that "we had to become non-incestuous to become human" (Levi-Strauss 61).
What is the incest taboo, and how does it relate to what is going on in *Wuthering Heights*? To answer this question, we must define what the incest taboo was to the primitive way of thinking and how it relates to totemism and exogamy.

A taboo is similar to conscience, an inner voice telling us not to do something, but it is communal rather than individual. It differs from a conventional moral norm in that it carries with it a sense of the sacred and, at the same time, a sense of the uncanny. Taboos are maintained by an inner anxiety and dread rather than by fear of punishment. They "lack all justification" but "are taken as a matter of course by those who are under their dominance" (Freud 821). According to Emile Durkheim, the incest taboo is "much more rigorous the more rudimentary is the society" (27).

Freud studied the origins of the incest taboo using the Australian aborigines as the best example of primitive concepts since they were, by modern standards, technologically primitive and geographically isolated. The aborigines represented for him primal man, stripped of cultural inhibitions. He found, as he had in history, legend, and myth, as well as in his neurotic patients, and even in children, that incestuous wishes were accompanied by an unusual horror of incest. In attempting to learn why, he became convinced that the incest taboo was located, not in the individual's
psychology but in the evolutionary history of the species, a conviction that was not contradictory to Darwin’s theories of natural selection and sexual selection.

Freud also discovered that the incest taboo is inseparable from totemism. A totem is "a being, animate or inanimate, and generally a plant or an animal, from which the group is reputed to be descended, and which serves the members as both an emblem and a collective name" (Durkheim 15). The primitive system of totemism takes the place of all religious and social institutions (Freud 809). A group of individuals who share the same totem is a clan. The clan is a domestic society, but differs from a family since relationship is founded exclusively on the community of the totem and supersedes consanguineous (or blood) relationship (Durkheim 16).

Almost everywhere that totemism is the prevailing system, Freud found that there also exists the law of exogamy (marriage out of one’s group); that is, members sharing the same totem cannot have sexual relations with or marry each other (809). For example, a man who belongs to the Wolf clan cannot have sexual relations with a woman of the same clan, or even with a woman from another clan, if they share the same totem (Durkheim 16). The totem is hereditary and is not changed by marriage (Freud 810).

The imagery in *Wuthering Heights* evokes the incest taboo’s early association with totems. The totems of the
Heights are bear, bull, wolf, dog, fire, storm, tree, and heather; the many references to Heathcliff's wolfish characteristics, as well as his apparent preference for the companionship of his dogs, seem to emphasize that Heathcliff is closer to an incestuous animal-like state than to a socialized human being. On the other hand, the totems of the cultivated Thrushcross Grange are more domesticated—bird, mouse, lamb, leveret, cat, ice, sunshine, and flowers.

Catherine and Heathcliff often speak in totemic metaphors when characterizing their affinities: Catherine says of Heathcliff, "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." (121). Heathcliff says of Catherine's marriage to Edgar, "He might as well plant an oak in a flower-pot, and expect it to thrive" (190).

Because of the rules of exogamy, Catherine and Heathcliff cannot have sexual relations or marry since they belong to the same clan regardless of whether they are blood relatives (as I have mentioned, the relationship of the clan is not dependent on consanguinity). They have no choice but to repress their incestuous desire for each other, since their relationship would violate the incest taboo.

The violation of the incest taboo differs from violations of other taboos in that it is most "energetically avenged by the whole tribe as if it were a question of warding off a danger that threatens the community as a whole
or a guilt that weighs upon all" (Freud 810). In many societies, incest is equated with demonism and witchcraft, equating the most heinous crime in the social sphere with the greatest crime in the religious sphere (Lamp 33); hence the many references to demonism in Wuthering Heights.

Historically, every violation of the incest prohibition has been most severely repressed (Durkheim 18). The regular penalty among primitives was death for both offenders (Frazer 157). In such societies, often a brother and sister who violated the taboo would commit suicide rather than await the punishment society would mete out (Lamp 34).

Durkheim, whose classic work on the incest taboo among primitive tribes remains an important historical source of information on incest, tells us that in societies where no formal penalty was inflicted,

. . . there was a general and unchallenged belief that the guilty ones were subject to natural punishment, that is to say, at the hands of the gods. . . . According to primitive ideas, the terrible powers which inhabit the world react, with automatic necessity, against everything that offends them, just as do the physical forces. (18).

In Wuthering Heights, a number of storms occur which appear to symbolize a corruption of the natural order which cannot be allowed to go unpunished. Significantly, the
storms occur when some aspect of Heathcliff and Catherine's togetherness is at issue.

At the beginning of the novel, Lockwood is forced to remain overnight at Wuthering Heights because of the inclement weather. Given quarters in the bed that Heathcliff and Catherine shared as children, Lockwood goes to sleep reading Catherine's diary. As the storm howls outside, he reads of her anguish at being separated from Heathcliff by Hindley.

The second storm takes place immediately following the death of Catherine's father, while Catherine and Heathcliff, according to Nelly, comfort each other with thoughts of Heaven. Nelly does not reveal their concept of Heaven, but does characterize it as "innocent" (85); therefore, we cannot definitely include this storm as a reaction of the forces of nature against evil unless we recall that Heaven has a reverse meaning for Catherine and Heathcliff—that Heaven for them is togetherness, and Hell is separation.

The third storm occurs the night Heathcliff and Catherine go to Thrushcross Grange to spy on Edgar and Isabella, their initiatory act of rebellion (88), which results in Hindley's separating them.

A fourth significant storm occurs the evening that Heathcliff overhears Catherine telling Nelly that she cannot marry him because Hindley has brought him so low. He runs away to begin an exile which lasts for three years, and as the storm rages Nelly concludes that it "must be a judgment
on us," but attributes the evil to Hindley (125). This remains a possible explanation, for certainly Hindley's behavior is unnatural. But a more compelling explanation is that nature is outraged at Catherine's open admission of love for a tabooed object. Prior to her deathbed, this is the only time she admits her true feelings to herself or another. Ironically, she is revealing her plans to marry another man.

The fifth storm takes place the day of Catherine's burial. We learn from Isabella and later from Heathcliff himself that he had gone to Catherine's grave that night and had attempted to exhume her body so that he could hold her in his arms again, but abandoned the project when he got the feeling "that Catherine was there, not under [him], but on the earth" (321).

The last storm in the novel only completes the pattern. On the night of Heathcliff's death Nelly discloses, "As I took my morning walk round the house, I observed the master's window swinging open, and the rain driving straight in" (364). Primitive societies might have interpreted this storm as nature's rebellion at an incestuous longing finally fulfilled: having shed his mortal body, Heathcliff is at last free to join "his soul's bliss" (363).

Finally, the elements are one last time identified with Heathcliff and Catherine's togetherness at the end of the story when rumors circulate after Heathcliff's death that
the two lovers appear to be looking out of the chamber window "on every rainy night since his death" (366).

The entire community feared the upheavals of the natural order incurred by violating the incest taboo. In Old Testament times, the penalty for brother-sister incest was banishment (Lev. 18: 29; 20: 11). The words "outcast," "exile," "beggar," "castaway," "waif," "vagabond," and "gypsy" appear repeatedly in reference to Catherine and Heathcliff. Catherine, in her delirium before her death, calls herself an "exile" and "outcast" after being "wrenched from the Heights" and her "all in all," Heathcliff (163).

According to Luciano Santiago’s 1973 study of incest, brother-sister incest "appears by far the most frequently in the folklore of almost all ethnic groups" (7). Otto Rank had established in his valuable work on the incest motif in 1912 that the brother-sister relation was predominant in primitive societies. He declares that it "is neither a feeblener of the mother-incest nor a disguise of union with a sister, but . . . a deliberate replacement of mother and wife by the sister—as one who has neither borne the brother himself nor bears him children" (145).

Robin Fox in his 1980 study, The Red Lamp of Incest, presents the two theoretical extremes of the stimulus to incest in the brother-sister relation: Edward Westermarck’s theory that siblings are naturally conditioned to avoid incest is at one end of the spectrum countered by Freud’s
apparently contradictory contention that there is an instinctive urge to incest.

Westermarck's approach is the "familiarity breeds contempt" argument. He found in a number of societies that siblings who are reared very closely from childhood with little or no restrictions as to physical, tactile interactions (although rarely consummated by intercourse) learn a conditioned incest avoidance. This avoidance can be understood as negative reinforcement; that is, the physical stimulation that is not consummated engenders frustration and a resulting love/hate, approach/avoidance, promise/disappointment ambivalence. Upon sexual maturity, the siblings relieve their frustration and ambivalence by looking outside the family for satisfaction (Lamp 25).

Fox reconciles Westermarck's theory with Freud's belief that incestuous love choices are the first and most intense by noting that Freud's observations of the dynamics of incest in neurotics and children were based on a family structure--such as the Victorian one--in which the siblings are reared very closely from childhood with very stringent restrictions on physical, tactile interactions. They have no chance to develop negative reinforcement; therefore no conditioned avoidance results. At puberty, although they may be sexually stimulated by each other, the temptation is tabooed, and so it is consciously avoided. The amount of temptation and the resulting repression can depend on a
number of factors, including the way the separation is brought about and the availability of other sexual outlets. Separation can be harsh or gentle, relative or absolute, effective or ineffective, and all these will affect the outcome. It is not simply then separation as such, but how the separation is effected, that will determine the quality, intensity, and effectiveness of the strong desire in adult life. For that matter, so will the relationship of the siblings after puberty. If they simply part and marry, it need never be an issue; if they are thrust together into some special and ongoing relationship, then there may be problems. (Lamp 26)

According to Fox, in Westermarck's scenario, there is "low anxiety about incest, a minimal interest in the subject, and fairly lax treatment of offenders." In Freud's scenario, on the other hand, there is "the highest incest anxiety and possibly the strongest desire of all" (27).

Of course, Freud's scenario closely resembles the conditions under which Heathcliff and Catherine were reared after the death of Mr. Earnshaw, when Hindley takes over, only to become more of a threatening father-figure than a brother. The resulting family relationship illustrates Freud's explanation of the origin of the incest taboo, the Myth of the Primal Horde.
According to Freud, patricide and incest were the only two crimes which troubled primitive society, and he formulated a mythological "explanation" for why that was so. In the "Primal Horde" theory, the brothers of the horde killed the father because he "stood so powerfully in the way of their sexual demands and their desire for power" (916). The overwhelming guilt that resulted from the murder of the father caused the sons to renounce their claims on his women, a social pact that, according to Freud, developed into the beginnings of social organization, religious rituals, and moral laws, including a rigid taboo against incest.

Freud's myth of the father who is slain by the sons because they were jealous of his power and wanted his mate illustrates how revenge as a central theme of *Wuthering Heights* points to an incest taboo as the underlying theme. Heathcliff, totally violating the ethics of the mythical horde, is determined to get revenge on Hindley and Edgar, both of whom stand in the way of his union with Catherine. His desire to usurp Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange more nearly approximates what Ernest Jones terms "the normal solution of the Oedipal complex," that is, the succession of the father by the son in due course (90).

Hindley, as a substitute father who is determined to separate Heathcliff and Catherine so that she will marry Edgar Linton, bears the brunt of Heathcliff's vindictiveness. Jones explains the deep-seated source of the hostil-
ity that arises between a father and child, a theory we can apply to explain the hostility between Heathcliff and Hindley:

A child very often unreasoningly interprets the various encroachments on its privileges, and the obstacles interposed to the immediate gratification of its desires, as meaningless cruelty, and the more imperative is the desire that has been thwarted the more pronounced is the hostility towards the agent of this supposed cruelty, most often of course a parent. (72-3)

Heathcliff's determination to ruin Hindley and to take his place as master of Wuthering Heights intensifies in direct proportion to Hindley's determination to separate Heathcliff and Catherine. He lays direct blame on Hindley for his thwarted love when he overhears her telling Nelly that it would degrade her to marry him because Hindley has brought him so low. He leaves Wuthering Heights for a period of three years, apparently to better himself both personally and financially. Upon his return, he tells Catherine that he has come back to "settle [his] score with Hindley; and then prevent the law by doing execution on [himself]" (136); obviously, his threat implies murder, or at least bodily harm.

As Jones explains, "There is a close relation between adult jealousy and the desire for the removal of the rival
by the most effective means, that of death . . . " (72-3).
At age sixteen, Heathcliff wishes that Hindley would drink
himself to death but fears that because of his strong con-
stitution he will "outlive any man . . . unless, some happy
chance out of the common course befall him" (116). Only six
months before Hindley’s death Isabella tells us that Heath-
cliff nearly killed him but desisted only through a "preter-
human self-denial" (213), perhaps because of Isabella’s
presence as a witness.

Suspicion surrounding Hindley’s subsequent death is
planted in the reader’s mind by Nelly, whose first thought
upon hearing of the death was, "Had he fair play?" (221).
She hastens to Wuthering Heights where Heathcliff claims
that Hindley has deliberately drunk himself to death.
Joseph confirms the story, but not without muttering that
Hindley had been alive when he (Joseph) had gone for the
doctor and that Heathcliff should have gone himself for
assistance. In other words, Heathcliff was left alone with
Hindley, who has become expendable since all his property is
now mortgaged to Heathcliff.

Nelly seems to remain unconvinced of Heathcliff’s
innocence, saying that his deportment "expressed a flinty
gratification at a piece of difficult work, successfully
executed" and that there was "something like exultation in
his aspect" (222) when the body was being removed. Never-
theless, no one questions the death further, even though it
is this death which gives Heathcliff sole control over
Wuthering Heights and Hindley's son, Hareton, whom he takes
for his own: "Now, my bonny lad, you are mine! And we'll see if one tree won't grow as crooked as another, with the same wind to twist it" (222). His vindictive motive is to raise Hareton in the same degrading way that Hindley has raised Heathcliff.

According to Nelly, "The unsuspecting thing was pleased at this speech; he played with Heathcliff's whiskers, and stroked his cheek . . ." (222), reminding us of Freud's conjecture that the sons of the primal horde, while they feared and envied the father, at the same time loved and admired him. Hareton certainly fears yet reveres his "devil daddy," refusing to openly oppose him, even though it means taking sides against Catherine, whom he is growing to love despite Heathcliff's attempts to keep them apart.

Taking over as master of Wuthering Heights and becoming the vengeful father-figure to Hareton does not appease Heathcliff, though. He will not rest until he has avenged himself on Edgar for taking Catherine from him. His next task, accordingly, is to gain power over Thrushcross Grange and Edgar's daughter, young Cathy, which he sets out to do by forcing her to marry his dying son, Linton.

Once again, Heathcliff has a hand in the death of an adversary, for he kidnaps Cathy with the intent that the resulting distress will finish off the dying Edgar, which it
does. He buys off the lawyer so that Edgar dies before he can put his estate in trusteeship; therefore Cathy, who is now Heathcliff's daughter-in-law, inherits Thrushcross Grange, which will fall to Heathcliff when Linton dies.

Again, Heathcliff has a hand in ridding himself of a male competitor, this time his weak and ineffectual son, whose death, if not directly caused by the father, is hastened by him. Cathy asks Heathcliff to send for the doctor because Linton is ill:

"We know that!" answered Heathcliff, "but his life is not worth a farthing, and I won't spend a farthing on him."

"But I cannot tell how to do," she said; "and if nobody will help me, he'll die!"

"Walk out of the room!" cried the master, "and let me never hear a word more about him! None here care what becomes of him; if you do, act the nurse; if you do not, lock him up and leave him."

(323)

When Linton dies, Heathcliff shows the will to Cathy whereby Linton has bequeathed everything to him, and she, "destitute of cash and friends, cannot disturb his possession" (325).

Heathcliff's relentless bid for power over all the other males, his attempts to keep the women from them, and their ineffectiveness in combating him seems to be a playing
out of Freud's myth of the primal horde as well as a validation of Darwin's law of sexual selection. Fox simplifies Darwin's theory:

Sexual selection has two sides: the competition between members of one sex (usually male) for mates from the other, and the choice exercised by the other (usually female) in picking mates from the competitors. (Lamp x)

Both theories tie in with Claude Levi-Strauss's sociological theory that the incest prohibition derives from society's need to perpetuate itself, resulting in rules that govern the exchange of women.¹

Totem groups are usually either matrilineal (descent on the mother's side) or patrilineal (descent on the father's side), since a bilateral system cannot specifically classify an individual on the basis of kinship (Lamp 63). Sociologists, such as J.R. Goody, maintain that matrilineal societies are primarily concerned with prohibiting incest with the sister, whereas patrilineal societies are more concerned about adultery with wives of members of the group. The logical outcome of the primal horde would be a matrilineal group of some kind with its taboos on mother and sister, but most anthropologists agree that patrilineal societies "came later and added the prohibition against the daughter" (Lamp 68).⁵
The family relationships in *Wuthering Heights*, as William R. Goetz has noted, "tend to be overdetermined," the doubling and overlapping of names reinforcing the sense of an "unhealthy proximity or likeness between characters who should remain different; they insist upon that general threat of incest that overhangs this society, the threat of a union between characters who are too alike" (365). But if we apply the rules of exogamy in a totemic society to the sets of lovers in the novel, only Heathcliff and Catherine would violate the incest taboo, and the younger Cathy's marriages to Linton and Hareton would be permissible.

In the matrilineal totem system, the children are members of the mother's group but not the father's, and the brother's children will not be members of this group. The nearest male relative of the children will not be their father, but their mother's brother, because his own children will belong to his wife's group. (Indeed, Linton tells his Uncle Edgar that Heathcliff "affirms I am more your nephew than his son" [290].) More importantly, this would explain why Heathcliff is so revolted by Cathy although she closely resembles her mother in looks and temperament and why he is so repelled at Lockwood's natural mistake that the daughter is Heathcliff's wife, for she would be taboo to him in a matrilineal system since they share the same totem. She would be equally taboo under a patrilineal system in which
the daughter is taboo. (In fact, Heathcliff calls himself Cathy's "father" after she marries Linton.)

To demonstrate the relationships that would be eligible in the matrilineal totemic system, we will designate the Heights clan--including Catherine, Heathcliff, and Hindley--by their totem Wolf, and the Grange clan--including Edgar and Isabella--by their totem Lamb. This means that Catherine (Wolf) would not be eligible to marry Heathcliff (Wolf) but must marry Edgar (Lamb); the younger Cathy (Wolf) would be eligible to marry both Linton Heathcliff (Lamb) and Hareton (whose mother was from outside both clans). She would be eligible to marry both in a patrilineal system also because she would be Lamb (carrying Edgar's totem), and Linton and Hareton would be Wolf (carrying Heathcliff's and Hareton's totem).

Cathy's marriages to both Linton and Hareton would be exogamous, and therefore permitted, in Levi-Strauss' "dual organization" kinship system as well. In such a structure, each individual belongs to one of two clans (or groups) and must marry from the opposite group (69-83). Both marriages in the second generation of Wuthering Heights would be between "crossed first cousins" (the children of a brother and sister rather than the children of two brothers or two sisters), which are "the first collaterals with whom marriage is possible" (372).§
Whereas the great love between Heathcliff and Catherine could not be fulfilled in life because of their totemic bond, the growing love between Hareton and young Cathy can be fulfilled and the two houses can merge because their union is exogamous. The binary opposition of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange is metaphorically transformed from static polarity to dynamic synthesis by way of the incest prohibition, which "is the fundamental step because of which, by which, but above all in which, the transition from nature to culture is accomplished. . . . Before it, culture is still non-existent; with it, nature's sovereignty over man is ended" (Levi-Strauss 25).
NOTES

1J. Hillis Miller addresses these questions in The Disappearance of God, responding that, for Victorian writers such as Bronte, "The lines of connection between us and God have broken down," resulting in "disconnection between man and nature, between man and man, even between man and himself" (2). According to Miller, the world Bronte portrayed is wild and savage because God has "disappeared," causing the "loss of an earlier state of civilized restraint" (168). David Cecil, on the other hand, maintains in his essay "Emily Bronte and Wuthering Heights" that "The setting is a microcosm of the universal scheme as Emily Bronte conceived it," and the opposites represented by Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange combine "to compose a cosmic harmony. It is the destruction and re-establishment of this harmony which is the theme of the story" (102-03).

2Darwin's theory of sexual selection--the males compete for mates, and the females exercise choices in picking mates from the competitors--ties in with Freud's association of incest with aggression, or his "primal horde" theory.

3According to Mark Schorer in his "Introduction to Wuthering Heights," "The natural elements provide at least half of the metaphorical base of the novel. . . . The second large area of metaphorical interest is animal life. . . .
Most of the animals are wild, and strength is equal to brutishness" (187).


5 In the most primitive societies where promiscuity was prevalent, only the mother's parenthood was unquestioned because consanguinity could be traced only to her. Anthropologists theorize that initially the woman was the authority in the family, society, and matters of religion. After a lengthy historical process, men overthrew the matriarchal system, replacing it with a patriarchy characterized by monogamy, especially on the part of women.

6 According to the *Book of Common Prayer*, marriage between first cousins was also permitted in the Church of England in nineteenth-century England.
CHAPTER WORKS CITED


CHAPTER II

INCEST BEHAVIOR

Any discussion of an incest theme in *Wuthering Heights* must begin with Sigmund Freud's theory of the Oedipus complex—that is, the infantile fixation of the child on the opposite sex parent and the simultaneous rebellion toward the same sex parent. The Oedipus complex, which gets its name from Sophocles' Oedipus, who slew his father and married his mother, is at the very core of Freud's psychological system. According to Freud, the Oedipus complex provides a key to understanding history and the evolution of religion and morals. Freud surmised from his studies of dreams that the secret wish buried deep within the unconscious for sexual possession of the opposite sex parent and the guilt that resulted from such a wish developed into religious rituals and moral laws, including a rigid taboo against incest (91-94).

Freud's insistence on the sexual nature of the infantile fixation of the child on the parent was unacceptable to many, not only to some of his followers but to other schools of scientific thought as well. Modern psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists clearly diverge from the Freudian characterization of incest as a purely sexual
drive. Ernest Becker, a cultural anthropologist, brings some cohesiveness to the different interpretations of the origins and significance of the Oedipus complex by arguing that it is motivated solely by the desire for power to deal with the fear of death, a fear that "haunts the human animal like nothing else; it is a mainspring of human activity--activity designed largely to avoid the fatality of death, to overcome it by denying in some way that it is the final destiny of man" (ix).

Since the child becomes aware of death and his utter powerlessness to escape it as early as age three, a fact too terrifying for him to face on a conscious level, he turns to the powerful parents, and in fantasy possesses them by replacing one with himself and symbolically taking the other as spouse. In other words, the child wants the power of the parent in order to deny his identity as a separate person who will die. In a sense, incest offers the most nearly perfect way of achieving oneness, providing the metaphor of like with like merging into complete possession. By suppressing the sexual instincts, this possession can be based on the eternal union of the spirit, hence not subject to the death of the physical body.

Ideally the child works through the Oedipal phase by around age nine and is able to separate himself from the powerful parent figure. In cases of arrested development, however, this separation process, which results in healthy
individuation, fails to take place, wreaking emotional havoc. The person remains in a child-like state, always attempting to immerse himself in another, unconsciously trying to perpetuate his own life by adding that of another to it.

Incest, then, can be viewed as an attempt by fragmented man to achieve wholeness and immortality through the most intimate, yet historically (because it has been taboo in almost every society and in virtually every period of history) the most heinous, sexual union possible—that of like with like. Yet incest, though arising out of a need for integration, paradoxically results most often in the severest disintegration. A variety of disorders follow in its wake, many of which are manifested in the bizarre behavior of Heathcliff—his sadism and vampiristic and necrophilic tendencies—and others which are implied in the hysterical attacks of Catherine and in her dreams and hallucinations.2

An analysis of behavioral patterns consistent with an incestuous fixation must begin with Heathcliff, for he is the character who has most beguiled readers and critics alike since the publication of Wuthering Heights.3 The mysterious nature of Heathcliff's origins, as well as his bizarre behavior throughout the novel, has been the basis for much of the conflicting interpretation of his character. The first generation of critics gave a "religious" reading to the novel, calling him a "fiend," "an incarnation of
evil qualities," filled with ingratitude and "implacable hate" (Twitchell 116). The second generation of critics gave a sociological reading, mitigating the harshly moralistic view by interpreting Heathcliff as victim of a "social or natural process in which he was pathetically powerless" (117). The present generation of critics can best view him in psychological terms, for Bronte, whether conscious of it or not, was portraying in clinically accurate terms someone suffering from the repression of incestuous desires and the consequent guilt.

The environment in which Heathcliff and Catherine were raised was extraordinarily conducive to the development of an Oedipal situation. Inhabitants of the lonely moors, "completely removed from the stir of society" (45), the family circle was closed to all except the servants and a handful of neighbors who lived at some distance. The sense of isolation is conveyed through a number of images, including doors, gates, and locks. The prevailing imagery of the book creates an atmosphere quite consistent with Lockwood's avowal that the locale was "a perfect misanthropist's heaven" (45). It was also a perfect breeding-ground for a mutual incestuous attachment.

Sociologists tell us that the role of isolation is a significant aspect in incest, as both a motive for the relationship and as an effect of its practice (Justice 135). Although incest arises from a yearning for completeness and
belonging, it most often results in further alienation, for
the incestuous lover, rather than turning outward instead
turns inward, a maneuver which can only end disastrously; in
a sense he is attempting a kind of union with himself.

Psychologists who focus on the family add to the socio-
logical picture. They point out that in cases of broth-
er/sister incest, the siblings are likely to be introverted
people who withdraw into the home as a haven from the out-
side world. The parents are most often weak and neglectful,
unwilling or unable to provide a strong, positive influence.
Typically, the mother is passive and ignores her responsi-
bilities or is not present at all; the father is preoccupied
and uninterested in the chaotic conditions which exist
within the family (Justice 64, 104-06).

The novel closely fits such a scenario, as we learn
from Nelly's account of Heathcliff's entry into the family.
He arrived at Wuthering Heights as a seven-year-old orphan.
Mrs. Earnshaw was opposed to his coming, patently neglected
him, and "never put in a word on his behalf" (79). Soon
Heathcliff and six-year-old Catherine became inseparable.
As Nelly tells us, Catherine always acted the "little mist-
tress" (83), and Heathcliff would "do her bidding in any-
thing" (84). Mrs. Earnshaw died within two years of Heath-
cliff's entry into the family, and Mr. Earnshaw was "strict
and grave" with his children, becoming even "crosser and
less patient" as his health declined (83). The two children
formed a rebellious alliance against the rest of the family, becoming abnormally attached to each other. Nelly charges that Catherine "was much too fond of Heathcliff. The greatest punishment we could invent for her was to keep her separate from him . . ." (83).

When Heathcliff was thirteen and Catherine twelve, Mr. Earnshaw died. Sociologists maintain:

During adolescence the final form of renunciation [of the incest drive] occurs when the youngster completes the job of redirecting his or her energy from inside the family to outside. (Justice 54)

At this time, however, Hindley returned from college and took over his father's position as head of the household. Hindley's demeaning treatment of Heathcliff curtailed any chance for him to achieve a healthy socialization in the outside world.

Heathcliff's behavior deteriorated in direct proportion to the injustice he suffered at the hands of Hindley, whom Catherine characterized as a "detestable substitute" (62), and the corresponding frustration of his desire to be with Catherine. Denied the benefits of education and cultivation, Heathcliff, according to Nelly, "bore his degradation pretty well at first, because Catherine taught him what she learnt, and worked or played with him in the fields" (87). However, "They both promised fair to grow up as rude as savages" (87), thwarting attempts by Hindley, Nelly, Joseph,
and the curate to tame them (87) and actively rebelling against their religious instruction (63, 363).

The classic Oedipal conflict between father and son is suggested by Hindley's repeated attempts to separate Catherine and Heathcliff and his threats to "turn him out of the house if [they broke] his orders" (64). He succeeded in physically separating them when he forbade Catherine at age twelve to sleep with Heathcliff, the first time that she "was laid alone" (163), but he was unable to break their emotional attachment to each other.

According to Justice:

A brother and sister who are kept together without much outside contact may become closely attached and build up mutual admiration, which at some point gets converted to sexual attraction. . . .

The brother and sister have such a rapturous love for each other that sex seems inevitable. (106)

Justice goes on to say, however, that "sex is not the basic issue in most incest cases" (87), an observation which concurs with Becker's insights into the Oedipal motive and Erich Fromm's identification of an "incestuous striving inherent in man's nature" that arises from deep needs for shelter and belonging. Justice maintains that case studies of incest indicate that the frightening insecurity of the outside world prompts a person to turn "inside the family to get his or her needs met and closes the door behind. . . .
The basic issue in incest is not sex but the need for closeness, nurturing and stimulation" (28-29).

In fact, as passionately attached as Heathcliff and Catherine were to each other, there is little physical contact between them of an overtly sexual nature. This curious lack of sexual expression between two such unbridled and seemingly amoral characters has prompted critical discussions of repressed sexuality which surely seem to have merit. The novel derives much of its power from the implied sexual energy and tension, but a careful reading confirms that the only physical contact between Heathcliff and Catherine after they reached puberty occurred as Catherine lay dying. Even when they were re-united after Heathcliff's absence of three years, Catherine only "seized Heathcliff's hands" (135, 136) twice.

Nelly tells us that at age sixteen Heathcliff "ceased to express his fondness for Catherine in words, and recoiled with angry suspicion from her girlish caresses, as if conscious there could be no gratification in lavishing such marks of affection on him" (108). Of course, it is possible to presume that Heathcliff refrained from physical contact because he was jealous of Catherine's friendship with Edgar Linton by this time. But this line of reasoning is unsatisfactory when we remember his active rivalry for Catherine's companionship, even keeping account of the evenings that she spent with each of them (109). It is more likely that
Heathcliff's conviction that there could be no sexual gratification arose from his adolescent sexual awareness of Catherine and the guilt which attended such a feeling for a sister. Hindley had forbidden them to share sleeping quarters some three years previously when Heathcliff was thirteen and Catherine twelve (163), a measure which would have called into consciousness their budding sexuality, even if they had been unaware of it up until then. From this point on, Heathcliff began his descent into "savage sullenness and ferocity" (106) and "unsociable moroseness" (108), resulting by age sixteen in "exciting the aversion rather than the esteem of his few acquaintance" (108). According to Nelly, he "lived a selfish, unchristian life" (363), turning away from the Bible and Christian teaching.

Heathcliff, as menacingly seductive as he appears to readers, was actually all but sexually sterile, as is indicated when close attention is paid to the text.\(^4\) His very name suggests barrenness, for an English heath is defined as "uncultivated ground; an extensive tract of wasteland, a wilderness" (*Oxford English Dictionary* 170). He persuaded Isabella, whom he openly despised, to elope with him, and their union produced only the weak and insipid Linton, an "ailing and peevish creature" (218), who died at an early age—a subtle symbol of sterility. Heathcliff probably consummated his marriage only once: Isabella said that within 24 hours she regretted her marriage (173); Heathcliff
said: "The very morrow of our wedding she was weeping to go home" (187); and Isabella told Nelly that Heathcliff refused from the very first to let her share his bedroom (181).

Heathcliff and Catherine both, then, while consistently identified in the novel with animal imagery and the forces of nature, and while portrayed as untamed rebels against civilization and religion, were paradoxically lacking in sexuality. The great passion which they had for each other was of a spiritual nature rather than a physical one. In psychological terms, suffering from the fear and guilt of forbidden desires, they sublimated their longing for physical union and became obsessed with the desire to merge their minds and souls. By suppressing the sexual instincts, possession can remain free from physicality, can be based on the eternal union of the spirit—that love which man normally aspires to as the perfection of heavenly love—and the lovers can achieve their own kind of immortality.

Heathcliff submerged the sexual side of his nature in order to keep his intense physical longing from consciousness. Becker explains man's denial of the body as his attempt to deny "the drag of his animality that haunts his victory over decay and death" (162).

Since Freud, it has become a psychological commonplace that the instinctual self, when consistently rejected, eventually surfaces elsewhere, often in a tragic form and with tragic results. The combination of Heathcliff's de-
prived early environment and his equally deprived adolescence indicates that he never received the kind of nurturing necessary to grow out of a symbiotic relationship. As a result he spent much of his energy keeping his unmet dependency needs out of his awareness. He did this through sadistic behavior, behavior which at times borders on depravity and self-destruction.

Along with sadism, Heathcliff exhibited other bizarre traits which we, as modern readers, can understand in light of psychological case studies of incest. Psychoanalyst Ernest Jones, in his book *On the Nightmare*, demonstrated empirically the relationship between incest, Satanism, vampirism, lycanthropy (or werewolfism), and necrophilia—all of which were manifested by Heathcliff. In folklore and myth, all of these disorders are considered demonic, a predominant characteristic of Heathcliff. Critics have pointed out the dozens of passages in which he is referred to as "fiend," "ghoul," "devil," etc., but there are also many allusions to vampirism in general and two of its specific forms, lycanthropy and necrophilia, so it is to these forms of aberrant behavior that I will direct attention.

Strictly speaking, Heathcliff was not a vampire, for the term designates a re-animate body or soul of a dead person who sucks the blood from the living in order to draw him into death, the vampire himself being re-animate in the process (Jones 99). But the predominant imagery of vamp-
pirism throughout the novel is so pervasive that it seems fair to say that Bronte created at least a metaphorical vampire. Jones demonstrated that the incest complex underlies the vampire one (127), for he paralleled the vampire who sucks blood to sustain himself to the infant who receives life-sustaining nourishment from the mother's breast. The whole superstition of vampirism, according to Jones, is "shot through with the theme of guilt" which is generated in the incest conflicts in infancy (127).

Jones points out that the relationship between the werewolf, or in clinical terms the lycanthrope, and the vampire superstitions are closely connected. In many parts of the world the idea is prevalent that "werewolves become vampires after their death" (139). From the blood-sucking of one to the ravenous lust of the other is but a small step (148).

Images of both vampirism and lycanthropy abound in the novel in regard to Heathcliff's appearance, as well as his behavior. According to folklore, "Werewolves could be recognized when in human form by having heavy eyebrows that met together . . ." (Jones 137). Nelly described Heathcliff as having "thick brows, that instead of rising arched, sink in the middle" (97). When he arrived at Wuthering Heights, Nelly tells how he spoke some "gibberish that nobody could understand" (77), even though he must have been seven years old. By sixteen he had "acquired a slouching gait, and
ignoble look" (108), and he had "sharp cannibal teeth" (212). Catherine told Isabella that he was a "fierce, pitiless, wolfish man" (141), who would "seize and devour her up" (145). Nelly likened his living at Wuthering Heights after Catherine's marriage to that of a wolf being in their midst: "I felt that God had forsaken the stray sheep there to its own wicked wanderings, and an evil beast prowled between it and the fold, waiting his time to spring and destroy" (146). Heathcliff told Nelly that he would never have harmed Edgar as long as Catherine loved him, but "the moment her regard ceased, he would have torn his heart out, and drunk his blood" (185).

The manifestations of vampirism in general and lycanthropy in particular heightened as Catherine neared death. Heathcliff, in his own words, "haunted" the Grange garden every night for six hours (189). Nelly reveals his behavior during Catherine's final hours: he embraced her so madly as she lay ill that "four distinct impressions left blue in the colourless skin" (195); he "gnashed" and "foamed like a mad dog" (197) until Nelly felt as if she were not "in the company of [her] own species; it appeared that he would not understand, though [she] spoke to him" (197). After Catherine's death, he "howled, not like a man, but like a savage beast getting goaded to death with knives and spears" (204), and Nelly "observed several splashes of blood about the bark
of the tree, and his hands and forehead were both stained" (204).

A month after Catherine's death, Isabella appeared at Thrushcross Grange, obviously having been beaten, calling Heathcliff an "incarnate goblin" (208), and claiming in terms suggestive of vampirism that Heathcliff had taken her heart "and pinched it to death, and flung it back" (209). Then she related that Heathcliff had not eaten with them for a week, just "come home at dawn, and gone upstairs to his chamber, locking himself in" (209). Isabella said that Heathcliff's "mouth watered to tear [Hindley] with his teeth; because he's only half a man" (216). Heathcliff himself tells us that he had a "savage feeling" towards those who feared him, and that he would consider a "slow vivisection" of the younger Cathy and Linton to be an "evening's entertainment" (302).

Heathcliff's latent necrophilic tendencies were suggested when he spoke to Catherine of Isabella: "You'd hear of odd things, if I lived alone with that mawkish, waxen face" (145). He manifested the symptoms of necrophilia more overtly immediately after Catherine's death. Modern psychology recognizes necrophilia as a sexual aberration which, like vampirism, arises from incestuous desires and guilt. Jones explains that the necrophiliac believes that "a dead person who loves will love forever and will never be weary of giving and receiving caresses" (110). This fantasy par-
ticularly appealed to Heathcliff, for "the dead being allows everything, can offer no resistance, and the relationship has none of the inconvenient consequences that sexuality may bring in its train in life" (Jones 111). Heathcliff would violate no incest taboo by dreaming of "sleeping the last sleep, by that sleeper," with his "cheek frozen against hers" (320).

Nelly clearly suspects Heathcliff's necrophilic tendencies; she reveals that he visited Catherine's funeral chamber at night, a fact that she realized because of the "disarrangement of the drapery about the corpse's face" (205). We learn from Isabella that he slept on Catherine's grave during the summer months (213). We later discover from Heathcliff himself that the night of Catherine's burial he had attempted to remove the dirt from her coffin, but as he bent over the grave he seemed to sense her presence "not under [him], but on the earth" (321). The sense of relief caused him to re-cover the grave and return home. All the way back, he "could almost see her, and yet [he] could not" (321). After that he continued to be tortured by the feeling of her presence, yet the inability to see her.

Heathcliff's obsession with the dead Catherine is so persuasive that the reader must make an effort to remember that he is merely projecting his own ideas onto the dead body. Actually Bronte is careful not to suggest that Cath-
erine is visible to Heathcliff after her death—that he only senses her presence.

Jones explains this insatiable desire to be revisited by the dead as mostly a "mechanism of identification":

It is as though the living person whose unconscious wishes have been exemplified by the life and conduct of the recently deceased felt that if he were dead he would not be able to rest in his grave and would be impelled by various motives to return. (99-100)

Jones goes on to say:

The deepest source of this projection is doubtless to be found in the wish that ultimately springs from childhood memories of being left alone by the loved parent. (100-01)

Likewise the insistence on complete possession is, according to Jones, "particularly urgent with those who have not succeeded in emancipating themselves from the infantile desires" which are characteristic of the Oedipal conflict (110).

Catherine's Oedipal characteristics are drawn as accurately as Heathcliff's, if more subtly. At the inception of Catherine's Oedipal attachment to Heathcliff, she acted as a kind of surrogate mother to Heathcliff and is portrayed in terms which suggest a maternal superiority. According to
Nelly, she acted "the little mistress" (983), the "queen of the country-side" (106), "a haughty, headstrong creature" with a "wondrous constancy to old attachments" (106). Heathcliff would "do her bidding in anything" (84) and was easily controlled by her "pretended insolence" (84), and so he was devastated by her rebuke for being dirty and ill-kempt (194) or for being poor company because he was not educated enough to amuse her (110). Heathcliff, on his part, idolized her much the way a small boy does his mother, thinking her face was "enchanting" and that she was "immeasurably superior" (92). She was full of ambition, willing to marry Edgar for his money so that she could "aid Heathcliff to rise" (122)—a sacrifice suggestive of an indulgent mother on behalf of her deprived offspring.

When Catherine was separated from Heathcliff, however, she easily lost her maternal superiority and reacted in a child-like fashion, throwing tantrums (127), obstinately refusing to take shelter from the elements (125, 103-4), refusing to eat (99, 158), having appalling nightmares (162), and threatening self-destruction (128, 155, 159, 165). Nelly tells us, "Our fiery Catherine is no better than a wailing child" (162).

Catherine was indirectly given a share of Heathcliff's vampiristic tendencies. She asked Nelly, "Who is to separate us [Heathcliff and her], pray? They'll meet the fate of Milo!" (121). Milo, according to a textual note, was a
"Greek athlete who, when trying to rend a tree asunder, was trapped in the cliff and eaten by wolves" (WH 370), a lycanthropic image. When Edgar tried to force her to choose between Heathcliff and him, she is described in vampiristic terms as "dashing her head against the arm of the sofa, and grinding her teeth, so that you might fancy she would crash them to splinters!" (156). Nelly further described her reaction to separation from Heathcliff: "She stretched herself out still and turned up her eyes, while her cheeks, at once blanched and livid assumed the aspect of death. . . . 'She has blood on her lips!' [Edgar] said, shuddering" (157). This description is suggestive of Heathcliff when he learned of Catherine's death. The vampiristic image is evident as Nelly continues: "She started up--her hair flying over her shoulders, her eyes flashing, the muscles of her neck and arms standing out preternaturally" (157). Catherine's appearance as she neared death furthers the image: "Her present countenance had a wild vindictiveness in its white cheek, and a bloodless lip, and scintillating eye . . ." (195). When she thought Nelly had betrayed her, "a maniac's fury kindled under her brows" (166), and she associated Nelly with witchcraft, saying, "I'll make her howl a recantation!" (166).

According to Leo Bersani, desire in Wuthering Heights is presented as essentially vampiristic: "The protagonists want to devour being," and they have a "cruel appetite for
others" (213). They have a "gluttonous and yet almost ascetic, an erotic and yet sexless, passion for otherness" (215). Bersani adds,

They are rather, in the etymological sense of the adjective, an aspiring openness, which sucks in and becomes other forms of being. Heathcliff's wild embrace almost kills Catherine, as if he wants to crush her into himself. (213)

Bersani's insights concur with the notion of incest as a means of adding to one's own life by merging with that of another. As Becker puts it, "These feelings are embedded in one's earliest experiences of comfortable merger with the mother" (134). Fromm has labeled this passionate need for what he calls "a magic helper" as "incestuous symbiosis" (Escape 180-201), which can be defined as the fear of leaving the family and facing the world on one's own; or, as Becker puts it, "the desire to keep oneself tucked into a larger source of power" (134).

Just as Heathcliff consistently rejected his instinctual self, so did Catherine. Whereas Heathcliff's repressed sexuality surfaced in a number of bizarre behavioral traits, Catherine's emerged as a variety of disorders. Catherine suffered a succession of illnesses in the novel, variously referred to as "delirium" (127), "a fever" (127), a "kind of fit" (167), "brain fever" (171), and severe headaches (64, 155). In fact, every time that Catherine was physically
separated from Heathcliff, she became physically ill, most seriously on the occasions which threatened total separation: when Heathcliff left for three years, and when Edgar refused to allow Heathcliff at Thrushcross Grange, resulting in her eventual death.

We learn through Lockwood's reading of Catherine's diary (64) and through Nelly's account of Catherine's delirium just prior to her death (162-3) about her headaches and "temporary derangement" when Hindley separated Heathcliff and Catherine at ages thirteen and twelve, respectively.

Bronte implies that Catherine and Heathcliff shared the same bed, which was described as a closet-like structure affording complete seclusion (61). (This was the same bed in which Lockwood had his nightmare and in which Heathcliff died.) It is possible that they merely shared the same room, although Catherine's statement, "I was laid alone for the first time" (163), certainly suggests they shared the same bed, especially since that bed figures so prominently throughout the novel. In any case, they at least shared the same room, apparently just the two of them for the three years that Hindley was away at college.

Santiago, after studying patterns of sibling incest, recommends that "sleeping arrangements should be based on separating the sexes" (171). He quotes a 1970 study of "Sexual Play among Children": "When a brother and sister share a bedroom, it invites sex play. When they share the
same bed, it practically guarantees it" (171). He concludes by saying that if is impossible for a child to have his own bed and room, it is "more practical to put three siblings rather than two in a room" (171). Of course, Hindley remedied this situation when he became head of the household by banishing Heathcliff from Catherine's room.

Catherine suffered a second hysterical attack, which eventually led to her death, when Edgar barred Heathcliff from Thrushcross Grange. The doctor, Kenneth, commented that he could not "help fancying there's an extra cause for this [her hysteria]" (167).

Critics have questioned Catherine's statement in Lockwood's dream that she has been "a waif for twenty years," for she had been dead only eighteen years when she appeared in his nightmare. The physical rejection that Catherine experienced at age fifteen when Heathcliff "ceased to express his fondness for Catherine in words, and recoiled with angry suspicion from her girlish caresses" (108) would explain why Catherine specifies twenty years, for twenty years previously would have put Catherine at age fifteen or sixteen. Because Bronte elsewhere has manipulated the time sequences flawlessly, it seems implausible that she would have carelessly made a two- or three-year error if she had intended Catherine to be referring to herself as a waif since her marriage (eighteen years) or since her death (seventeen years).
Whereas Heathcliff married a woman whom he despised, Catherine married an essentially sexless man, one "in general lacking spirit" (107) according to Nelly, whom Catherine called "a sucking leveret" (154). Certainly the relationship lacked vitality and sexuality. Heathcliff told Catherine, "This lamb of yours [Edgar] threatens like a bull!" (153)—an obvious sexual slur. We are told by Catherine that Edgar's "blood cannot be worked into a fever" and that his "veins are full of ice-water" (156). There appeared to be little display of emotion between Catherine and Edgar despite Nelly's rather weak assertion that the first six months of their marriage (during Heathcliff's absence) gave her reason to believe "that they were really in possession of deep and growing happiness" (132). At the same time, however, she admitted that "the gunpowder lay as harmless as sand, because no fire came near to explode it" (131). We see how little affection Catherine had for Edgar when she invariably took Heathcliff's side against her husband, saying, "I'd rather see Edgar at bay than you [Heathcliff]" (154).

Catherine denied her sexual instincts as heartily as did Heathcliff. But she did not always deal with their mutual feelings for each other as consciously as he did, as is apparent in her vacillating statements about him. Some of her comments are so inconsistent that the reader is tempted to doubt her sincerity altogether, but if we are to
trust Nelly's assessment that "she was not artful, never played the coquette" (107), then we must assume that rather than being affectatious, she was unconsciously denying the true nature of her feelings for him. In fact, in a story which is essentially a magnificent love story, the heroine, prior to her deathbed, openly admitted her love for Heathcliff on only one occasion—when she was telling Nelly of her decision to marry another man. In that same conversation she claimed to love Edgar also, but we are led to discount that protestation of love as Catherine’s superficial conformity to Victorian concepts of love and marriage by her saying, "I love all his [Edgar’s] looks, and all his actions, and him entirely, and altogether. There now!" (119).

When Catherine told Nelly of her decision to marry Edgar, she wanted to be "convinced that Heathcliff has no notion of these things" (121)—what "things" are unclear, but we can assume that she meant matters of love and marriage since that is what she and Nelly had been discussing; her question of Nelly, "He does not know what being in love is?" (121) seems almost facetious, being tucked in between two of her most impassioned statements: "... he’s more myself than I am" (121) and "... my great thought in living is himself" (122). The reader shares in Nelly’s astonished reaction: "I see no reason that he should not know, as well as you" (121).
When Heathcliff talked of marrying Isabella, Catherine said, "I'm not jealous of you. . . . If you like Isabella, you shall marry her" (150). The reader applauds Heathcliff's disbelief, which prompted him to reply: "If I imagined you really wanted me to marry Isabella, I'd cut my throat!" (151).

Even more unconvincing is Catherine's remark to Nelly when she was relating the delirium brought on by Hindley's separating her and Heathcliff at age twelve—she was "laid alone, for the first time" (163), implying that they were not allowed to sleep together—and she said, "I cannot say why I felt so wildly wretched—it must have been temporary derangement for there is scarcely cause" (163). "Scarcely cause" seems the grossest kind of understatement to be made by one who in the same breath asserted that Heathcliff was her "all in all" at that time (163).

Perhaps the most significant example of Catherine's refusal to admit consciously her unbounded love for Heathcliff was when Edgar demanded to know if she loved "that wretch, Heath--" and was not even allowed to complete his question. "Hush!" cried Mrs. Linton. "Hush, this moment! You mention that name and I will end the matter instantly, by a spring from the window" (165).

At least one critic, Ronald Hatch, has suggested that Heathcliff's death constituted a kind of suicide (49-64). Mitchell notes that Heathcliff turned his "aggressions
inward in so radical a way that he need not, in the usual sense, kill himself. He simply cease[d] to remind himself to breathe" (33). It is easy to infer from the text that Catherine's fatal illness also was brought on by Catherine herself, for Nelly tried to restrain her from opening the window onto the frosty night, warning her that she would catch her "death of cold" (163). As Leo Bersani explains, Heathcliff and Catherine came to conceive of death as "another kind of unceasing life" (213).

A period of eighteen years elapsed after Catherine's death in which Heathcliff continued to seek the wholeness which had eluded him in incest. Yet he did not forsake his incestuous longing. His obsession with the dead Catherine and his desire to have her possess him did not abate, but grew stronger. One thing that kept Heathcliff alive was his illusion that Catherine was with him spiritually if not physically, for he told Nelly that Catherine chose "a strange way of killing, not by inches, but by fractions of hair-breadths, to beguile [him] with a spectre of a hope through eighteen years" (321).

Heathcliff returned to the bed that he and Catherine had shared until separated by Hindley at age twelve and surrendered to his "soul's bliss" (363). When Nelly found him dead, she tried to close his eyelids to shut out the "life-like gaze of exultation," but "they would not shut" (365), typical of the corpse of a vampire (Jones 103). Hareton and
Nelly fulfilled Heathcliff's wish to be buried with his coffin opening into Catherine's, free now that he had shed his mortal being to "dissolve with her" (320) so that one would "not know which [was] which" (319).

Bersani points out that "the visible destruction of this body, with its all too particular history, is the condition for being nothing in particular, the ambiguous license to roam eternally in other bodies and other histories" (213). If we are to take seriously the rumors of the countryside after Heathcliff's death, though, we must concede that Heathcliff and Catherine chose no other bodies, no other histories, than their own. Since they reappeared as adults, not children, the implication is that the union which had been forbidden to them in life found fulfillment in death.
NOTES

Both Otto Rank and Carl Jung, basing their conclusions on studies of myths, legends, and dream symbolism, took different approaches to the Oedipus complex, while not denying its importance. Rank (1884-1939) attributed the primacy of the mother-child relationship to the separation trauma undergone at birth and re-interpreted infantile fixations and anxieties as recurring attempts to return to the stasis and primal pleasure of the womb (Trauma of Birth 11-29).

Jung (1875-1961) agreed that the Oedipal complex is a fundamental psychic process, but saw it as part of a self-regulating development in the individual's personality involving the downward movement of the psyche from the anxieties of the outside world into the womb of the mother where it undergoes healing and re-emerges with new vitality (Basic Writings 408).

Viewing the human being as primarily social rather than instinctual were Alfred Adler (1870-1937), who re-interpreted the Oedipus complex as the utter dependency of the weak and helpless child on his powerful and superior mother, and Karen Horney (1885-1952), who argued that the Oedipus complex arises from conditions in the family environment.

More recently, Erich Fromm (1900-1980) contended that the Oedipus complex arises from the struggle against pater-
nal authority, a struggle that has its roots in ancient matriarchal systems of society (Forgotten Language 204-05).

For a largely Freudian study of these manifestations, see Giles Mitchell's "Incest, Demonism, and Death in Wuthering Heights," Literature and Psychology XXIII (1973): 27-36. Since the early 1970s Mitchell has published a number of fine studies drawing on Becker and existential psychology moreso than on Freud.

David Daiches, in his introduction to the novel, insists that we must ascertain the nature of Heathcliff in order to solve some of the intricacies of the novel. But he maintains that "we get no direct presentation of Heathcliff: he is seen almost always as a force acting on others, and it is to his effect on others that we must pay particular attention if we wish to come to the heart of the mystery" (18). On the contrary, Heathcliff is revealed not only by the observations of others (in fact every major character participates), but by his own candid comments about himself. He never attempts to dissemble in order to cast a better light on himself. It is he who tells us that he wishes he had Edgar Linton's "great blue eyes and even forehead" (98) and that he is jealous of him, just as he tells us that he will get revenge on Hindley and Edgar and that he never misrepresented himself to Isabella but let her see him "hang up her little dog" (187).
Thomas Moser, in his article "What Is the Matter with Emily Jane? Conflicting Impulses in *Wuthering Heights*" (*Nineteenth Century Fiction* 17 [1962]: 1-19), maintains that Heathcliff possesses a "magical sexual power" and that his "presence was vital to the conception of all three children of the second generation [Hareton, young Cathy, and Linton]" (16). Moser seems to refute his own argument, however, for he admits that Heathcliff "has little personal impact upon Hindley's relations with Frances, and one could attribute Hareton's conception after their arrival to the potent atmosphere of Wuthering Heights" (16); he damages his argument further by admitting that "apparently Emily Bronte imagines [Heathcliff and Isabella] sleeping together only the first night" (17)—hardly characteristic of a lusty male married to a "charming" eighteen-year-old. Moser's observation that Heathcliff has an "immense effect . . . on relations between Cathy and Edgar" (16), influencing the conception of their child, falls short of pointing up Heathcliff's potency, for there seems to be no question that Edgar is the father.

Carol Senf (*The Vampire in Nineteenth-Century English Literature*) argues that Catherine is the vampire and that she turns Heathcliff into one when he opens her grave while the sexton is digging Edgar's grave (79). Senf bases her argument on the folkloric belief that people rarely become vampires without first being attacked by another vampire.
CHAPTER WORKS CITED


CHAPTER III
PARADISE DENIED

John Milton's use of the incest theme in *Paradise Lost* affords two opposing perspectives from which to examine the moral implications of incest in *Wuthering Heights*: first, that if incest is "the sin that no Christian need pardon" (*WH* 166), it can be a metaphor for post-Lapsarian evil, as embodied in Heathcliff; second, that if incest is a yearning for a return to a child-like state out of a need for personal security and integration, it can be a metaphor for pre-Lapsarian innocence, as embodied in Catherine.

The parallels between *Paradise Lost* and *Wuthering Heights* are significant to a study of incest when we recall that *Paradise Lost* places incest at a pivotal point in both the Fall of the Angels and the Fall of Adam and Eve. Satan's incest with his "daughter" and "darling" Sin (II. 870) occurred immediately after his revolt against God and produced his offspring Death. Adam's incest with Eve, his "daughter" and "fair consort" (IV. 610), occurred immediately following their disobedience and was a "seal" of their mutual guilt (IV. 1043). Prior to their disobedience, their union was innocent, but afterwards they acquired the shame consequent to carnal knowledge, a knowledge which brought
with it an awareness of death as well. Milton’s view of incest as the harbinger of catastrophe is borne out by the consequences of the two Falls in *Paradise Lost*: a descent into brutehood, the loss of Paradise, a resulting alienation and disintegration, and, finally, the most terrible consequence of all, the birth of death (Hall 11).

Heathcliff displays so many of the brutish characteristics that one finds in Milton’s Satan that Bronte seems to imply a kinship. In dozens of passages Heathcliff is referred to as "fiend," "devil," "evil genius," and "imp of Satan"; in others he is characterized as "diabolical," "hellish," and "inhuman." We have already noted that the characteristics that Heathcliff manifested—sadism, vampirism, lycanthropy, and necrophilia—are disorders which are considered demonic in folklore and myth (*Nightmare* 89-98). Sociologists Blair and Rita Justice associate the demonic with incest by pointing out that "incest became identified in people’s minds with witches and witchcraft" and "that incestuous unions were mandatory" at witches' conclaves (46). Hence, "incest became an act inspired by the devil, and people who practiced it were doomed to hell" (46).

Much like Milton’s magnificent Satan, whose "courage never to submit or yield" (I. 108) has spawned countless debates over who the real hero of *Paradise Lost* is, Heathcliff has appeared to many as the tragic hero of *Wuthering Heights*. He, too, is magnificent in his grand passion.
Like Satan, Heathcliff is the essence of primitive savagery and brutality, but at the same time he is ruthlessly idealistic and passionately sincere, qualities which give him a kind of tragic integrity. Nevertheless, a scrutiny of his obsessive single-mindedness indicates that Heathcliff was driven by the same "obdurate pride and steadfast hate" (PL I. 58) that drove Milton's Satan.

Charlotte Bronte's description of Heathcliff in her apology for her sister's creation of him is appropriate to both Satan and Heathcliff:

[He], indeed, stands unredeemed; never once swerving in his arrow-straight course to perdition. . .
[He] betrays . . . a sentiment fierce and inhuman: a passion such as might boil and glow in the bad essence of some evil genius; a fire that might form the tormented centre—the evil-suffering soul of a magnate of the infernal world: and by its quenchless and ceaseless ravage effect the execution of the decree which dooms him to carry Hell with him wherever he wanders. (1850 Preface to WH 40)

Heathcliff, then, is like Milton's Satan, who lamented, "Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell" (IV. 75).

Heathcliff and Satan both exhibited a fatal excess of pride. In the healthy ego, a degree of narcissism is essential to a person's sense of self-worth and acts as a posi-
tive force. An exaggerated sense of self-worth, however, becomes a negative force. As early as Greek tragedy, excessive pride, or hubris, led many protagonists to disaster.

Heathcliff was arrogant, angry, and absolutely without conscience where all but Catherine were concerned from the time he was separated from her at age thirteen by Hindley. His vengefulness bordered on madness. Embodying a hatred of heaven itself, he resembled Satan, the haughty "antagonist of Heaven" (II. 509), who in his arrogance asserted that he and his fallen angels were "self-begot, self-raised," claiming "Our puissance is our own" (V. 860, 864). Just as Satan "trusted to have equalled the most High" (I. 40), Heathcliff placed himself on a par with the supernatural, arrogantly assuring Catherine before her death that "nothing that God or Satan could inflict would have parted [them]," only she herself (197).

In *Paradise Lost*, Satan's revolt against God arose from pride, ambition, and envy. Too proud to bend to God's will that "all knees in Heaven" should bow to His Son and "confess Him Lord" (V. 608), Satan "resolved / With all his legions to dislodge, and leave / Unworshipped, unobeyed the throne supreme" (V. 668-70). Cast out of heaven and tormented by the thought "both of lost happiness and lasting pain" (I. 55), he vowed to avenge himself out of a "sense of injured merit" (I. 98).
Heathcliff, too, revolted out of a sense of injured merit. After Mr. Earnshaw's death, Hindley, who regarded Heathcliff as "a usurper of his parent's affections, and his privileges" (79), set out to establish his power and re-assert his position as head of the household. His first act was to separate Heathcliff from Catherine—Heathcliff's idea of heaven.

Nelly confirms that Hindley's treatment of Heathcliff was "enough to make a fiend of a saint" (106). By age thirteen, Heathcliff had resolved to pay Hindley back, telling Nelly, "I don't care how long I wait, if I can only do it, at last. I hope he will not die before I do!" (101). Heathcliff's resolution recalls Satan's resolve to "pursue / Vain War with Heaven" (II. 8-9), for "to be weak is miserable / Doing or suffering" (I. 157-58).

Heathcliff's rejoinder to Nelly when she pleaded with him to leave justice to God, "Let me alone, and I'll plan it out: while I'm thinking of that I don't feel pain" (101), suggests Satan's immediate response to being cast out of heaven: he rallied his cohorts to retaliation, which action re-invigorated the fallen troops and their leader alike, diverting them from their loss in their determination to wrest "resolution from despair" (I. 191).

Perhaps the most compelling illustration of Heathcliff's descent into brutality is Bronte's portrayal of him as child of nature, and as such, kindred to the savage
beast, forming another vivid point of comparison between him and Milton's Satan.

In the first chapter of *Wuthering Heights*, we are introduced to Heathcliff's savage dogs, a relationship he proudly acknowledged to Lockwood as "I and my dogs" (49). The dogs resembled Milton's hideous Hell Hounds engendered in Death's rape of his mother, who "never ceasing barked / With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung / A hideous peal" (II. 654-56). They embodied the concept of incest, not only because they were the offspring of Sin and her son Death ("And in embraces forcible and foul / Ingendering with me, of that rape begot / These yel ling monsters . . ." [II. 793-95]), but because "when they list into the womb / That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw / My bowels, their repast . . ." (II. 798-800). These passages from *Paradise Lost* bear a striking resemblance to Lockwood's description of Heathcliff's dogs: "Half-a-dozen four-footed fiends, of various sizes, and ages, issued from hidden dens to the common centre. I felt my heels and coat-laps peculiar subjects of assault . . ." (49).

Heathcliff's Satanic image seemingly symbolized his defiance of the laws of God and man; therefore, his incestuous longing can only be construed as negative. At least at some point, however, Catherine's incestuous longing can be regarded as an attempt to recapture the innocence of the Garden of Eden. Her love for Heathcliff appealed to her as
a means of reversing time, of retreating to the lost innocence of childhood, in a sense, of returning to the Edenic state shared by Adam and Eve before the Fall, paradoxically through incest, but an incest that is not taboo in a world with no evil. 3

Heathcliff and Catherine's love for each other and for the natural environment can be associated with that of Adam and Eve in a pre-Lapsarian Eden. In Bronte's complex story of love and evil, Heathcliff's and Catherine's ambiguous natures shifted back and forth between perversity and innocence. This is the identical paradox to be found in incest, too. Historically the most heinous of crimes, the motive as elaborated by psychologists is innocent in origin--the intense desire to return to the mother's womb to avoid the dangers of life and especially those of death.

At the beginning of the novel Catherine is portrayed as "fully human, sprightly, lovable . . . essentially normal," according to F.H. Langman (300). She acted as surrogate mother to Heathcliff, as well as his inseparable companion. Bronte portrays her as mischievous, close to nature, and charmingly vexatious. As Nelly says, "Her spirits were always at high-water mark, her tongue always going--singing, laughing, and plaguing everybody who would not do the same" (83). She and Heathcliff roamed the moors in a childish innocence similar to the "youthful dalliance" enjoyed by the guiltless Adam and Eve (IV. 338). Milton might have been
speaking to Heathcliff and Catherine when he warned Adam and Eve: "Ah gentle pair, ye little think how nigh / Your change approaches, when all these delights / Will vanish and deliver ye to woe" (IV. 366-68).

Heathcliff and Catherine's woes began at Mr. Earnshaw's death, at which time Hindley returned from a three-year stint at college, bringing a wife with him. As his wife "grew peevish" in regard to Heathcliff, Hindley's old animosity was renewed, and "he drove [Heathcliff] from their company to the servants, deprived him of the instructions of the curate, and insisted that he should labor out of doors . . . " (87). Catherine, of course, took Heathcliff's part, and Nelly watched them "growing more reckless daily" (87).

Just as Satan rose in "proud rebellious arms" (II. 691), Heathcliff and Catherine revolted. Catherine, in her diary, revealed, "H. and I are going to rebel--we took our initiatory step this evening" (62). Did Catherine intend that the initiatory rebellious step was when she and Heathcliff cast their religious volumes into the dog-kennel (63), or when they set off across the moors to spy on Edgar and Isabella at Thrushcross Grange (64)? In both cases, the rebellion takes on moral significance.

In the first case, obviously, to throw religious volumes to the dogs is to defy God; Nelly later in the novel accused the grown Heathcliff of having lived a "selfish, unchristian life" since he was thirteen years old (363), his
age during this incident. Heathcliff was "beaten out" of Catherine's chamber at age thirteen also, which suggests that he lost his religion when he lost Catherine, his idea of heaven.

The trip to Thrushcross Grange also takes on moral significance when we parallel it to Satan's stealthy view of Adam and Eve in Paradise, the first step in their seduction. Milton's characterization here of Satan as a "prowling wolf . . . / Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve / In hurdled cotes amid the field secure" (IV. 103-06) associates him with the intruders at Thrushcross Grange and renders sinister Heathcliff's and Catherine's subsequent relationships with the Lintons.

Like Milton's Satan and Sin, whose hearts moved together in "secret harmony" (X. 358), Heathcliff and Catherine stood in opposition to Edgar and Isabella. Catherine told Nelly she would marry Edgar to "aid Heathcliff to rise" (122), and even after her marriage, Catherine assured Heathcliff that she would "rather see Edgar at bay" (154) than him. When Isabella expressed a love interest in Heathcliff, Catherine only half-heartedly warned her that "he'd be quite capable of marrying your fortune and expectations" (142). She then told Heathcliff, "If you like Isabella, you shall marry her" (150), even though she knew her husband would not approve.
We have already noted that in her rages and delirium Catherine took on some of Heathcliff's demonic qualities. Her descent into the world of Thrushcross Grange, like Eve's descent, represented a fall into the realities of life, especially sex, the body, and death. Nelly, as she recounts the events preceding Catherine's death, says of the two lovers: "The two, to a cool spectator, made a strange and fearful picture. Well might Catherine deem that heaven would be a land of exile to her, unless, with her mortal body, she cast away her mortal character also" (195).

A second consequence of the two Falls in Paradise Lost was the loss of heaven. The concepts of Heaven, Paradise, and Hell shifted ambiguously in Paradise Lost, at times overlapping, at other times being juxtaposed to each other, at still other times representing the opposite of the conventional definitions. The three distinctions began to shift and merge as Milton illuminated a philosophy which was popular in his time: "The mind is its own place, and in itself / Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven" (I. 254-5).

The metaphorical Paradise in Wuthering Heights is less complicated than in Paradise Lost, for Bronte merely redesignates the meaning of the words "heaven" and "hell." Within the opening paragraph of the novel, Lockwood denoted the setting of the story as "a perfect misanthropist's Heaven" (45), an oxymoron which sets the tone for the amend-
ed image of heaven/hell to follow. So persistent is this theme that Heathcliff and Catherine stipulated no less than ten times that for them heaven was being together, hell was being separated (89, 120, 133, 150, 163, 186, 190, 196, 358, 363).

This desire for togetherness was associated with marital love when Catherine deemed Hindley and his wife in "paradise on the hearth" (63). Catherine scorned this Paradise, saying, "There they were, like two babies, kissing and talking nonsense by the hour--foolish palaver that we should be ashamed of" (63), an evocation of Satan's jealous anguish upon viewing the innocent Adam and Eve in the Garden:

Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two Imparadised in one another's arms

The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss, while I to Hell am thrust,
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least,
Still unfulfilled with pain of longing pines . . .
(IV. 506-10)

The consequences of Heathcliff and Catherine's unconscious incestuous longing were no less dire than those of the fallen Satan and the fallen Adam and Eve. Denied the Paradise of togetherness, they responded to the expulsion from their own personal heaven in much the same manner,
forcing them to change their concept of heaven/hell from the conventional religious one. Heaven became synonymous with togetherness, hell synonymous with separation. Accordingly, as they spied on Edgar and Isabella Linton through the window at Thrushcross Grange, Heathcliff said, "We should have thought ourselves in heaven!" (89).

Catherine's dream image of being flung out of heaven and onto the "heath on the top of Wuthering Heights" becomes another recurring motif that is a third consequence of the two Falls in Paradise Lost—that of isolation and alienation. There are numerous references in the novel to "exiles," "outcasts," and "beggars." This image forms another association with Paradise Lost, with its frequent references to both Satan and his fallen angels, as well as the disobedient Adam and Eve, as outcasts and exiles: "And they outcast from God, are here condemned / To waste eternal days in woe and pain" (II. 694-5).

Concurrent with the theme of alienation that is a result of incest is the theme of isolation, which in Wuthering Heights is symbolized by a number of images representing barriers in one form or another—gates, fences, windows, doors—but, primarily, locked doors. We noted earlier that incest results in part from a sense of isolation, which in turn is amplified and perpetuated by the incestual activity. The incestuous personality turns back in upon the self rather than going outside the family circle. The image of
locked doors occurs most frequently in regard to Heathcliff and Catherine: Heathcliff always slept with his door locked (179), twice he was locked out by Hindley (88, 121), and he locked Nelly and young Catherine in (301); Catherine locked Edgar, Heathcliff, and herself in (153), then locked herself up for three days when Edgar threatened to bar Heathcliff from Thrushcross Grange (156). These images reflect the self-imposed, or locked-in, isolation of the incestuous person. On the other hand, young Cathy manages to escape her imprisonment at Wuthering Heights. Symbolically, incestuous longing has no final hold on her.

In *Paradise Lost*, there is a similar emphasis on barriers. The gates of heaven are barred to Satan and his followers, and the gates of Paradise are barred to Adam and Eve. The gates of hell, however, are depicted as wide open.

Satan disdained attempts to bar him, forming another association between him and Heathcliff and Catherine. Satan easily leaped over the highest wall into the Garden, where he spied on Adam and Eve (IV. 180-83), reminding us that Heathcliff and Catherine spied in much the same manner on Edgar and Isabella at Thrushcross Grange.

The verbal similarity is striking between *Paradise Lost* and *Wuthering Heights* when Satan is likened to a "prowling wolf . . . watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve" (IV. 183, 185), calling to mind Nelly's characterization of Heathcliff: "I felt that God had forsaken the stray sheep
... and an evil beast prowled ... waiting his time to spring and destroy" (147).

Whereas doors most often act as barriers in *Wuthering Heights*, windows seem to offer a liberating alternative. In a number of instances, entrance was denied through a door, but gained through a window; such was the case also with Milton's "grand thief," who, deterred by "substantial doors, cross-barred and bolted fast . . . / In at the window climbs" (IV. 189-91). Heathcliff gained access to Hindley through a window when the door was barred against him (213); he gained access to Catherine's dead body when Nelly left the parlor window open for him (204); and the window was open when Nelly found him dead (364), suggesting that his spirit escaped to join Catherine's spirit, which had tried to enter the window of Heathcliff's bedroom during Lockwood's dream (70). Catherine, on a number of other occasions, was associated with windows, either gazing out of them (192), insisting that they be opened (160, 163), or threatening to spring out of them (128, 165).

The bed in Heathcliff and Catherine's childhood room had panels which acted as a type of door/window, for one entered the bed through them, in which case they functioned as a door, but at the same time they resembled "coach windows" (61). Catherine's and Heathcliff's coffins closely approximated the same kind of structure, having removable side panels, which Heathcliff bribed the sexton to remove
after his death so that he and Catherine could be symbolically buried together. It is possible to construe these panels as serving a dual metaphorical function: though they barred entry in life, functioning as doors and forcing separation, they afforded entry in death, functioning as windows and permitting togetherness.

Although Catherine undeniably shared with Heathcliff the consequences of incest as outlined in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, she returned to a childlike state of innocence before her death. Upon Heathcliff's return from his exile of three years, Hindley was no longer able to keep Heathcliff and Catherine separated; with Catherine's heaven in view, she took on the characteristics of Eve before the Fall. She told Nelly:

The event [of his return] has reconciled me to God, and humanity! I had risen in angry rebellion against Providence. . . . However, it's over, and I'll take no revenge. . . . I can afford to suffer anything, hereafter! Should the meanest thing alive slap me on the cheek, I'd not only turn the other, but I'd ask pardon for provoking it. (139)

Catherine's intense desire to recapture her childhood concurs with her incestuous attachment to Heathcliff. Her bliss in Heathcliff's presence suggests a child's adulation of a parent: she "kept her gaze fixed on him as if she feared he would vanish were she to remove it" (135).
As she seemingly propelled herself toward death, the allusions to her child-likeness increased. As she lay ill, she "seemed to find childish diversion in pulling the feathers from her pillow, so that Nelly sharply reproved her to "give over with that baby work!" (160). In her delirium she fancied that she could see the lights of Wuthering Heights and that she was a child again, with Joseph waiting to lock the gate behind her (164), which implies an attempt to deny her adult sexuality by returning to the locked-in security of childhood innocence. She believed that she was back in her old room at Wuthering Heights, with the black press against the wall (161). Nelly avowed, "Our fiery Catherine was no better than a wailing child!" (162). She told Nelly: "I wish I were a girl again, half savage and hardy, and free. . . . I'm sure I should be myself again were I once again among the heather on those hills" (163), perhaps a play on Heathcliff's name. Adam, too, had yearned to flee the consequences of guilty knowledge, saying: "O might I here / In solitude live savage" (IX. 1084-85).

Before her death, Catherine asked Heathcliff's forgiveness for making him so wretched and said, "I'm wearying to escape into that glorious world, and to be always there" (196), a speech which conveys religious sentiments of Christian forgiveness. Nelly seemed to believe that Catherine had left her "evil ways to follow good" (203). She told
Heathcliff that Catherine had died "quietly as a lamb" (another religious image) and "like a child reviving" (203).

The most terrible consequence of the two Falls in *Paradise Lost* is Death, as personified by the "grim and terrible" son, "odious offspring" of the incestuous union of Satan and Sin (II. 682, 781). The reversal of the concepts of life and death is as clearly drawn in *Paradise Lost* and *Wuthering Heights* as is the reversal of the concepts of heaven and hell. Along with the knowledge of sin came the awareness of death. After the Fall of Adam and Eve, Adam, when he beheld his companion "defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote," resolved to share the guilt: "However I with thee have fixed my lot, / Certain to undergo like doom, if death / Consort with thee, Death is to me as life" (IX. 952-54). Eve said, "So dear I love him, that with him all deaths / I could endure, without him live no life" (IX. 832-33).

The significance of the reversal of life and death to a study of incest becomes apparent when we examine modern psychological thought that ideas of sex, birth, and death are extensively associated (*Psycho-Myth* 19). Jones elaborates on this point by theorizing that death represents a return to the mother's womb (14), forming an obvious association with the incest theme.

The wish to die together is common to both Adam and Eve and Heathcliff and Catherine, and this common notion forms
the most compelling basis for comparison of the love relationship in both works. Adam said: "And me with thee hath ruined, for with thee / Certain my resolution is to die; / How can I live without thee . . ." (IX. 906-8). In reply, Eve "tenderly wept, much won that he his love / Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur / Divine displeasure for her sake, or death" (IX. 991-93).

Jones explains that "the wish to die together is the same as the wish to sleep and lie together (originally, of course, with the mother)," making the grave equivalent to the mother's bed (Psycho-Myth 10).

Jones characterizes this notion to die together as:

... an infantile desire to defy the father and escape with the mother to some distant place where he cannot disturb their mutual relations; therefore dying together can signify in the unconscious to fly with the mother and thus gratify secret desires." (14)

This notion certainly seems to pertain to Catherine’s yearning for death. As she compelled Heathcliff to hold her, even though Edgar was approaching, she cried, "Oh, don't, don't go. It is the last time! Edgar will not hurt us. Heathcliff, I shall die! I shall die!" (199).

Curiously, Catherine never directly pleaded with Heathcliff to take her away, a plea we feel would have been promptly acted upon by Heathcliff; perhaps this was because
of the impediment to their physical union—an unconscious incest taboo—in the author's mind. Instead, Catherine in her delirium only fancied that she begged Heathcliff to find a way for them to be together in life: "Find a way, then! not through that kirkyard" (164). Only Nelly heard her insane "ravings" (164). Since their incestuous union was not possible in life, however, Catherine resolved to have Heathcliff join her in death: "I wish I could hold you . . . till we were both dead!" (195).

After Catherine's death, Heathcliff was even more determined to ruin everyone around him—Hindley, Isabella, Edgar, Hareton, even his own son and niece. Catherine had associated him with Milton's Satan, saying "Your bliss lies, like his, in inflicting misery" (151). Satan, after his Fall, had boasted, "To do aught good never will be our task, / But ever to do ill our sole delight" (I. 159-60). Heathcliff's sole justification for living seems to have been the acting out of his revenge.

F.H. Langman, in considering why Heathcliff died when he did, a full eighteen years after Catherine's death, says, Heathcliff's love for Catherine is inextricably involved in the motives of his long drawn-out struggle for mastery over his enemies. The two concerns are kept alive together until just before the end, and the survival of the love must be understood or puzzled over—along with the perpet-
uation of the struggle. The meaning of the one provides the motive for the other. (307)

According to Heathcliff's own testimony, his revenge kept him alive; when he "lost the faculty for enjoying [his old enemies'] destruction," he lost his will to live, saying, "I cannot continue in this condition!--I have to remind myself to breathe--almost to remind my heart to beat!" (354-5).

Just "when everything [was] ready, and in [his] power," and his victory over his enemies was assured, his will to do evil vanished. Like Satan, who returned to hell to celebrate his victory over seduced Man, only to find that "a greater power / Now ruled him" (X. 515-16) and turned "triumph to shame" (X. 546), Heathcliff, "instead of fruit / Chewed bitter ashes" (PL X. 565-66).

Heathcliff, like Satan, discovered that evil "like a devilish engine back recoils / Upon himself; horror and doubt distract / His troubled thought . . ." (IV. 17-19). Nelly confirms that just prior to Heathcliff's death his state of mind made her wonder "greatly how it would end," as she watched him "pace the room, muttering terrible things to himself" (355). For him, as for Milton's Satan,

.. . Now conscience wakes despair
That slumbered; wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse; of worse deeds worse suffering must ensue.

(IV. 23-6)

The final blow to his vain attempt "out of good still to find means of evil" (PL I. 165) was Heathcliff's failure to pervert Hareton and his inability to come between the love of him and the younger Catherine. Like Satan, he realized that:

... All his malice served but to bring forth Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown On Man by him seduced, but on himself Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance poured.

(I. 217-20)

The much-debated conclusion of Wuthering Heights seems to offer a harmonious resolution to the forbidden relationship of Heathcliff and Catherine through the socially-condoned marriage of the cousins, Hareton and young Cathy. The garden images, especially that of the two cousins as laborers in the garden (352), and that of Cathy as carver of "figures of birds and beasts" (330), certainly suggest the innocent Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The emphasis on their importation of bushes for their garden from Thrushcross Grange promises a new fertility based on mingling like with unlike, a reversal of the incestuous striving to merge like with like.

That harmony is achieved at the hands of the unredeemed Heathcliff is understandable when we recall that Milton's
unredeemed Satan illuminated the goodness of God and ultimately was the unwitting instrument of good. Heathcliff's evil was impotent when confronted with the love of Hareton and Cathy, a love capable of breaking the relentless cycle of fall and punishment and establishing "order from disorder sprung" (PL III. 713).

As Heathcliff gazed at the two young lovers, he stood "disarmed" (352), reminding us of Satan:

... Abashed the devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape, how lovely, saw, and pined
His loss... (IV. 846-51)
NOTES

1 All quotations from Paradise Lost are based on the Norton Critical Edition edited by Scott Elledge, 1975.

2 Although the comparison of Wuthering Heights to Paradise Lost is purely a speculative reading, Bronte was certainly apt to have been influenced by Milton. Winifred Gerin, in her biography of Emily Bronte, maintains that Milton's Satan "stirred her to admiration and sympathy" and that the poetry of Milton and Byron left clear traces on her work (47). Alan Bacon hypothesizes that the paintings in Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre form a sequence representing temptation, sin, and death as presented in Milton's Paradise Lost. (See "Jane Eyre's Paintings and Milton's Paradise Lost," Notes and Queries 229: 64-5.)

3 Judith May Schelly's dissertation illustrates attempts by five nineteenth-century authors to demonstrate the nostalgia of the period for the lost paradise of sibling unity. According to Schelly, this theme arose out of the nineteenth-century regard for the family as a refuge from public life (23). In Wuthering Heights this interpretation falls short of explaining the adult eroticism evident between Heathcliff and Cathy as they embraced just prior to Cathy's death, as well as the return of the ghosts of Heathcliff and Cathy as adults rather than children.
CHAPTER WORKS CITED


CHAPTER IV

DOUBLING AS AN ASPECT OF INCEST

The incest theme, long a component of the Western literary tradition, reappeared in nineteenth-century literature after lying dormant during the neoclassic period.\(^1\) Henry Miles' study of this reappearance reveals that incest was the third most prevalent fantasy in Victorian pornography, serving as a protest to the "cosy artificial world of the Victorian family" (9-10). Maseo Miyoshi explains that "As perhaps the extreme expression of social defiance, incest was a serviceable symbol for the Romantics, who took seriously their obligation as rebels and social critics" (11).

Concurrent with and often parallel to the prolific use of the incest theme was the recurring motif of the double in nineteenth-century poetry, drama, and prose fiction. More than any other literary form, the novel has contributed to the concept of doubling because the novelist can entirely manipulate the situations, as well as the characters and their interactions.\(^2\)

Perhaps no novel of the nineteenth-century is so permeated with the doubling theme as *Wuthering Heights*, for virtually every character has one or more doubles. The
complex doubling patterns simultaneously place the major characters side by side with every other character, then repeat the cycle in the next generation. There is both spatial doubling, in which a character is a repetition or counterpart of another character who is his contemporary; and temporal doubling, in which a character recognizes someone of another generation as a double of himself and perceives the younger's life as a fateful repetition of his own.

The complicated doubling results in family resemblances, overlapping names, and personal and psychological affiliations which bewilder the reader as well as those within the novel; for example, Nelly tries to clarify Hareton Earnshaw's lineage to Lockwood:

And who is that Earnshaw, Hareton Earnshaw, who lives with Mr. Heathcliff? are they relations?

No; he is the late Mrs. Linton's nephew.

The young lady's cousin, then?

Yes; and her husband was her cousin also--one on the mother's, the other on the father's side--Heathcliff married Mr. Linton's sister. (75)

In addition to the traditional doubling devices--juxtaposing, duplicating, and/or presenting composite characters--Bronte employs a circular narration--Nelly Dean providing a pragmatic, realistic dialogue to complement Lockwood's romantic, idealistic one; a binary narrative structure--the
two parts comprising similar yet contrasting situations; a
double temporal frame—present time alternating with up to
30 years past; and a metaphorical structure based on pairs
of opposites. Surely this extensive use of doubling sug-
gests a pattern with meaning.

Studies of the double's use throughout the history of
literature indicate that it originated in the author's
unconscious desire to depict mankind's struggle for self-
integration. Obsessed by the duality of his nature—part
matter, part spirit—man desperately seeks to resolve his
chronic incompleteness. Through doubling, the contest
between the spirit and sensuality is depicted in the divided
psyches of the characters, the double acting as one or more
of the self's opposing partitions. Twentieth-century writ-
ers, for whom Freud's ideas of the unconscious, sexual
repression, and the Oedipal conflict are current, often con-
sciously employ the double motif.

Primitive cultures had always been aware of the terror
and awe inspired by the concept of duality—whether that
duality was manifested in twin births, in a man and his
shadow, in one's reflection, or in the creation of an arti-
fact resembling him. But Freud's revelations as to the
importance of the irrational, unconscious nature of the
psyche enabled man to create some rationale as to his irra-
tionality, including the possibility that everyone has a
second, or shadow, self dwelling beside the civilized social
self, ready at any moment to assert its anti-social tendencies.

The correlation between literary doubling and incest, itself a doubling of relationships, becomes apparent when we observe that the primary motive of both is to achieve wholeness or self-integration. In essence, "Doubling and incest are both images of the self-enclosed—the inability of the ego to break out of the circle of the self and of the individual to break out of the ring of the family" (Irwin 59).

Miyoshi draws a further parallel between incest and doubling when he claims that for the Romantics, incest, in dissolving the familial bonds between individuals, "finally dissolves the identifying masks distinguishing one individual from another. . . . The incestuous act becomes the moment for the self meeting with itself." He adds, "One can be, through incest, other than oneself, yet strangely, by virtue of this sense of the family as a 'larger self,' more completely oneself" (11).

Since the motive for both incest and literary doubling is to achieve personal integration, a common device of the author is to present two characters who complement each other both physically and psychologically, forming one composite self. Heathcliff and Catherine are a paradigm of the composite, or mirror, double, differing in sex alone. They are both wild, violent figures—dark, proud, and headstrong—roaming the moors as uninhibited figures more akin
to nature than to civilized society. Each is incomplete without the other. The passages in which Catherine describes her symbiotic relationship with Heathcliff are among the most powerful and most quoted of the novel. She attempts to explain her feelings to Nelly:

... He's more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same.

... 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. ... 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--so, don't talk of our separation again --it is impracticable. (121-22)

Critics have remarked at length on the all-consuming nature of Heathcliff and Catherine's love, many seeing it as selfless and sacrificing, and therefore admirable. Derek Traversi even goes so far as to say, "There is about it a quality which can properly be called religious" (54). Psychologists, however, recognize the dangers of such a relationship, for it can become an exercise in self-love, in which each is drawn to the reflection of himself in the other.

Freud labeled this type of love narcissistic, so designated because of the myth of the youth who became infatuated
with his own reflection. He identified this exaggerated concern with the self as an early stage in human development; if it persists into adulthood, the individual is unable to develop attachments outside the self. Narcissistic love differs from normal sexual love, which admits the other partner as a separate and distinct being to whom one gives part of oneself. The narcissistic relationship denies the difference implicit in the sexes—a difference needed to complete the denied part of the natural self—in favor of the likeness yearned for by the ego. Milton correlated such a relationship with the incestuous love of Satan and Sin in *Paradise Lost*: Sin reminds Satan, "Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing / Becam'st enamoured . . . (Paradise Lost III. 763-64).

Heathcliff and Catherine's passionate desire for identification with a sibling recalls a later form of the Narcissus myth, in which the youth gazes down into the water at an exact replica of himself, only to discover that it is his recently deceased twin sister. This version of the myth appears only rarely in myth and folklore, probably because of its offensive nature since the primitives believed that opposite-sex twins have had "sexual relationship in the womb" (Keppler 108).

As children, Heathcliff and Catherine live in perfect symbiosis in a paradise of their own making. But upon viewing Thrushcross Grange and its inhabitants, an event
coming soon after Hindley physically separated the two by not allowing them to eat, play, or sleep together (64, 163), no doubt calling into their consciousness their growing sexuality, Catherine begins to suppress the incestuous part of her self that identifies with Heathcliff and to seek the company of Edgar Linton, Heathcliff's and (by extension) her physical and psychological opposite.

Constance Hill Hall sheds light on the metaphorical function of the doubling of opposites in incest:

... incest signifies a fall from wholeness, a lapse in which mind is sundered from body, thought from sensation. ... This contest is dramatized in the divided souls of the stories' characters. The major figures are depicted as one or the other of the bifurcated parts. (17-18)

Catherine's attraction to her opposite Edgar Linton is an externalization of her divided psyche, Edgar representing the socially acceptable, conventional self as opposed to the free, uninhibited, amoral self that seeks incestuous symbiosis with Heathcliff.

Clearly, Nelly Dean was aware of Catherine's double nature. On one hand, she was "not artful, never played the coquette" (107) and had the "bonniest eye, and sweetest smile, and lightest foot in the parish" (83). On the other hand, she was proud, temperamental, easily given to hysteria (111). Nelly reveals that "[Catherine] had no temptation to
show her rough side" in the company of the Lintons and this desire to appear at her best before them "led her to adopt a double character without exactly intending to deceive anyone" (107).

Here Jung’s doctrine of the persona and of the shadow self, or repressed second self, provides useful terminology. As it most often appears in fiction, the shadow is the repulsive self, the unlived portion of the personality. In suppressing the shadow self, the individual assumes a persona, that is, the mask he wears in societal settings, never facing others with his total personality but drawing upon specific facets according to the situation. The mask represents his conscious attitude and is therefore opposite to the unconscious. Since any extreme in the persona is balanced by an extreme in the unconscious, the psyche is vulnerable to the conflict of opposites (Jung 210). The "more repressed the more 'alien' the shadow will appear when projected into the world" (Hallam 17).

These words certainly describe Heathcliff, whose mysterious origins brand him as an alien from the moment he enters the family. Moreover, he is repeatedly associated with the natural elements and animals, embodying the instinctual and unconscious side of man's nature. The many references to his demonic tendencies take on added meaning when we observe that "the forces of the 'Invisible World' such as werewolves, wraiths, vampires, phantoms, and succubi
can be understood as dark personae of the Double" (Hallam 8).

As we noted earlier, Catherine clearly shares many of Heathcliff's demonic characteristics when in his physical presence. But in his absence, with the object of her incestuous desires removed, she suppresses her shadow self, and her "good" and affectionate self is in control. She married Edgar Linton, moved to Thrushcross Grange, and "behaved infinitely better" than Nelly had reason to expect. But "the gunpowder lay as harmless as sand, because no fire came near to explode it" (131).

The attempt "to keep a suppressed self alive, although society may insist on annihilation," has been one of the recurrent preoccupations of double literature (Guerard 2). Rank points out that fairy and folk tales emphasize that the double, as an independent entity, thwarts the self, especially in love relationships (Rank 11). When Catherine betrays her shadow self--figuratively Heathcliff--by seeking the company of the Lintons, he becomes a foreboding presence, listening undetected while Catherine confesses to Nelly that she will accept Edgar's proposal. His hidden presence symbolizes Catherine's shadow self, reflecting the self she alienates in deciding to marry Edgar. When he hears her say it would degrade her to marry him, he runs off without hearing her immediately contradict herself with an impassioned declaration of love for him (121), a contradic-
tion that points up the confusion and ambivalence of her divided self. As Catherine keeps vigil for Heathcliff’s return during the storm that follows his departure, the violent wind and thunder "split a tree off at the corner of the building" (125), symbolic of the divisive split that occurs in Catherine’s perception of her self when she denies her shadow.

Obviously, the problem of self-definition in a relationship such as Heathcliff and Catherine’s is acute. As Hall explains, "The incestuous partner’s uneasiness as to who he may be is evident in his rejection of the world outside and in his adherence to someone he perceives as an image of himself" (66). The identity problems are worsened by the role violations both relationships incur as the incestuous partners struggle to reconcile their simultaneous attraction to and repulsion of their suppressed desires.

After Catherine’s marriage, Heathcliff continues to play the part of double as foreboding presence, his enigmatic character a reminder of her past life as a girl "half savage and hardy, and free" (163). He interrupts the growing intimacy between Catherine and her husband by his return after a three-year absence, implying that she is prevented from loving her husband by her own personified shadow in the form of Heathcliff. His whereabouts during his absence are never explained, adding one more mystery to his elusive history. As Carl F. Keppler explains, "The second self is
the intruder from the background of shadows, and however prominent he may become he always tends to remain half-shadowed" (3).

Heathcliff, as though making the point that he is taking Edgar's sister in exchange for Edgar taking his, marries Isabella and makes her "Edgar's proxy in suffering" (182), thus setting up a corresponding juxtaposition of double-crossed siblings: Catherine and her opposite, Edgar, Heathcliff and his opposite, Isabella--the doubles doubled, or a "redoubling."

With Heathcliff's return, Catherine is unable to reconcile her simultaneous attraction to and repulsion of her incestuous desire, and his presence revives the fearful struggle of her divided selves. Jung agreed with Freud that an individual cannot get rid of himself in favor of an artificial personality without punishment; the attempt to do so brings on unconscious reactions such as compulsive ideas, phobias, depressions, etc. Heathcliff's departure three years earlier had "proved the commencement of delirium," and Catherine had to be watched for attempts at suicide (127-28). Upon his return, Edgar, jealous that she treats this "runaway servant as a brother" (135), forces her to make a decision between Heathcliff and himself; then she goes into another prolonged delirium.

The scene in which Catherine, hysterical, gazes into a mirror and cannot recognize herself, vividly demonstrates
the disintegration that follows when Edgar separates her from Heathcliff—a disintegration paralleling that which occurred when they had been separated by Hindley in adolescence. As she gazes into the mirror, she can no longer recognize herself. She fancies that she is back at Wuthering Heights, "enclosed in the oak-panelled bed" they had shared as children. She tells Nelly,

. . . the whole last seven years of my life grew a blank! I did not recall that they had been at all. I was a child; my father was just buried, and my misery arose from the separation that Hindley had ordered between me, and Heathcliff—I was laid alone, for the first time, and rousing from a dismal dose after a night of weeping. . . . (163)

Symbolically locked in a mental childhood consistent with the infantile, regressive nature of incest, Catherine is unable to maintain her adult identity. In her delirium, she becomes "no better than a wailing child" (162), longing to return to the security of childhood and the symbiosis she had shared with Heathcliff at Wuthering Heights.

Perhaps, too, Catherine glimpses a vision of her approaching death. Rank observed the equivalence of the mirror/shadow to the ego/conscience/soul among primitives, who prohibited gazing at oneself in a mirror at night lest one lose his own image, that is to say his soul. Death became a necessary consequence (Rank 10, 63).
Just before Catherine's death, Nelly testifies, "... they were locked in an embrace from which I thought my mistress would never be released alive" (197). This physical union symbolically represents the merging of the two components of the single personality, whole once again. In fact, their embrace is Catherine's last conscious awareness, for when they part at Edgar's entrance, she faints, thereafter "having never recovered sufficient consciousness to miss Heathcliff, or know Edgar" (201).

Certainly, the text indicates that Catherine wills her own death, suggesting the use of the double for the simultaneous punishment and satisfaction of the incest (Irwin 44). When Catherine fails to reconcile the split between sister figure and lover, she in a sense murders her shadow, the sister figure punishing the incestuous lover. But Rank's study of the modern uses of the double motif convinced him that the double paradoxically affords the individual with immortality at the same time announcing his death.

Avery Weisman proposes that there are those who are "self-destructive in order to preserve themselves and to triumph over death. This means that the hostile side of self-destruction is secondary and that death--so universally deplored--becomes idealized" (298). This would seem to explain the self-willed deaths of both Catherine and Heathcliff. She says just before her death,
. . . the thing that irks me most is this shattered [one is tempted here to read fragmented] prison, after all. I'm tired, tired of being enclosed here. 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. (196-97)

Eighteen years later, Heathcliff echoes Catherine's intense desire for death: "I have a single wish, and my whole being and faculties are yearning to attain it. . . . I am swallowed in the anticipation of its fulfillment" (354). The word swallowed recalls Fromm's characterization of incestuous symbiosis as a kind of "swallowing" (180).

Why did Heathcliff linger for eighteen years after Catherine's death, since he apparently had no compunctions about joining her in death and eventually does?

From a literary standpoint, the second half of the book after Catherine's death is a working out of the incest taboo by socializing it through the acceptable marriage of Hareton and Cathy, the temporal doubles of Heathcliff and Catherine.

From a psychological standpoint, the action doubles back on itself. Heathcliff acts under the compulsion to relive the anguish of his unrequited love in a way that is less threatening to the ego. Freud identified the repeti-
tion compulsion as an "impulse to work over in the mind some overpowering experience so as to make oneself master of it . . ." (Beyond 10). Heathcliff transformed the passivity of the experience to the activity of passing it on to those around him, in this way revenging himself on a substitute. That he avenged himself on his temporal double Hareton becomes understandable through Freud's observation that "unconscious mental processes are in themselves 'timeless.' This means in the first place that time does not change them in any way and that the idea of time cannot be applied to them" (Beyond 22).

Irwin explains that temporal doubling and incest evoke the way in which "the circle of the self-enclosed repeats itself through time as a cycle, the way that the inability to break out of the ring of the self and the family becomes the inability of successive generations to break out of the cyclic repetition of self-enclosure" (59).

The doubling continues into the next generation through Cathy, a less "natural" Catherine, and Linton Heathcliff, a weaker Edgar (temporal doubles of the opposites Catherine and Edgar). It eventually comes full circle with the composite doubling of Cathy and Hareton, a more refinable Heathcliff, (temporal doubles of Catherine and Heathcliff), who can legally marry because they are first cousins, thus not impeded by nineteenth-century English law.
To this point we have noted two of the most commonly used devices of literary doubling in nineteenth-century literature: composite doubling as seen in the relationship of Heathcliff/Catherine and their temporal doubles Hareton/Cathy; and the doubling of opposites as seen in the relationship of Edgar/Catherine and their temporal doubles Linton/Cathy. For the sake of brevity and clarity, we will pass over other similar patterns of doubling (namely the composite pairs Heathcliff/Hindley, Edgar/Linton, Catherine/Cathy; and the pairs of opposites Heathcliff/Isabella, Heathcliff/Edgar, Catherine/Isabella, and Linton/Hareton) to take up the first-person narrator, Lockwood.

We have noted that the psychic disintegration that results from incest is dramatized in literature through the divided souls of the stories' characters. The lesser characters often function as the "foils, reflecting and revealing the hidden dark corners of the protagonists' hearts" (Hall 17-18). But in this case, Lockwood, Heathcliff's civilized double, as Giles Mitchell has characterized him (35), serves as a foil to point up the vitality of the passion between Heathcliff and Catherine, even though it is a passion that can never be consummated because of the incest taboo. Lockwood, in his overly refined civility and silly romantic misjudgments, is an impotent reflection of the vital Heathcliff, no doubt helping to augment the reader's sympathetic acceptance of him. Even though Lockwood
resides at the Grange, thus identifying him with the cultural opposite of the Heights, he falls short of even the colorless Edgar Linton, who at least is capable of an impassioned love for Catherine and their daughter.

Lockwood is an obsessive prying observer, but, as his name suggests, he is just a passive looker-on, a bystander who is "locked" within himself because of his sexual apathy, if not antipathy. His doubling with Heathcliff is hinted at from the outset. Like Heathcliff, an outsider and one who goes by only his surname, Lockwood is initially attracted to Heathcliff as a mirror image of himself, one with whom he "can divide the desolation," claiming that they are "such a suitable pair" (45), a mark of how limited his self-knowledge is, for the reader sees at once that the genteel dandy does not resemble his unrefined, passionate landlord at all and that he has totally mistaken Heathcliff for "a capital fellow" (45) with whom he shares "a sympathetic chord" (47). In fact, the two are opposites, most notably in their feeling lives. Lockwood, passive and effete, lacks the passion and wild intensity of Heathcliff. Although socially and morally incompatible as well, however, the two strike up a strange acquaintance, but Lockwood's initial attraction turns to increasing repulsion, while Heathcliff's initial antipathy progresses to curiosity and at least grudging acceptance (334).
In Lockwood's erroneous characterization of Heathcliff is contained a picture of himself: "his reserve springs from an aversion to showy displays of feeling—to manifestations of mutual kindness. He'll love and hate, equally under cover, and esteem it a species of impertinence, to be loved or hated again" (47). Admitting that he might be bestowing his "own attributes over liberally" (47) on Heathcliff, he confesses an abortive love affair with another whom he had found "a most fascinating creature . . . as long as she took no notice of [him]," but he had "shrunk icily into [him]-self, like a snail, at every glance retired colder and farther" (48) when she returned his advances. His inability to experience love and passion implies a narcissistic impotence—both emotional and sexual.

Lockwood symbolically takes his double's place when he climbs into the oak-panelled bed that Heathcliff had shared with Catherine in childhood, a wooden structure that Lockwood describes as "a large oak case with squares cut out near the top" (61), hence the association of the bed with the coffin that Catherine was, and later Heathcliff will be, buried in.

While lying in the forbidden bed (Zillah had made him "hide the candle, and not make a noise" lest Heathcliff discover he was in there), Lockwood has three separate dreams that through a circular pattern merge into one: the first, in which a "glare of white letters" spelling out the
names Catherine Earnshaw, Catherine Heathcliff, and Catherine Linton appear "as vivid as spectres" (61); the second, in which Jabes Branderham and the congregation expose some secret sin, resulting in a riot that gives way to the third dream, in which the ghostly names of Catherine are displaced by the ghostly figure of Catherine herself.

Freud's extensive study of dream interpretation established that "In dreams that follow one another we often observe that one dream takes as its central point something that is only alluded to in the periphery of the next dream, and conversely, so that even in their interpretations the two supplement each other" (480). The presence of Catherine in the dream sequence on either side of the Branderham scene, then, doubly ties her to the sermon.

The Branderham dream from the outset takes on incestuous overtones since it occurs when Lockwood falls asleep reading Catherine's account of Hindley's separating her and Heathcliff. The diary was inscribed in the blank margins of a book containing "a red ornamented title--'Seventy Times Seven, and the First of the Seventy-First: A Pious Discourse delivered by the Reverend Jabes Branderham, in the Chapel of Gimmerden Sough.'" The subtle association of Catherine's grief at being "laid alone, for the first time" (162) with Branderham's sermon title associates the First of the Seventy-First sins, "the sin that no Christian need pardon" (66), with incest.
Here Philip K. Wion's interpretation of the first part of the Branderham dream becomes applicable, although Wion's thesis that Heathcliff is a surrogate parent figure because of the absent mother in *Wuthering Heights* seems entirely too ingenuous an explanation for the complexities of the novel. Wion, using familiar Oedipal terms, says, "If 'home' represents the mother (ultimately, the womb), using a phallic 'staff' to enter it would indeed be 'absurd'—because forbidden by the incest taboo, and therefore a source of intense anxiety" (159).

The fact that Lockwood's companion Joseph—a pious though sanctimonious Christian—wearies him with "constant reproaches" for not having brought a "pilgrim's staff" (phallus), telling him he "could never get in the house (womb) without one, while himself boastfully flourishing a heavy-headed cudgel" (phallus), suggests the vitality of one who is not guilty of the "secret sin" and identifies Lockwood's, and by extension Heathcliff's, impotence if not castration—both classic punishments for violation of the incest taboo.

Lockwood realizes that he is not going home; he and Joseph are journeying to hear a sermon and "either Joseph, the preacher, or [he] had committed the 'First of the Seventy-First,' and were to be publicly exposed and excommunicated" (65). As Mitchell has pointed out, "In Freudian psychology such a dream crowd represents a secret, in this
case, obviously, a secret sin" (35). Freud, in *Totem and Taboo*, maintains that the secret sin is always incest, explaining why Lockwood stresses that "it seemed necessary the brother should sin different sins on every occasion" (65).

Lockwood hastens to add what some critics have seen as an attempted reality to the dream scene in the description of the location of the chapel and the nearby cemetery, saying, "I have passed it really in my walks, twice or thrice" (65). Freud found that

There are dreams of landscapes and localities in which emphasis is always laid upon the assurance: "I have been here before." But this *déj vu* has a special significance in dreams . . . the locality is always the genitals of the mother; of no other place can it be asserted with such certainty that "one has been here before." (394)

In any case, the description of the chapel and cemetery contains distinctly sexual imagery suggesting the womb: "It lies in a hollow, between two hills--an elevated hollow--near a swamp, whose peaty moisture is said to answer all the purposes of embalming . . ." (65), recalling the motive of incest as a desire to perpetuate life by a return to the mother's womb.5

The church is full, and Lockwood must endure "a sermon! divided into four hundred and ninety parts, each fully equal
to an ordinary address from the pulpit and each discussing a separate sin!" (65). The universality of the guilt implicit in the dream is evidenced not only by the number of sins sermonized against and the magnitude of the sins ("odd transgressions" that Lockwood had never imagined previously), but by the uncertainty of who the perpetrator is: Lockwood accuses Branderham (explaining why Lockwood later asks Heathcliff, the brother who must sin, "Was not the Reverend Jabez Branderham akin to you on the mother's side?" [69]), and Branderham in turn accuses Lockwood, and "presently the whole chapel resound[s] with rappings and counter-rappings" (66).

A dream scene, by its very nature, is symbolic, and therefore "a place for multivalence and reversibility," to use Roland Barthes' terminology (S/Z 19). Certainly, there are a number of ambiguities in the dream that follows the Branderham scene, including the overlapping and shifting identities of Lockwood, Heathcliff, and Catherine.

The dream merges the incest theme with the doubling theme if we suppose that Lockwood, who has taken Heathcliff's place in the bed, symbolically shares his shame and guilt for sexual misconduct. Since the unconscious does not make a distinction between a wish and an act, those who suppress a part of themselves suffer guilt as though they had actually acted out the forbidden wish—for Heathcliff, the desire for union with a forbidden partner; for Lockwood,
the desire to rid himself of his sexual, or shadow, self—in the dream embodied by the child at the window. He tries to protect himself by slashing its wrist—in dream interpretations a symbolic castration—trying to rid himself of Heathcliff's double, and by extension Heathcliff himself, and therefore trying to rid himself of his own shadow, only to find that he is committing a symbolic murder/suicide.

Lockwood ultimately is the "ghastly harbinger of death," to use Rank's term for the function of the double in modern literature. Just as Catherine meets her death soon after seeing her reflection in the mirror, Heathcliff meets his death soon after Lockwood sees her reflection in the window. The violent scene in which Lockwood grinds the ghostly figure's arm on the broken windowpane foreshadows Heathcliff's death in the same bed, his arm grazed by the same window's lattice (364).

Whereas Heathcliff commits a kind of physical suicide out of his passionate desire to be reunited with Catherine in death, Lockwood commits psychological suicide out of his fear and repugnance to submit to passion in life. If Heathcliff is guilty of the unforgivable sin, incest, Lockwood is guilty of the equally unforgivable sin, self-betrayal.

Terrified by his brush with passion, Lockwood once again shrinks icily, even petulantly, into himself, telling Heathcliff after his nightmare, "You need not dread a repetition of my intrusion. I am now quite cured of seeking
pleasure in society, be it country or town" (70). He returns to the safety of the civilized Thrushcross Grange, "fearful . . . of serious effects from the incidents of today and yesterday" (76), and indeed he does fall ill, allowing him to hear the rest of the story from Nelly safely, at a distance, once again becoming a voyeur rather than a participant.

As Lockwood learns more about the Heights inhabitants, his initial attraction turns to repulsion. He no longer feels "inclined to call Heathcliff a capital fellow" (54), and he cautions himself to "beware of the fascination that lurks in Catherine Heathcliff's brilliant eyes. I should be in a curious taking if I surrendered my heart to that young person, and the daughter turned out a second edition of the mother!" (191).

As soon as Lockwood recovers from the indisposition occasioned by his experience at Wuthering Heights, he disavows his former attraction to the isolation of the countryside and tells Nelly that "my home is not here. I'm of the busy world, and to its arms I must return" (288). After less than two months of his year's lease of Thrushcross Grange, he hastens to Wuthering Heights to tell Heathcliff he will honor his lease monetarily, but he is leaving for London, telling himself, "I would not pass another winter here, for much" (329). He reasons, "How dreary life gets over in that house! . . . What a realization of something
more romantic than a fairy tale it would have been for Mrs. Linton Heathcliff, had she and I struck up an attachment, as her good nurse desired, and migrated together, into the stirring atmosphere of the town!" (335).

Lockwood's last visit to Wuthering Heights takes place after Heathcliff's death. Nelly tells him the strange circumstances of the death, and he observes for himself the passionate love between Hareton and Cathy, who will soon marry. He professes to be envious of their happiness and to be bitter "at having thrown away the chance [he] might have had" (338), but at the same time, he "felt irresistibly impelled to escape them" (367) as Heathcliff had felt--Heathcliff because they were mirror images of him and Catherine, and as such, embodied the passion he could not allow himself because their love was taboo; Lockwood because they embodied the passion he would not allow himself.
NOTES

¹*Tom Jones* was a comic exception.

²Studies of the divided self abound in nineteenth-century novels as writers reflected the turbulence of Victorian times. In the introduction to Rank's *Der Doppelganger*, Harry Tucker explains that "the interest of the reading public seems especially to have been drawn to the theme of the double during or just after major upheavals of society" (xix).

Claire Rosenfield attributes the nineteenth-century novelist's fascination with the double as a result of the new emphasis placed on the individual during the French Revolution and the Romantic Movement. Because the Romantics made the inner life of the individual primary, nineteenth-century audiences readily accepted literary works which explored the duality of the self, at the same time requiring that no threat to the communal order or Victorian personal complacency occur. Along with Romanticism, Miyoshi identifies Gothicism as "traditions which together created the prototypes of man divided" (xiv).

³I borrow the terms "spatial" and "temporal" doubling from John Irwin's *Doubling and Incest/Repetition and Revenge: A Speculative Reading of Faulkner*, 1975.

At the time of Lockwood's dream, Catherine and Edgar are already buried in this sexually-symbolic cemetery, and within the next six or seven months Heathcliff will join them, all three graves placed side by side, with Catherine's grave in the middle. Heathcliff will bribe the sexton to remove the panels to the adjoining sides of his and Catherine's caskets, boasting, "... by the time [Edgar] gets to us, he'll not know which is which!", suggesting the fulfillment of incestuous desire (319). The fact that "no clergyman will undertake the duties of pastor" there (65), suggests that evil has totally prevailed.
CHAPTER WORKS CITED


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CHAPTER V

"THE THRESHOLD OF HOME"

"My sister's disposition was not naturally gregarious; circumstances favoured and fostered her tendency to seclusion; except to go to church or take a walk on the hills, she rarely crossed the threshold of home." (1850 Preface 38)

The scant knowledge that exists relating to Emily Bronte, the most talented of an extraordinarily gifted family, is a measure of her introversion. The picture that emerges in the numerous biographies is to some extent speculative because it is largely based on witnesses' accounts, especially those of her sister, Charlotte, and therefore subject to bias. Few of her directly personal documents remain. Her early prose and poetry writings, the prose "Gondal" chronicles, and all but a few of her diary entries have disappeared, probably destroyed by herself or Charlotte (Braithwaite 46). Only two or three of her letters have been preserved as compared to nearly seven hundred of Charlotte's. But accounts of those who knew Emily, including her own family members, disclose that her predominating passions were her family, her home, and the surrounding Yorkshire moors. Of the four attempts she made to leave home in her thirty years, none lasted more than a few months; together they total around two years.
It is not my intention to add anything new to the speculation about the influences on Emily Bronte's life. Nor do I want to suggest that she had a physically incestuous relationship upon which she based the story of Heathcliff and Catherine. My concern is with incest and the incest prohibition, "not in the form of a system of rules—rather in the form of a theme for mythical thought" (Levi-Strauss 547). The incestuous mindset of Emily Bronte's life and personal philosophy, whether conscious or unconscious, particularly suited her to write a story with an underlying incest theme.

Born July 30, 1818, Emily Jane Bronte moved with her family to Haworth in Yorkshire in April 1820 when her father took what was to become a "perpetual curacy" (Gerin 1). This move to the isolated environs of West Riding was to establish impermeable boundaries between the family and the outside world. Sheer geographical isolation became a barrier to socialization with other persons, turning the family back in upon itself.

The barrier at Haworth was first and foremost a natural one: the parsonage opened onto Yorkshire's "wild bleak moors--grand from the ideas of solitude and loneliness which they suggest, or oppressive from the feeling which they give of being pent up by some monotonous and illimitable barrier" (Gaskell 4). The harsh climate added to the isolation, the parsonage located in a part of the world "where the snow lay
late and long on the moors . . . and where often, on autum-

nal or winter nights, the four winds of heaven seemed to
meet and rage together as if they were wild beasts striving
to find an entrance" (62).

Another barrier to socialization was imposed by the
differences in education, culture, and temperament of the
new curate's family when measured against the wild, rough
population of the Yorkshire district. That hardy race--
self-sufficient and distrustful of strangers, shrewd and
unemotional except when roused to violent anger--was shaped
by the harsh environment and by a way of existence in which
a man seldom met his neighbor (Gaskell 20-26). From the
outset, "from individuals in the village the [Bronte] family
stood aloof" (Gaskell 49).

Incest automatically negates the concept of communal
sharing because it renders its participants inactive in the
social system. Sociologists explain that the incestuous
personality is unable to "benefit from the stimulation of
exchanging ideas, values or experiences with persons outside
the family" (Thorman 74). Mr. Bronte, even after fifteen
years as a resident of Haworth, still characterized himself
as

a stranger in a strange land. In this place I
have received civilities and I have, I trust, been
civil to all, but I have not tried to make any new
friends, nor have I met with any whose minds were congenial to my own. (qtd. in Crandall 8)

Whatever impulses to friendship and hospitality the curate’s family might have tentatively felt were stymied completely within eighteen months, when Mrs. Bronte died, leaving the bereft widower with six small children—five daughters and a son. The family circle became identical to that of Wuthering Heights, "completely removed from the stir of society" (WH 45), closed to all except the servants and a handful of neighbors and friends, who were seen only occasionally.

Biographers and critics have often pointed out the importance of Patrick Bronte in shaping the children's futures. He was no doubt stern, straitlaced, and humorless. He grew increasingly introverted after the loss of his wife. But biographical entries of his dismay when he feared his youngsters had been lost or harmed in a violent storm, his reluctance to let his daughters travel alone, even in adulthood, and his constant concern for their fragile health suggest that he was entirely devoted to his children. He passed on his extraordinary love of nature and learning to all his children and was close to each one in different but specific ways—to Emily through their shared love of music and shooting.

Biographers and critics have probably not exaggerated the significance of the children's loss of their mother.
After her death, though, her place was more or less adequately filled by two surrogates who helped raise them--Aunt Branwell, their mother's elder sister, who raised them with a sense of duty and discipline; and Tabitha Aykroyd, a widow of fifty-six, whose warm heart and generous nature earned her a spot as a family member. Tabby was a particular favorite of Emily's.

More important to our study from a biographical standpoint is the self-enclosure imposed by the isolated setting of the Bronte's home on the desolate English moors, the introverted nature of the family as a whole stemming from the father's natural taciturnity augmented by his grief at losing his wife, and the effects of the persistent presence of death in that closed environment.

From an early age, the children were surrounded by death--literally, since a graveyard "terribly full of upright stones" (Gaskell 5) adjoined the parsonage, and figuratively, since their mother's death was followed within four years by the deaths of the two oldest sisters who had taken over the maternal responsibilities, forever proving a haunting memory to the youthful siblings who remained and to the increasingly withdrawn father.

Cultural anthropologist Ernest Becker, clearly diverging from Freud's characterization of incest as an instinctual sexual drive, argues that the Oedipal complex is motivated solely by the desire to cope with the fear of death.
Since the child, Becker argues, becomes aware of death and his utter powerlessness to escape it as early as age three, a fact too terrifying for him to face on a conscious level, he turns to another, usually the parent or a surrogate, out of fear of "standing alone, helpless and afraid," in order to deny his identity as a separate person who will die (36, 54).

Ideally, the child works through this phase by around age nine and is able to separate himself from the parent figure. In cases of arrested development, however, this separation process, which results in healthy individuation, fails to take place. The person remains in a childlike state, always attempting to immerse himself in another, unconsciously trying to combat his fear of death by adding the life of another to his own.

In the case of the Brontes, the siblings, rather than turning to their stern father or their coldly pious Aunt Branwell (Tabby did not join the family until after the deaths of the two sisters), turned to each other. Their fears of death and of facing the world on their own turned them in upon themselves.

The resourceful children, especially after the deaths of their sisters, escaped from their morbidly foreboding surroundings by creating a shared imaginary world that they kept secret from others. Until Fannie E. Ratchford deciphered their secret writings nearly a century later, the
fantastic world created by the Bronte children remained a secret—"marvellous kingdoms in which for more than sixteen years they had lived an intensely absorbing and intoxicating life: 'That bright darling dream,' as Charlotte often said, when thinking of her secret life" (Maurat 49). Their fantasy life became so interfused with the real world that "Notations of everyday happenings in the Bronte household, or historical events like Queen Victoria's ascent to the throne [were] juxtaposed against records of the Gondal world as if the two existed on exactly the same plane of reality" (Miller 160).

The secret games and shared fantasies were not mere child's play for the Brontes, for they continued long after most children have put aside their juvenile pursuits. Charlotte and Branwell moved from the early "Glass Town" adventures to the world of Angria, which Charlotte continued until age twenty-three (Braithwaite 38). When Emily was thirteen, her and Anne's imaginary kingdom of Gondal was established, and at age twenty-seven, she and Anne were still acting out the parts of their Gondal heroes and heroines (Crandall 102).

That their shared childhood fantasies extended into adulthood is not surprising when we consider that these overly-sensitive children, who never achieved healthy individuation through socialization, were locked in a mental childhood, enclosed as though in a womb by the "distant,
dreamy, dim blue chain / Of mountains circling every side"
(Hatfield #92).

At the parsonage, visitors were few, and "they had no friends into whose home they could come and go at will"
(Maurat 46). Branwell went to the village to play with the local boys from time to time, but he was so far advanced intellectually that they were not able to keep his interest for long. Charlotte, Emily, and Anne were too reserved and shy to seek outside company and rarely went to the village (Maurat 46-47). One of their few outside friends, Ellen Nussey, with whom Charlotte had become acquainted at age fifteen, recalls that

Charlotte had a painful conviction that living in other people's houses was to all of them an estrangement from their real characters, it compelled them to adopt an exterior which was a bona fide suppression and alienation from themselves, and they suffered accordingly. (Ellen Nussey's confidential letter to Wemyss Reid; qtd. in Fraser 80)

In fact, each time the four siblings left Haworth, they remained for only a short while before hastening back, apparently seeking personal redefinition and reintegration in each other. Throughout their lives, like Heathcliff and Catherine, they seemingly lost their identities when separated.
Emily, by all accounts, was the most reserved and introverted of the four. Her first venture outside the bounds of Haworth was not auspicious. At age six, she joined her three sisters at The Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge, but she and Charlotte remained only seven months because of the typhoid outbreak that resulted in the deaths of sisters Maria and Elizabeth. Steve Davies suggests that "For the rest of Emily's life, moving away from Haworth was associated with death" (14). She returned to the parsonage to study under her father and aunt, the family circle now tightened to the servants, Mr. Bronte, Aunt Branwell, Charlotte, two years older than Emily, Branwell, a year older, and Anne, a year and one-half younger.

Emily's next venture across "the threshold of home" and into the world beyond did not occur until she was seventeen, at which time she joined Charlotte in school at Roe Head to prepare herself for the life of a governess. Schoolfriends remembered both sisters as "inwardly self-preoccupied" and "intensely individual," moving in "what invariably appeared to the Brontes to be an arbitrary, alien world of reality" (Crandall 15). The friends did not suspect that Emily and Charlotte "were feverishly absorbed within themselves and went so far as to lose their identity in a world of incredible fancies which they were forever creating and keeping alive" (Maurat 80).
Emily remained at Roe Head less than three months, her acute homesickness threatening to break her health. After this, the family decided that, since Emily's absence from Haworth was inevitably accompanied by physical suffering, she should be allowed to remain at home in the future (Gaskell 143). According to biographer Rita Gerin,

The truth was that it was already too late to make Emily conform to the normal contemporary standards of female education; she had passed beyond them, both in maturity and inclination. For too long she had developed along lines traced exclusively by herself; her nature could not now be trained in any other direction... The fact that her return home from Roe Head completely restored her health is proof enough that the origin of her troubles had been psychological. (55)

At the same time Emily had entered Roe Head, her brother Branwell, equally unacquainted with the world beyond Haworth, was to enter the Royal Academy of Arts in London, the first step in an artistic career. The only male among the Bronte siblings, he was understandably petted and indulged, and his talents as a musician, an artist, and a writer were probably overrated by the biased family members. At any rate, his promise of artistic distinction never materialized, his tragic failure as much a factor of his own mental makeup--a lack of resolve and intemperate behavior--
as of an absence of ability. According to his biographers, he probably never presented himself at the academy. One of his Angrian tales might have recorded his own abortive attempt at making his way in the world: his hero travels to a large city, but out of "an instinctive fear of ending his pleasure by approaching reality," he does not present his letters of introduction to the art gallery directors (qtd. in Crandall 28). Likewise, Branwell, unable to bear the burden of his own and his family's high expectations of him, returned to the security of the family circle at Haworth, dissipated, debt-ridden, and disillusioned.

Reality had by this time impinged even on the haven of the moors, however. When Emily returned home from Roe Head, Anne took her place, and for the next few years, she and Charlotte continued their schooling with a view to getting employment as teachers and governesses out of economic necessity, even though both of them considered themselves unfit for such a future life and longed to return to Haworth, Emily, and Branwell, and the imaginative enterprises they had pursued with each other since early childhood.

Meanwhile, left by their siblings at home alone, seventeen-year-old Emily and her brother, eighteen, who had previously been closer to Charlotte while Emily had paired off with Anne, entered into a new relationship. No doubt Emily's own mortifying failure at Roe Head enabled her to empathize with Branwell's inglorious return home, for she,
who was habitually staunch in her moral principles, put them aside where he was concerned and accepted him unreservedly.

Biographers agree that the years Emily spent in isolation with Branwell were important developmental ones for her. For the first time, she was in close association with a masculine way of thinking and behaving, and no doubt the gifted yet irresolute brother captured her imagination. She had seen his inability to cope with the world outside, and coupled with her own experience at Roe Head, she was more than ever determined to create for herself a secure world within. Probably out of protective concern for Branwell, her Gondal poems reflect themes that were to remain important to her in the future--themes of guilt and failure and her growing contempt of "mankind / All hollow, servile, insincere" (#11).

Branwell's work, too, reflected his disillusionment. He was "increasingly preoccupied with death, his own sinfulness and fear of divine retribution, as well as the hypocrisy of practising Christians" (Fraser 102). In his poem "Misery," written soon after his ignoble return from London, he expressed defiance of God and railed against the emptiness of religious promises. In Emily's eyes, he no doubt took on heroic stature, a forlorn and wronged figure fighting the injustices of society. As Gerin points out, "The subject was familiar (Byron had never treated of any other), but for the first time in [Emily's] life the subject was
real and she was personally and intimately involved in it" (59).

The influence of Byron on the Brontes is well documented. The family owned the complete works of Byron. Emily and Anne's Gondal poems, as well as Charlotte and Branwell's Angrian tales, show their debt to him: the outlaws, exiles, and prisoners, who defied the laws of God and man; the exotic settings; and especially the proud and implacable heroes.

We have already noted the influence of Milton, who had been Mr. Bronte's favorite poet as a boy. Gerin calls attention as well to the influence of Shelley on Emily, claiming that "A common vision informed their work," including the concept of death as the fulfillment of life, the image of two lovers as one absolute, and the ideal of redemption through love (154). Gerin goes on to comment how alike Shelley and Emily were in character as well: both proud and untamed, both placing personal freedom over material goods, both oppressed by the plight of humanity, and both seeking comfort in eternity rather than on earth (154).

Perhaps not coincidentally, Byron and Shelley were preoccupied with incest in both their personal lives and their literary works. We cannot be sure if the Brontes were aware of the scandals attached to the personal lives of Byron, who openly flaunted his incestuous relationship with his half-sister, Augusta (Augusta became the name of Emily's
Gondal heroine); or of Shelley, who allegedly had a sexual relationship with his wife Mary's step-sister, Claire Clairmont, who was at the time Byron's lover. But the Bronte children, from an early age, were passionately interested in current affairs and devoured the Leeds Intelligencer, the Leeds Mercury, John Bull, and Blackwood's Magazine (Fraser 54). Biographer Charlotte Maurat maintains that "The echoes of the vague, insidious rumours, mostly hostile, that had been spread about Byron and his half-sister Augusta must have resounded in the minds of these wide-awake adolescents" (71). In any case, we can safely surmise that the precocious Brontes would have been aware of the incestuous themes that ran through both poets' works, incest being "a very poetical circumstance," according to Shelley.

Neither can we be sure if the Brontes were aware of the rumors of an incestuous affiliation that circulated about another of their literary idols, William Wordsworth, whom Branwell petitioned for help in getting published in 1837. In 1800, Wordsworth had retreated with his beloved sister, Dorothy, to Dove Cottage at Grasmere. Living in the incestuous seclusion he depicted in "Home at Grasmere" (McGuire 2), he wrote his most powerful poetry exalting the interfusion of the human and the natural, portraying a world in which "the self can be itself and never be lonely" (Hartman), a theme that Emily poetized increasingly as her philosophical attitudes matured.
Emily briefly ventured out into the world two other times, but neither attempt lasted more than a few months. Charlotte excused her, understanding that she "detested the artificial men of cities" (qtd. in Crandall 77), but she could not be so generous in the case of Branwell, who could not function outside the parsonage and who became increasingly self-destructive as his talent disintegrated. At age twenty-five, "alcohol- and opium-ridden, he lingered, futureless, at the parsonage" (Crandall 88), where Emily devoted herself to his care. Charlotte, realizing how unsuited she was to teaching, had begun to wonder if she were equally unfit for novel writing. Surprisingly, Anne, seemingly the most fragile of the siblings, pursued her life as a governess with stoic endurance.

At Christmas 1843, Charlotte returned to Haworth after an agonizing stint in Brussels to find the Brontes' outlook "hopelessly dismal" (Crandall 93). Mr. Bronte, nearly blind, was a semi-invalid. Branwell was dangerously dissolute and suicidal. Charlotte wrote her friend Ellen: "Something which used to be enthusiasm is tamed and broken. I have fewer illusions! Haworth is a lonely, quiet spot buried away from the world" (qtd. in Crandall 94).

The sisters, in a desperate attempt to make their way financially yet remain together at their beloved Haworth, tried to start a school, but they could not entice even one student to register, even though their fees were about half
the usual charge. "Haworth, ringed by hills, was fatally remote and inaccessible," according to at least one parent, and even the cheaper tuition could not offset this handicap (Crandall 96).

Despite their declining fortunes, though, Emily characterized herself as "undesponding." Ratchford asserts that in a poem written in 1844 beginning, "O thy bright eyes must answer now" (#176), "she speaks in her own person, proclaiming clearly and emphatically her credo of life" ("Gondal" 16). Crandall notes that this and other poetry written in 1844, at age twenty-six, testifies that

Emily’s mystique had flowered into a spiritual pantheism—a mystical union and reverent belief in a Universal Spirit, a timeless enduring essence, a "presence" beyond religious creed; human ills; ordinary concepts of good and evil; even personal Death. (97)

Such a philosophical attitude had been developing since she was nineteen, when she had begun to conceive of her poetic self as a "double" of her physical self.

Gerin marks 1837 as the year in which Emily first treated her imaginative powers as an entity outside herself. These "visitations," as Gerin calls them, by a "God of Visions" (#176) became increasingly frequent until "such manifestations became the purpose and fulfillment of her life, as physical love is to other women" (87).
Eight poems that C.W. Hatfield and Ratchford categorize as the "Significance of Gondal in Emily Bronte's life" (19) appear to deal with Bronte's own personal poetic inspiration and imagination, and in these she certainly personifies her poetic double in distinctly romantic terms:

The Wanderer would not leave me;
Its kiss grew warmer still--
"O come," it sighed so sweetly,
"I'll win thee 'gainst thy will."

Emily refers to her poetic double as "my true friend" (#174); "My Darling Pain"; and "ever present, phantom thing-- / My slave, my comrade, and my King" (#176). Her "God of Visions" (#176) takes on a religious quality as she characterizes it as "a radiant angel" (#176), a "benignant power, / Sure solacer of human cares" (#174).§

But other poems imply that her mystical experiences "left a Christian God out of the equation" (Fraser 294). Katherine Frank, a recent biographer, contends that "These extraordinarily intense and pleasurable 'spells' were less akin to religious experiences than to the release and exhilaration of sexual communion when the self is merged with a desired presence or being beyond itself" (147). In any case, by the end of 1847 Anne and Emily were increasingly estranged, "mainly due to religious reasons" (Fraser 294).

Both Charlotte's and Anne's misgivings continued to mount as Emily's metaphysical vision grew. Charlotte de-
fended her sister's writing of *Wuthering Heights*, saying that "she did not know what she had done" (1850 Preface 39). But a recent biographer, Rebecca Fraser, finds evidence that Anne, to judge from her poetry, was more openly critical towards Emily. She felt that Emily did know what she had done in creating her characters and, being closer to Emily than Charlotte, she was probably more aware of her sister's increasing tendency to be possessed by her God of Vision, her "darling pain." In her poem "The Three Guides," Anne seems to be criticizing Emily's arrogance, her arrogation of supernatural powers. (293)

There is a certain arrogance in incest that becomes apparent in anthropologists' studies of ancient rituals surrounding brother-sister incest. In primitive times, exemption from the incest taboo was almost always reserved for royalty. According to Kirson Weinberg, "In preliterate and ancient societies, the 'deified' royalty who were considered of divine descent could resort to practices that were expressly forbidden to ordinary mortals" (240).

Rank clarifies "The puzzling inconsistency between the incest-ritual sanctioned and imitated by the community, and the act of incest forbidden the individual," saying that the paradox "disappears when we realize that the divine king represents a socialized hero endowed with all the characteristics of the original heroic type" (114). The ritual mar-
riage of the king to the sister, though not primarily a sexual union but a "magical ceremony still guaranteeing the perpetuation of one's own self in the successor," represents a "breeding of genius" (117).

As Constance Hill Hall reminds us, "What a great temptation, how god-like, to be whole, to be alone, unified, integral, to be the more completely self-sufficient, entirely independent, something reserved for a deity, by union with a part of oneself" (43).

Rank ties the ancient ritual of royal brother-sister incest to artistic genius by equating the god-like "self-creative hero" with his human representative, the "artist-type":

The latter's emergence was only possible by the renunciation of the egotistic principle of self-perpetuation in one's own image and the substitution for it of the perpetuation of the self in work reflecting one's personality. . . . This idea of a self-creative power attributed to certain individuals signified a decisive step beyond the naive belief in an automatic survival of one's own double, in that it impressed upon man the conviction that he has to work for his immortality by creating lasting achievements. (98-99)
In other words, according to Rank, "incest is a symbol of man's self-creative urge, which draws its strength from the belief in immortality" (113).

Rank places the origin of the concept of the double in a desire for immortality as well, giving, appropriately enough, a double meaning to the double. According to Rank, whereas the negative interpretation of the double can be "symptomatic of the disintegration of the modern personality type," a positive interpretation in which the double is a symbol of life or immortality is also possible; in fact this interpretation was probably the original function of the double, which in primitive societies was thought to be the immortal soul (66).

Beneath the identical motivation of both doubling and incest as attempts to achieve self-integration, then, is the even more fundamental motivation of both strategies to achieve immortality—which is the same as to say, overcome fear of death. Here we can begin to tie Emily Bronte's creation of Wuthering Heights with its underlying theme of incest to what we have observed of her biography.

Freud explains that creative writing, like a day-dream, is a substitute for the wishful fantasies of the writer, who "creates a world of his own or, more truly, he rearranges the things of his world and orders it in a new way that pleases him better" (174).
The magnificent passion between Catherine and Heathcliff, then, can be seen as a sublimation of Emily Bronte's desire for profound communion with her poetic double, who in her unconscious is perhaps indistinguishable from her beloved Byronic brother. In the statement "I am Heathcliff!" and the reasoning surrounding it are contained Bronte's aspirations toward an immortal self beyond the self that is yet the self and her "transcendental" vision of the essential oneness of the body/self, body/world:

"... 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? ... 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. (122)

The house at Wuthering Heights can be likened to Emily's living situation at Haworth—both are enclosures within enclosures. The Heights is presented in sexually symbolic terms, as Lockwood plunges into the bizarre goings-on, repeatedly characterized by the words intrusion and invading. He makes his way across a number of thresholds "previous to inspecting the penetralium" (46)—or private parts of the house—the outer gate, the front door, a door into the kitchen, the stairs and halls leading to an up-
stairs room. Since primitive times, thresholds have been associated with the knowledge of sex, birth, and death (Frazer 279-83).

Lockwood, though, is incapable of a grand passion such as that shared by Heathcliff and Catherine, as he discovers when he lies down in the bed that the two lovers had shared in childhood, a structure "with squares cut out near the top, resembling coach windows" (61), hence the connotations of sex/death/journey. This bed offers him a chance to journey back into the womb to confront the realities of sex and the body (life), which paradoxically leads to a corresponding acknowledgment of death—a journey that would be impossible to such "an artificial man of the cities" to Emily's way of thinking. His very intrusion into the Heights' sanctum sets in motion the transformation of the physical separation of Heathcliff and Catherine to the metaphysical union of the two beyond the grave. For Bronte, heavily influenced since childhood by Byron and Shelley, no less a culmination of romantic love between two such unbri-dled yet sexually virginal lovers would have appealed to her. And "stretching eager hands to Death" (#181) would be expected for one who felt so little joy on earth.

As for the second half of the novel, critics who call attention to the lessening of poetic power are no doubt justified because certainly in the second generation, doubles lack the power, intensity, and interest of the first.
Hareton and Cathy are obviously pale doubles of Heathcliff and Catherine. The second half becomes understandable with Rank's explanation that the end result of royal brother-sister incest was not genius but degeneration:

As time went on, the ritual and symbolism became more important than the person, especially when strong personalities were lacking. Finally a situation developed which can best be described in terms of the witty observer who once characterized the group of Bohemian artists on Montparnasse as showing all the symptoms but none of the achievement of genius. (117)

As Victoria Moore points out, "Emily Bronte clearly represents the Grange as a life-denying world" (263). Bronte's personal biography supports such a view of the world outside the parsonage. Nothing suggests that she ever changed her opinion that society was not worth crossing the threshold of Haworth for, since "Vain are the thousand creeds / That move men's hearts, unutterably vain" (#191). Cathy and Hareton's plan to move to the Grange at the end of the novel implies that their individualism will continue to diminish with socialization. Wuthering Heights, on the other hand, will still be the domain of "such ghosts as choose to inhabit it" (366), that is, the adult Heathcliff and Catherine, whose spirits can still be seen on rainy nights looking out of the Heights' window of the room they
had shared as children (366); beyond the grave they finally "Have undisputed sovereignty" (#174).

Emily's life was short by modern standards; she was only thirty years old when, much like Heathcliff, she "allowed" herself to die. Having caught an "inflammation of the lungs" at her brother's funeral service, she never left the house again. According to Charlotte's letters, within a month of Branwell's death Emily would not answer when spoken to; she refused to lie in bed, but continued however painfully, to carry out her chores without letting anyone help her. Refusing to accept any medical attention, she steadily declined, although the "illness would not in itself explain her rapid decline if her spiritual resistance had not at the same time been undermined" (Gerin 243). She died less than three months later at thirty years of age.

Anne died nine months after Emily at age twenty-nine. Charlotte, the most out-going of them all, married against her father's wishes, and she and her husband moved to the parsonage with her father, where she died in 1855, just thirty-nine years old, leaving no offspring. She was buried at the very threshold of the Haworth parsonage near her sisters and brother, once again closing the circle of Bronte siblings.
NOTES


2 Bronte defended himself against Mrs. Gaskell's biographical portrayal of him. He wrote to her: "I do not deny that I am somewhat eccentric... Only don't set me on in my fury to burning up hearth rugs; sawing the backs of chairs; and tearing up my wife's silk gowns" (qtd. in Crandall 8).

3 For a psycholinguistic feminist approach to the mother's role in Emily Bronte's work, see the chapter, "The Name of the Mother in Wuthering Heights," in Margaret Homans' Bearing the Word, Chicago: Chicago UP, 1986.

4 Hatfield's citations are to poem numbers rather than page numbers when the number symbol (#) precedes the numeral.

5 Ms. Ratchford, the foremost scholar on Emily's poetry, cautions against reading the poems too subjectively, claiming that the "majority, perhaps all of them," pertain to her imaginary Gondal saga, therefore "turn[ing] into nonsense the hundreds of pages of Bronte biography based on the subjective interpretation of her poems" (Introduction in...
Hatfield 16). On the other hand, responsible critics such as J. Hillis Miller maintain that *Wuthering Heights* is a fictional "vision of things which her poems express, . . . so the same moral and metaphysical laws prevail in the novel as in the poems" (157).

Jung maintains in "Phenomenology of the Self" that the individual typically constructs a schema in which the self "is a God-image, or at least cannot be distinguished from one" (*Portable* 162).
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CONCLUSION

Obviously, a novel which has endured the analyses and speculations of critics for nearly a century and a half defies any attempt to neatly categorize or summarize it with one perspective in mind. A speculative reading based on modern insights, however, suggests new vistas of thought and affords new prospects for interpretation, new possibilities for admiration. Insights from disciplines such as anthropology, psychology, sociology, and history provide a key to many of the subtleties of *Wuthering Heights* by broadening our perspectives on the study of incest.

Anthropology offers a clue as to why *Wuthering Heights* is in a state of pre-cultural existence, while nearby Thrushcross Grange exists in civilized tranquility. The incest taboo, according to anthropologists, is the basis for every human society, no matter how it is structured. The threat that violation of the taboo poses to the community is expressed through Bronte’s use of animal imagery and her emphasis on the unleashed forces of nature, which act as metaphors for the corruption of the natural order—a corruption that cannot go unpunished.

To the primitive mind, the incest taboo was inseparable from the system of totemism, out of which laws of exogamy arise. Because Heathcliff and Catherine are members of the
same totem, their sexual union could not be permitted under the laws of exogamy, so they had no choice but to repress their guilty desire for each other.

Psychological insights aid us in interpreting the consequences of such repression. Heathcliff's behavior is understandable in light of psychological theories that sadism, lycanthropy, vampirism, and necrophilia are manifestations of the Oedipal fixation. The relentless revenge and murderous rage he directs at his substitute father, Hindley, and the other males who stand in his way is a variation of Freud's Myth of the Primal Horde.

Likewise, Catherine's hysterical personality and inability to form a successful attachment outside the family may be explained by her failure to work through the Oedipal phase and achieve healthy individuation. The lack of physical passion between two otherwise unbridled characters becomes clear in light of Becker's hypothesis that fear of death can cause fear of sex and the body and can transform physical longing into a yearning for the immortality of spiritual union.

But the consequences of incest are the same as those incurred by Satan and Adam and Eve after their Falls: expulsion from Paradise, alienation and disintegration, a descent into brutishness, and finally the consciousness of death. Bronte's Heathcliff personifies Milton's Satan in *Paradise Lost*; Catherine is symbolic of Eve, attempting to recover a
pre-Lapsarian innocence. Hareton and the younger Cathy represent the new Adam and Eve, joined in a socially-condoned union that "might yield luxuriant crops under other and favourable circumstances" (WH 231).

Sociologists reveal that an isolated environment, such as that of the Heights, is both a motive for an incestuous relationship and an effect of its practice. The individuals turn back in upon themselves out of fear of facing the outside world alone. This doubling back upon the self is reflected in the pervasive doubling motif throughout the novel.

Emily Bronte was herself a product of an isolated environment such as she depicted in Wuthering Heights. A study of her biographical history suggests that, however unconsciously, she may have been retracing her own childhood memories and expressing her repressed wishes through symbolic writing. Even though the second part of her story implies that socialization and culture must reside in the coupling of like with unlike—in Hareton of Wuthering Heights with Cathy of Thrushcross Grange—the doubling of like with like is still insinuated by the repetition of names and the marriages Cathy makes with her two first cousins, marriages so endogamous that they come as close to breaking the incest taboo as possible. Bronte, we must remember, never overcame her distrust of the artificiality of society nor broke out of the circle of family.
As Freud theorized from his studies of the creative process, a writer writes in terms of hidden motivations and unconscious conflicts. The true artist is uniquely capable of expressing the unconscious and gratifying repressed wishes, not only those of him or herself, but also those of the reader, who is also subject to the laws of the unconscious.

Wuthering Heights, perhaps because of its underlying incest theme, conveys well that sense of the uncanny referred to by Freud—not merely a sense of strangeness but also of familiarity, of not merely attraction but also of seduction. The mystery and shame which have historically surrounded incest still surround the subject today, even though our society is in the midst of an era of sexual permissiveness. It repels, offends, perplexes, yet it fascinates, just as the two lovers in the novel do.

Is our sympathy for the outcast, vengeful, brutish Heathcliff in actuality a sympathy for the repressed side of one's own self? Do we readily accept the love between Heathcliff and Catherine that could have ended in marriage but instead ends in eager death because it touches upon some hidden and taboo yearning of our own that is not part of our conscious frame of reference?

Certainly, part of the appeal of Wuthering Heights for nearly a century and a half lies in the reader's sense that matters of great import lie just beneath the surface.
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