

The Futility of Revenge: (Remaining part of last P.D.F.)

Revenge is central focus of Heathcliff's life and, in fact, drives most of the decision he makes later in the novel. Though, Heathcliff gains some bitter satisfaction through causing pains for others, for he does not achieve any personal happiness. Instead, his single-minded pursuit of revenge leaves him empty and exhausted. After being tormented by Hindley as a child, Heathcliff becomes obsessed with the idea of getting revenge. By taking advantage of Hindley's debt, Heathcliff gets control of Wuthering Heights and becomes the master of the house, a great irony considering that he was once forced to work there as a de facto servant.

Heathcliff seeks further revenge on Hindley by raising Hareton, who should have grown to be a gentleman and a landowner, like a common servant, forcing on the boy the ~~same~~ same indignity which Hindley ~~once~~ had once heaped on Heathcliff. Heathcliff is fully aware of his ~~own~~ cruelty. As he explains to Nelly, he understands and desires Hareton's suffering: "I know what he suffers now, for instance, exactly - it is merely a beginning of what he shall suffer though." Moreover, Heathcliff has the perverse pleasure of knowing Hareton loves and respects him no matter how badly he treats him.

Injustice versus the necessity of the class system.

Social class is presented as an ambivalent theme in the novel. On one hand, Bronte seems to agree that social class is an arbitrary distinction that prevents people from being happy. On the other, she shows disruption to social class as negative forces that have to be eliminated in order for peace and order to be restored.

As a child, the fact that Heathcliff is treated differently simply because of his family background seems to be clearly unfair. However, while Bronte seems to be sympathetic to Heathcliff's frustration with the class system, she also implies that he goes too far when he tries to disrupt it and insert ~~see~~ himself.