

The theme of depicting revenge in literature discussed by rowe in her article

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Revenge, this reoccurring theme is present throughout Rowe's essay entitled 'To Spin a Yarn: The Female Voice in Folklore and Fairy Tale, Wuthering Heights, Thirteen Reasons Why, and The Little Red Riding Hood'. In Rowe's essay, she discusses the role that females have by using their voices even when the greatest obstacles come between to silence them. Each female in these works whether it's a significant role or a small role have a voice. Each novel discussed, represents revenge in their own form. Even when they were kept silent because of either fear, guilt, or anger they all still found a form of seeking their revenge.

In her essay, To Spin a Yarn: The Female Voice in Folklore and Fairy Tale, Rowe argues that the female's in fairy tales are the original narrator throughout the tales. In the essay, she uses two folktales to prove her argument, for example, Philomela from Ovid's Metamorphoses. In the story itself, Rowe describes the narrator as, "a type for the narrative power of the female, capable of weaving in tapestry the brutal story of rape that leads to the enactment of a terrible revenge" (297). The theme of revenge becomes evident in the poem, but while revenge is present throughout the story, there are two key factors that attribute to the theme of revenge. One is women, but women in Ovid's poem are evidently powerless. So, women hold two key factors. In Ovid's Metamorphoses, women are not only wanting revenge, but they are also women who are powerless. Therefore, the victims of this poem are women and they are powerless and vengeful women. But, once the inhumane act of raping Philomela is done to make sure her silence is true Tereus cuts her tongue off to keep her permanently silent. But, even though Philomela is physically silenced, she makes the decision of weaving

her story to have a voice onto a piece of tapestry. While Tereus tried to keep her silent, she found another form of using her voice to tell others of what was done to her. Rowe argues that Philomela is the woman that became one of the first female narrators stating, "...Philomela as a woman who weaves tales and sings songs becomes the prototype for the female storytellers of later traditions..." (301). Philomela although she was labeled as a powerless woman, was able to use a different voice to portray the harm that was done onto her by using her expertise in weaving.

In *Wuthering Heights*, the theme of revenge is also obviously present. For example, Heathcliff seeks vengeance. Heathcliff begins with aiming his hate at Hindley. Heathcliff's revenge becomes evident in chapter 11 after Hindley first took away Heathcliff's education, he does the same by taking his education away. Heathcliff's actions in chapter 11 become the first part of his revenge. The second part of Heathcliff's revenge is towards Edgar, but Heathcliff uses Isabella to his amusement. It becomes evident that he does not have any love, admiration, or passion for her, he only wishes to use her, and so he does. Isabella becomes his key into reentering Thrushcross Grange, a place that symbolizes a civilized culture. *Wuthering Heights* has not only the theme of revenge, but it also has a cycle of revenge among the characters. Hindley starts off by seeking revenge against Heathcliff by taking his education away. This then entices Heathcliff by doing the same upon Hareton, who is Hindley's son. Heathcliff takes Hareton's education just like his father did to him. But, while Heathcliff's revenge does become effective for him, it also seems to show that his efforts for vengeance do not make

him as happy as he thought he would be. Much like in Rowe's essay she states, "...[a] voice in a tale so singularly about the voiceless is immediately to recognize that to tell a tale for women may be a way of breaking enforced silences" (297). There are silences present in *Wuthering Heights*, Cathy tells Heathcliff of her revenge upon him. Her revenge on him is seeing him more miserable, it does not matter how miserable she must be, but if Heathcliff is miserable then she has accomplished something greater than him. Heathcliff sought revenge, but he was receiving the same by Cathy.

Rowe talks about the silent, voiceless women in her essay and Cathy becomes one of them by seeking revenge, but only by the means of remaining silent. She evokes her revenge by being married to Heathcliff while her happiness is essentially put to the side. Her being unhappy does not become important, the only importance is making Heathcliff feel miserable and unhappy and she is able to achieve just that.

In *Thirteen Reasons Why*, revenge also becomes a theme throughout this novel. But, not only does it show the theme of revenge, but it also evokes blame, guilt, and betrayal. Hannah, who is the protagonist of the novel is bullied by students who spread rumors about her. In the novel, Hannah is a young high school student who has allowed certain rumors to escalate in a matter that she can no longer have control over. This essentially becomes the main reason why she commits suicide because she lets these rumors consume her life and does not use the countless aids that are available to her nor does she use her voice to tell someone until it becomes too late. The tapes are her way of seeking her revenge. These tapes are left to thirteen

individuals, who are essentially "responsible" for the suicide of Hannah. Rowe makes a point in her essay saying, "...The Arabian Nights may thus seem straightforward. King Shahryar of India surprises his adulterous wife as she torridly copulates with a blackamoor slave" (302). This is evident in *Thirteen Reasons Why* because the novel gets to the point. The thirteen individuals who are "responsible" for Hannah's death are being addressed by her through these tapes. Rowe states, "He executes his wife and swears himself by a binding oath that whatever wife he married he would abate her maidenhead at night and slay her next morning to make sure of his honor..." (14, 302). King Shahryar, does not allow this sort of betrayal to continually make a fool of him nor does he allow his adulterous wife to get away with her actions. The king solves the problem by getting rid of the source, who is evidently his wife. Hannah on the other hand allows for rumors to consume her young adult life. She could have addressed the rumors at hand, just like the king took care of his with his wife. But, her idea of revenge is the recording of these audiotapes that she sends to each person who is "responsible" for her death.

In Charles Perrault's *Little Red Riding Hood*, there are implications of sexual tones and warnings that are addressed to young girls. The folktale opens with, "...there was a village girl, the prettiest you can imagine" (11). The opening sentence begins to focus on the young girl's appearance, a pretty young girl who is adored by her mother, grandmother, and everywhere she went she was known by her red hood. Red also has meaning behind it, which suggests seduction. In Rowe's essay, she states the three attributes that are

aimed at women: " the knowledge of sexual passion, the knowledge of healing, and the wisdom of spin tales" (303). In *The Little Red Riding Hood*, the knowledge of sexual passion is evident in Perrault's version. It becomes a warning to young girls that they are reaching the age of purity and they must be careful to avoid " tame wolves" as Perrault states.

With *Thirteen Reasons Why* there is a crossover between Perrault's folktale and the novel. For example, Hannah begins to explore with her own level of sexual passion following the kiss, comments on her body, stalking, molesting, and sexual assault. Notice that with each sexualized advancement there is an increase in the level of each form. With *Wuthering Heights*, *Thirteen Reasons Why*, and *The Little Red Riding Hood* there are crossovers not only with the theme of revenge, but also forewarnings between the works. Revenge does sometimes solve issues at hand, but with Heathcliff, it is sometimes not the correct action that will bring happiness. This goes hand in hand with *Thirteen Reasons Why* and *The Little Red Riding Hood* as well. Rowe states, "...they employ the folk or fairy tale as a "speaking" (whether oral or literary) representation of the silent matter of their lives, which is culture itself" (300). Each novel represented revenge in its own form. While they were kept silent because of either fear, guilt, or anger they all still found a form of seeking their revenge.