

## I. Traumatized Psyche of Oates' Characters

Death and rape produce emotional trauma that outlast physical injuries and many raped women endure great emotional discomfort to see the prosecution. In Oates' novel *Rape: A Love Story*, Martin Maguire is a widow with young daughter. Many of the regular customers at the Horseshoe have known her husband, Ross Maguire. He works at Goodyear Tire and dies of a quickly spreading melanoma cancer several years before. After that she falls in love with Ray Casey but cannot spend the sound conjugal life because Teena is gang-raped later. Prosecutor Jey Kirkpatrick turns the reality upside down in the Niagara Country Courthouse in September. It produces great emotional discomfort to mother and daughter, and they live traumatic life forever.

Joyce Carol Oates' *Rape: A Love Story* depicts rape scene, cause and effect of the incident. Oates attempts to show the real traumatic experiences through the gang rape, hearing, plea-bargains, trials, sentencing and misjudgement of the case in the novel. This research highlights the two issues - the issue of emotional trauma and women's humiliation at the trial.

Joy Carol Oates' *Rape: A Love Story* examines death, rape and injustice. Teena Magurie and her twelve years daughter, Bethie, take a shortcut through the park on their way home from a fourth of July party. Walking through it, they are chased by a gang of young drunkard men, who savagely rape, beat and leave to die on the floor of the filthy boathouse at Rockey Point Park. Bethie is able to hide and run for the help; the assailants are quickly identified and brought to hearing but their defense lawyer claims that Teena was working for it and was even going to pay. So, "It is not rape but a multiple act of sex" (73). After that Teena and Bethie have seen attackers walk free from court; Teena's lover, Ray Casey whose feeling have changed since the attack;

John Dromoor a young police officer, whose concern for Teena is matched by his desire for Justice; Haried Diebenkorn, the deputy prosecutor thinks her own identity is also related with that case.

Most of the time the form of epic and tragedy are considered appropriate form of literary writing. If the text that doesn't follow the form of epic and tragedy such text is not taken as a literary text. But Joyce Carol Oates' *Rape: A Love Story* doesn't follow the traditional standard of writing text. National Book Award winner Oates is a masterful storyteller, and this novel is not exception. In particular, *Rape: A Love Story* is told in a choppy type of narrative. She divides it into three chapters. Even every chapter has its sub chapters where all letters are in capitalized form in first sentence. She does not present grand form. If any writer is able to express his/her feelings, emotions and ideals with simple form, grand form does not need.

Her issues of writing are powerlessness, victimization and betrayal. Women are always powerless in the society. Women lack all power: intellectual, political, logical, rational etc. So, she writes on the issue of being powerlessness in the society. Naturally or by birth they are not powerless but they are made powerless by the patriarchy. They have been victimized because they have not allowed equal right. Women are betrayed by the belief that gender role is natural to them. Oates' *Rape: A Love Story* shows powerless experience of the women and corrupt nature of male in the society. She writes about her experience of female victimization from house to court of law. Her female character Teena doesnot have energy to act. It is typical experience of women.

Oate's *Rape: A Love Story* is as powerful as anything she has produced but not to be read for pleasure. She was writing for every woman who has ever feared rape or experience it and for all the women who have seen their attackers walk free from

court. It begins as an account of the gang rape of Teena Maguire, a single mother in her thirties one fourth of July in Niagara Falls. Teena nearly dies. For a long time, she will feel it would have been better not to have been left alive. Her daughter, Bethie, witnesses the attack.

Right from the start, the narrative is skilfully interlaced with its ugly aftermath, as if to show how a crime contains consequences within it - seeds of the future. Gossip from neighbours about Teena piles up in lazy damnation - violation of another sort: "She had it coming. She was asking for it" (73).

Teena and her attackers are not the only focus of this novel. Oates includes a policeman called Dromoor, a brilliantly conceived character, who fought in the Gulf War. "One bright, hallucinatory morning in the desert, he saw his soul curl up and die like an inchworm in the hot sand" (8-9). Dromoor has not lost his soul entirely, or his heart. He makes himself Teena's champion but his morality is compromised. He will turn out to be a deadly practitioner of his own brand of smooth Justice. In this discomfiting story, there is no such thing as uncomplicated salvation.

The complicated love story begins when young Niagara Falls policeman John Dromoor, first on the scene, finds himself intensely drawn to Teena and her daughter. He simply cannot forget what he saw that night and promises Teena and Bethie that he will do everything in his power to make things right for them. Bethie, who is terrified to live in the same neighborhood as the men awaiting trial for her assault, looks to Dromoor as her protector and feel a special kind of love for him.

Oates' novel reflects her view of a world in which women and young girls often suffer physical violence at the hands of men when they least expect it to happen to them. She is not afraid to use brutal words and images to tell the stories of these

women and to describe the criminals who go after them. But it is the second half of the novel's title that hints at the most intriguing part of Teena Maguire's story.

Teena, a thirty years widow with a twelve year old daughter, makes a fatal mistake one dark night by deciding to cut through a deserted Niagara Falls Park with her daughter on the walk home from a Fourth of July party. Teena Maguire should not have tried to shortcut her way home that Fourth of July.

Not after midnight, not through Rocky Point Park. Not the way she was dressed: tank top, denim cut-offs, high-heeled sandals. Not with her twelve year old daughter, Bethie. What should have been relaxing ten-minute walk led instead to an experience that almost killed her and changed more than a few lives forever. (20-21)

Her daughter's childhood would end from that event, a Niagara Falls policeman would define "justice" in new terms, families would be pushed to the brink of bankruptcy in order to pay for unscrupulous defense attorneys, and a few thugs would realize that things were different now even for them.

Teena and Bethie were followed into the park by a gang of young men from the neighborhood, men high on booze and drugs and with one thing on their minds. They forced the two into an old boatshed where they punched and kicked them and gang-raped Teena. Luckily for Bethie, she was able to wedge herself into a spot so hard to reach that the rapists lost interest in her. But she had to listen to everything that happened and, when it was finally over, it was up to her to find help before her mother bled to death in the shed.

To appropriate dominance and operation, and to justify rape, defense attorney Kirkpatrick twists language-what had happened in Rocky Point Park. It had happened with their agreement. It explores the relationship between words and wounds. It

shows how words deal with trauma. However, Oates novel *Rape: A Love Story* attempts to dig out the reason behind this traumatic experience of the characters after gang rape, hearing, plea bargains, trials, sentencing and misjudgement of the case in the novel.

Oates has packed a lot into this novel of barely one hundred fifty pages. She reminds the reader that violent crime impacts more lives than just those of the victim and the attacker. Families of the victim suffer a special kind of hell, but families of the attacker are forced to confront the dirty underbelly of family loyalty in a way that few really pass when it comes down to a question of whether or not to hire lawyers to distort the truth in an attempt to save their sons from prison. Will they excuse them for a terrible crime because they share the same blood? Will they really try to destroy the relations of the victims in order to save their criminal sons? Sadly, we all know the answer to those questions.

Since the publication of Oates' *Rape: A Love Story*, it has been responded in various ways. Some reviewers have paid attention to the thematic analysis, structure of the novel and her political capability. Reviewing the novel from thematical standpoint, Jeff Zaleske relates the novel with theme. He writes:

Oates explores sexual violence and its aftermath in this taut, harrowing novels. Teena, a pretty, 30-something widow, is on her way home from a party when she is beaten, gang-raped and left for dead. She survives the attack, which her twelve years old daughter Bethie witnesses, but as only a husk of her former self. It is to Bethie, then, that the task of caring for her falls. "If Momma could sleep, that was good. It was your duty to let her sleep." Oates draws on shifting, often fragmentary point of view to tell the story of the days before and after the rape. (41)

It explores sexual violence. Teena Maguire a thirty years widow and her twelve year daughter, Bethie are on her way home from a party. On the way Teena is raped by a drunkard gang. After that she has psychological fear. She does not sleep but it is daughter's duty to let her sleep. This case divides their lives into two periods of time before and after.

Another reviewer Kate Kellaway, however, focuses on the military forces and their devotion. She asserts:

Teena and her attackers are not the only focus of this book. Oates includes a policeman, former soldier called Dromoor, a brilliantly conceived character, who fought in the Gulf war. The U.S. flag has a powerful effect on him sometimes. He salutes the flag. He is a cop and wore a gun on his hip. He liked handguns and he likes rifles. A gun in his hand, he felt pretty good. Cleaning a gun. Loading a gun, aiming a gun. Firing a gun. In the life of his country, so fast moving and not looking-back, the Gulf War nearly forgotten. He wasn't a man to look back, and he wasn't a man of regrets what happens, happens. (154)

To salute U.S. flag is to respect his motherland. He doesn't care his own benefits and betterment. Dromoor is always completely determined to serve and save his motherland. He is a fighter of Gulf War. John Dromoor, a police officer and former soldier who fought and killed people in the first Gulf War. His attachment with gun reflects American War and destructive motives. America doesn't want to look back, does not want to know and internalize the feelings of common people.

Similarly, Natasha Tripney highlights on the structured aspect of the novel. She asserts:

Joyce Carol Oates is a masterful story teller, and this book is no exception. In particular, *Rape: A Love Story* was told a choppy type of narrative and where I've thought this kind of choppy narration didn't work in other books, I definitely thought it worked in this novel. Narration alternates between various characters, all told in third person, addressing the reader as "you" Oates wants her readers to identify with Bethie, and frequently uses the second person to emphasise this: "you are Bethell Maguire everybody called Bethie. Your childhood ended when you were twelve years old." (53)

Oate's *Rape: A Love Story* does not follow the traditional standard of writing text. She has divided novel into three chapters. Each chapter has multiple subchapter. Story told in third person, but Bethie's character is narrated in second person, addressing the reader as 'you.'

In this regard, it is clear that the text has not been analyzed from the perspective of trauma theory. It highlights the trauma and humiliation of the female victims of rape.

Without a proper study of the above issue, the meaning of the text will remain incomplete. The primary focus of the study is to interpret Oates' novel in terms of trauma theory with reference to death, rape and trial where the original trauma is replayed. Since there are no critical interpretations of the novel, the analysis will draw on a reading of the novel in terms of trauma theory, particularly Windy S. Hesford's "Reading of Rape Stories in terms of the trauma of representation" ; Helen J. Lauderdale's "The Admissibility of Expert Testimony on Rape Trauma Syndrome" ; Duncan Bell's *Memory, Trauma and World Politics*. It will also depend on Amanda Konradi's *Taking the Stand: Rape Survivors and Prosecution of Rapists*, which

explore the traumatic experiences of some forty-seven women at the trial of their rapists.

Though traumas are of different types, the impact of trauma is only related with psychology. People suffer from various trauma. But the final consequences are seen in their psychological sector. Traumatized people always have psychological threat in their mind and always remain upset or anxious. The emotional trauma has been discussed below on the basis of psychology of the characters in Joyce Carol Oates' *Rape: A Love Story*.

Psychological trauma is the result of extra ordinarily stressful event that shatters our security, making us feel hopeless and vulnerable in a dangerous world. Traumatic experiences often involve a threat to life or safety but any situation that leaves us feeling overwhelmed and alone can be traumatic, even if it doesnot involve physical harm. It is not objective fact that determines whether an event is traumatic but our subjective emotional experience of the events. The more frightened and helpless we feel, the more likely we are to be traumatized.

A stressful event is most likely to be traumatic if it happened unexpectedly or if it happened in childhood. Emotional or psychological trauma can be caused by a single blow, onetime events such as death, horrible accident, a natural disaster, or a violent attack. False or sport injuries, sudden death of some close, a breakup of a significant relationship, humiliating or deeply disappointing experience misjudgement of case are source of emotional or psychological trauma that we find in the Oates' novel *Rape: A Love Story*.

Not all potentially traumatic events lead to lasting emotional and psychological damage. Some people rebound quickly from even the most tragic and



shocking experience. Others are devastated by experience that, on the surface, appear to be less upsetting.

A number of risk factors make people susceptible to emotional or psychological trauma. People are more likely to be traumatized by a stressful experience if they are already under a heavy stress load or have recently suffered a series of losses. People are also more likely to be traumatized by a new situation if they have been traumatized before especially if the earlier trauma occurred in childhood.

Following a traumatic event, most women experience a wide range of physical and emotional reactions after rape. These are normal reactions to abnormal events. The symptoms may last for days, weeks, or even months. Shock, denial or disbelief, anger, irritability, mood-swings, guilt, shame, self-blame, feeling sad or hopeless etc. are emotional symptoms of rape.

These symptoms and feeling typically last from a few days to a few months or lifelong, gradually fading as characters process the trauma. But even when characters are feeling better, they may be troubled from time to time by painful memories or emotions-specially in response to trigger such as an anniversary of an event or an image, sound, or situation that reminds them of a traumatic experience.

This present research moves ahead its study under the rape trauma which causes emotional trauma and its related aftermaths. This research has presented its study to explore how a person's traumatic experiences are based on memory and desire to lead a pathetic life towards the relative goal in which the experiences are caused by male power politics and notorious impact of rape.

This research paper has been divided into three chapters. This first chapter deals with introduction: the basic information about hypothesis, statement of problem, writer's thematic introduction, literature review, point of departure and about the

chapter division. In the same way, the second chapter analyses the text that means textual analysis which applies the events and experiences using the tool to reach its destination or to meet the objectives of the research paper. At last, the third chapter is conclusion which ultimately concludes above mentioned chapters and gives a nutshell. This chapter can be said as a very brief critical summary of the text concerning to the subject matter of traumatic experiences.

## II. Traumatic Experiences in Joyce Carol Oates' *Rape: A Love Story*

The present research work focuses on Joyce Carol Oates' widely discussed novel *Rape: A Love Story* in order to study traumatic experiences of the characters who undergo trauma throughout their life because of their direct personal experience of sexual assault of a drunkard gang on the floor of filthy boathouse at Rockey Point Park and corrupting influence of prosecutor in Niagara County Courthouse in September, 1996.

The central intent of the novel, *Rape: A Love Story* is to deal with traumatic experiences which describe "an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the events occur in the often delayed and uncontrolled, repetitive occurrences of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena" (Bell 107). Death, gang rape, hearing, plea bargains, trials, sentencing and misjudgment of the case in novel are the central and recurring images of trauma.

Trauma can never be a purely individual event, in the same way as there cannot be a private language, because it always involves the community or the cultural setting in which people placed. Not only the major characters of the novel are fallen in traumatic circle but also others are not beyond from whirlpool of trauma. Joyce Carol Oates in this work pictures out the traumatic vision through the actual depiction of rape and trial. Almost all the characters of novel are haunted by the traumatic ghost. Character's activities, their involvement in drinking, false love making also lead the novel's direction towards traumatic vision.

Collective memory specifies the temporal parameters of past and future, where we come from and where we are going, and also why we are here now. Within the narrative provided by this collective memory, individual identities are shaped as experimental frameworks formed out of, as they are embedded within, narratives of

past, present and future. Collective memory is a key factor to identity formation. All individuals are parts of certain cultural heritage and share some sorts of attitudes from past which sets the path to future exercises. Therefore, Bethie's life is divided into two before and after.

Memories of traumatic events can be seen between the dead and those who survive to hold the dead in our arms is an impossible gesture of solidarity and compassion in the face of the wit of eternity. What is being remembered or perhaps more accurately re-constituted, is relationality, that radical interconnectedness that has been so shockingly betrayed in and through the violence of trauma. In one sense, it seems that it is not so much death that is traumatic as survival or at least survival in the face of particularly brutal or incomprehensible death. So, it is an argument that addresses the relationalities at stake in memory and traumatic memory in particular.

Traumatic experiences leave long lasting effects on the victim. People who go through traumatic experience often have certain symptoms and problems afterwards. How severe these symptoms depend on the person, the type of trauma involve and the emotional support they receive from other. Reaction to and symptoms of trauma can be wide and varied and differ in severity from person to person. Age factor also determines it. In the novel, *Rape: A Love Story*, Bethie is not matured girl. So it requires a subtle approach to explore the effect of trauma in her because she does not seem abnormal, neither does she turn to alcohol or drugs to escape the feelings as some other victims do.

Bethie Maguire is a twelve years girl. Her father Ross Maguire had worked at Goodyear Tire. He had died of a quickly spreading melanoma cancer several years before. Teena Maguire, mother of Bethie had boyfriend after the death of her husband. They love each other but cannot spend the sound conjugal life because of

the gang rape later. But, before gang rape Bethie seems anxious and has a question whether they are going to get married? Oates narrator of the novel expresses the psychological fear of the Bethie "If they got married, if Momma brought you to live in Ray Casey's house, you believed that momma would love you less. Momma would have less time for you. Momma would love him" (19). Bethie, knows that her mother loves to Ray Casey after her father's death. So, if they live together she will not get true love from her mother. This is fear set in her child psychology. Therefore, she is jealous with the Ray Casey that very jealousy is illustrated by the narrator, "You were Jealous of Casey, sometimes you wished Casey would get back together with his wife. Or move away. Or die" (19).

Jenny Edkins points out:

Trauma is often seen as an injury. First the word meant an injury to the body, but now it is more commonly taken to mean an injury to the psyche, or even the community, the culture or the environment. What happens if we think this differently? [ . . . ] destruction between psyche and body. (109-110)

Perhaps it is possible instead of seeing trauma as involved with an injury to an object – when a sharp object enters the skin or a shock encounter to the psyche – to see trauma as something to do with the crossing of distinctions we take for granted, the distinctions between psyche and body, body and environment. It is perhaps this obliteration of distinctions that is horrific, and that prompts us to describe an event as traumatic.

Bethie Maguire has an injury to her psyche because of the several meeting between her mother and Ray Casey, her boyfriend. They conduct party where they drink too much. Teena Maguire is one of the best dancers of that party. They embrace each other, she kisses his cheek and brushes her lips across his baked-clay cheek.

Bethie thinks, it happens because of the death of her father. Therefore, Oates says Bethie remembers her father.

Your father had died yet you thought of him a lot. More like the idea of *Dad, Daddy* sometimes than any actual memory. When you were fully awake, his face was kind of blurred. But drifting off the sleep you would see him, suddenly ! you would hear his voice, the deep, comforting sound of his voice, you would see his face, his smile, you felt his presence in the house. It would be wrong. It would be not right. For another man to pretend to be you daddy. (19-20)

These lines clearly demonstrate the traumatic feeling in the mind of Bethie Maguire. She has actual memory of her father. She suddenly recalls her father's voice, face, his smile, not only that but also his presence in the house when she used to see immoral activity between her mother and Ray Casey. So, she is not ready to accept Casey as her own father. It will not right for her. Narrator says, "It would be wrong" (20).

Bethie is sleeping on the rattan sofa on the one hand Teena and her boyfriend Casey are drinking and taking enjoyment on the other. Suddenly there is quarrel between them. That's why she decides to leave the party, takes her daughter. Narrator quotes:

After the fireworks ended, you must have fallen asleep on the rattan sofa. Amid the loud music and raised voices and laughter you slept from about an hour until your mother stooped to blow into your ear, waking you.

"Bethie. Time to go home, sweetie."

"I wasn't asleep . . . " (21).

She hears mother's voice and wakes up. Bethie feels confusion at first, her face throbs with sunburn. Ray Casey said, sliding his arm around her shoulders in a fierce playful hug, "Bethie can sleep upstairs if she wants to. There's room. Stay a while longer Teena? C 'mon" (16). But momma was high tempered woman she sayed, "no" (16). Mother and daughter walk home. Therefore, she is in Rocky Point Park at midnight. It is a decision that divides their lives into periods of 'before' and 'after.'

Teena Maguire was living with her daughter in a rented row house on Ninth Street around the corner from her mother's brick house on Baltic Avenue. Ninth street was lighted and populated even at this late hour. Rocky Point Park was mostly deserted at this late hour. A woman like that, thirty-five years old and dressed like a teenager: tank top, denim cut offs, shaggy bleached-blond hair frizzed around her face, high-heeled sandals, tight sexy clothes showing her breasts.

Crossing the park along the lagoon, a scrubby overgrowth path. Saving ten minutes, thinking it would be nice to cross through the park, moonlight on the lagoon, no matter the lagoon is scummy and littered with beer cans, food wrappers, butts. Making that decision, a split second out of an entire life and the life is altered forever.

The youngest just kids, the oldest in their late twenties, neighborhood guys whose faces Teena Maguire would know, maybe that their given names but their family names, as the guys knew her, at least recognized her from the neighborhood though she was older than they were, calling out "Hey! Hey there! Mmmm, good-looking! Hey foxy lady, where ya goin? Show us how your titties bounce, foxy lady! Heyheyhey whereya goin" (5). After she had been chased by the guys like a pack of dogs jumping their prey, turning her ankle, losing both her high-heeled sandals on the path besides the lagoon, she had gotten herself trapped and raped. Bethie a twelve

year old daughter produced her screaming said, "Let us go! Don't hurt us! please don't hurt us" (30)!

Teena Maguire and her twelve years daughter, Bethie Maguire, take a shortcut through the park on their way home from a fourth of July Party. Walking through it, they are chased by a gang of young drunkard men, who savagely rape, beat and leave to die on the floor of the filthy boathouse at Rockey Point Park. Luckily for Bethie, she is able to hide herself. She is listening to everything but she is not thinking rape. As the narrator describes:

You didnt think rape. The word rape wasnot yet a world in your vocabulary.

You would think beat, hurt. Try to kill.

You heard your mother's cries. Shifted screams. You heard her pleading with them you heard them laugh at her.

Teeeeena ! Show your titties now Teeeeena Spread your legs Teeeeena.

You Cunt. (30)

Given extract shows child psychology. Narrator says, in her vocabulary, she does not have the word rape. She is unknown about the rape. Bethie can think, they can beat, may be they can kill her mother. At the same time she hears painful cries of her mother. Laughing sound of the men and their nonsense word than she begs with God, "God don't let them kill Momma please God help us please" (31).

Bethie heard their kicking sound: They grabbed her mother's slender ankles, spread her legs violently as if they wished to tear her legs from her body. They laughed at her. They laughed at her feeble attempts to protect herself. They were reckless, euphoric. One could learn that they were high on a drug called crystal meth.



In their excitement they forgot her. Narrator says, "you were of no significance to them, who had an adult woman" (30).

Young drunkard gang left her mother after rape which is the major cause of the trauma. Bethie came and saw pathetic condition of her mother. Teena was bleeding from head wounds, a broken nose, torn lips. A pool of dark blood lay beneath her, spreading between her legs. The horrifying scene is so heart touching described as, "[. . .] jammed their penises into her bleeding mouth and into her bleeding vagina and into her bleeding rectum" (30). Further, narrator describes the barbaric and animalistic activities of the gang with the daughter.

They had torn your mother's clothes from her body as if the female's clothes infuriated them. They spat in your mother's face as if her beauty infuriated them. They yanked at your mother's hair wishing to pull it out by the roots. One of them would gouge repeatedly at her right eye with her thumb, wishing to blind her. (30)

Given lines suggest brutal and cruel nature of gang. The drunkard gang not only raped her but also gave physical torture. After rape, they tore her clothes from her body. Her beauty infuriated them. So, they spat in her face. They yanked her hair wishing to pull out its roots. One of them pushed his thumb at her eye wishing to blind her.

The physical trauma is taken as the response to the physical injury which depends on the degree and the suddenness of the injury and the previous physical condition of the victim. Physical trauma is related more to physical hurts and damages which affect vital organs leading to the serious condition of the patients. Though the body reacts against the physical stress, these defenses are believed usually to increase the tissues' functional resistance to damaging stress, but they may overreact to trauma and cause early physical exhaustion. The physical trauma is medic that is serious

injury or shock to the body, as from violence or an accident. Trauma theoretically is a real psychological disorder. Trauma comes with the individual feeling and subjective assessment of victims of how threatened and helpless they feel. The extra-ordinary events closely affect the victims and they come fundamentally as the trauma itself. Judy Kelly views trauma as the emotional wound which hampers the psychological development of a person. He writes:

An emotional wound or shock that creates substantial lasting damage to the psychological development of a person. The emotional trauma occurs when the psychological pain of traumatic events involves damage or threat of damage to an individual's psychic integrity or sense of self. (1)

Various stress-related disorders may result from the trauma experience such as attachment disorders, sleeping disorder, conduct disorder, and dissociate reactions, eating disturbance. Trauma effects may also be evidenced as multiple personalities, anger and sleep problem and difficulty trusting people and difficult relationships. Trauma theory has opened up many new vistas in the study of mind-body relation.

As soon as Bethie and her mother were dragged into the boathouse at Rocky Point Park, she began to exist in 'after.' Never again could she exist in 'before.' It was emotional and physical wound which hampers her psychological development. Her childhood ended for forever, remote as a scene glimpsed at a distance, fading like vapor as the narrator describes:

You are twelve at the time your thirteenth birthday would arrive abruptly too soon in August, and depart mostly unheralded. For childhood belonged to before, now you had come to live in after. You

would tell what you could remember. Many times you would tell. And tell. (37)

Regarding the meaning of these lines, what is clear is that emotional trauma and trouble respectively occur in the psyche of the traumatic character Bethie whose thirteenth birthday is about to come. Narrator says mostly it will depart without celebration because her life is divided into two—the life before and the life after.

The life before in her real childhood life, at home, full of happiness with family whereas the life after is now, no such reliability in life as if it is life or not. She is living her lifeless life being traumatic in the life after. Emotional trauma occurs when the psychological pain of traumatic event damages her psychic integrity. Bethie's childhood ends from that night when she was twelve years old. She desires love from her mother but she gets pain. Oates states, "you were Bethel Maguire everybody called Bethie. Your childhood ended when you were twelve years old" (17). Now she would have to tell and retell the rape event of July fourth, what she could remember.

Now Bethie is thinking a word "If". If momma had said "no" her childhood would not have ended exactly from that night. To illustrate it, narrator further describes:

Always you would think *If*. If Momma had not said *no* you'd have stayed at Casey's that night. Both of you. And what would happen in Rocky Point Park would not happen and no one would have knowledge of the possibility of its having happened and so your childhood would not have ended that night. (17)

Unmarking the very ideas of traumatic whirlpool, these above mentioned lines clarify the Bethie's pain, anxiety, sorrow and problematic situation. She has been trapped in

the circle of trauma and there is not any possibility to release from it. Teena cannot take proper decision in that very night fourth of July party which is a cause of the trauma. So, Bethie's childhood ended from that night. This sort of problem is undoubtedly traumatic problem. The more she tries to forget it, the more she recalls it.

A call came from Rocky Point Park. A 911, from a motorist who had been stopped on a roadway by child, a young girl of approximately eleven or twelve, disheveled, torn clothing, bleeding at the nose and mouth, saying her mother had been beaten, hurt bad, in the boathouse at the lagoon. And, they had arrived at the site, there was the girl dazed sitting on the grass, and Dromoor saw the look of her, the torn clothing, bloodied face, the way one of her arms hung wrongly, and knew it must be rape.

A young Niagara Falls Police officer John Dromoor helped her. He was second man who saw a horrific and miserable scene of mother and daughter. He took them in the emergency room at St. Mary's Hospital. Bethie and her unconscious mother were taken by ambulance. He simply could not forget what he saw that night and promised Teena and Bethie that he would do everything in his power to make things right for them.

In Cathy Caruth's psychoanalytic theory of trauma as quoted in Wendy S. Hesford, it is not the experience itself that produces traumatic affect but rather the remembrance of it. In her theory there is always a time lapse, in which forgetting in characteristics between an event and the experience of trauma. As a reflective process, trauma links past to present through representation and imagination. A psychological trauma has an insistent claim on the person's psychic energy. It becomes part of psyche. She focuses on anxiety as the key emotional response to danger and threat. She held that an overpowering event, unacceptable to consciousness, can be forgotten

and yet return in the form of bodily systems or compulsive repetitive behaviors'. He constantly regarded it as the goal of the analytic treatment to bring repressed memories of early psychic life to consciousness. When traumatic events are retained consistently in details and relatively precisely in the memory, it is primarily a case of fact that are remembered initially rather than a description of the psychic reality of traumatic experiences.

In Cathy Caruth's words:

Trauma . . . is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available. This truth, in its delayed appearance and its belated address, cannot be linked only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language." (qtd. in Hesford 196)

Oates invokes certain narrative frames to describe rape trauma, and yet these frames also remind them of those memories that are without language or image though Bethie is a sole witness.

Her grandmother and other relatives arrived at the hospital. They all had questions. Narrator says, "You were questioned. You would tell what you could remember. Many times you would tell and retell" (37). Bethie a twelve years daughter expresses her pain time and again with her grandmother and relatives what had happened on the floor of the filthy boathouse at Rockey Point Park after the fourth of July Party. She had to utter fact not only with her relatives but also with the policeman. Her grandmother brought her from St. Mary's Hospital to the police station where narrator says, "you were the sole witness. Try to explain it happened so fast. So fast! And it was so dark! The men's face . . ." (38). Fourth of July night was

dark, the case was dark. The rapists had all been white though their nature was morally paralyzed. As the narrator describes, "You would have to say white. White but dark" (39).

Bethie was in police station. She was feeling fear. She was unable to say anything, only her eyes wet with tears. A detective gives emotional security saying, "The Police would protect you. It was all right you would be safe. You and your mother, the police will protect you please believe us" (39).

But she does not know what to believe, how to believe. Again she saw, knew and understood those dark faces that she could never forget. She pointed out, "Marvin Pick. Lloyd Pick. Jimmy DeLucca Fritzs Haaber. Joe Rickert" (41). She identified the suspects. Later, she is informed that they had already been taken into custody by police in the early hours of July five. Unfortunately police investigation began without any proper examination though there are real evidences, is the next major cause of the emotional trauma that Oates points out.

Plea-bargaining is critically important because it affects the majority of rape survivors whose cases are prosecuted after they make report to police. Yet there is not a robust discussion about it within the scholarly and activist community concerned with rape prosecution. Prosecutors maintain their discussion in pleas by standing behind the legal construction of state. However, a criminal justice process that is responsive to rape survivors' needs cannot be achieved while setting aside the plea component. Prosecutors must not reduce the charges in rape cases substantially more than they do in cases of comparable non-sexual assaults and robbery.

Pick brother has hired lawyer whose fee was astronomical: Kirkpatrick demanded a retainer of \$ 30, 000 for each brother. His hourly fee was \$ 250 out of court, \$ 350 in court. "There would be other fees" (107). Walt Pick father of Pick

brothers had hoped for discount of may be ten percent. But Kirkpatrick smiled and expressed, "Discount is not possible. I am an attorney, Mr. Pick. I am not a remnant carpet store" (109). Their negotiation occurs by standing behind the legal construction of state. Walt Pick fulfills his demand. He knows this is serious case, rapists are serious criminal. So, there is no win. It is loss he quotes, "I was lose-lose. My hard earned money. They hired Kirkpatrick like a gamble risking all his cash" (108). He later turns case upside down. He interpreters the Rape as consensual sex, – multiple act of sex, sex – for – money.

In St. Mary's Hospital, outside from her mother's room she overhears one nurse asking another, "That poor girl, the daughter, they didn't rape her, too, did they" (51)? She was not raped but she got emotional pain more than the rape of her mother. Everywhere she used to hear word "Rape." It raised emotional trauma that she can never forget. Her mother was that woman who was gang-raped in the Boathouse of Rocky Point Park and she was that girl, Teena Maguire's daughter.

By her twelfth day in St. Mary's Hospital, Teena Maguire is beginning to remember something of what happened to her. Bethie sees the stricken look in her face sometimes, her mother opening in a silence cry. She knows that her daughter was involved but she was not hurt as badly as she was. She knows that it happened on the fourth of July, in the park. She has heard the word *assault*. Now, the nature of her injuries that she is thinking about rape. Yet her knowledge is vague. Two Niagara Falls Police Department's detective come to ask few question. "I don't know", she murmured beginning to tremble. "I'm afraid I just don't know" (53). Her bloodshot eyes fill so rapidly with tears. She cannot say anything with the policeman because of the psychological fear.

There is a hearing scheduled for next month. A hearing is not a trial but the preparation for a trial. Narrator says, "You will be required to answer questions in court though you have already answered these question many times" (56). Bethie is a sole witness so, she will have to give answers in court. If Teena Maguire is well enough, she will be requested to answer questions at the hearing to make the hearing more effective. A detective told, "Your mother's testimony is more crucial than yours. Without her testimony that case against the suspects will be circumstantial, weak" (56). She does not know why. She doesn't understand why this is so. She knows, they are criminal. Those animals will be sent to prison. They hurt her mother so badly, beat her and tore her inside and left her to bleed to death on the boathouse floor. She thought, "This has to be proven. In court of law" (56).

The lead deputy prosecutor Diebenkorn rose to address Judge Schpiro. Her manner was differential, guarded. When she spoke too rapidly out of nervousness, Schpiro told her, "Hold your horses, counselor" (67). She was nervous but later she controls herself. Further Diebenkorn argues:

The crime had been a especially vicious sexual attack-a gang rape. It had been attack against a woman in the presence of her twelve-year-old daughter who had also been assaulted and threatened with rape. If Mrs. Maguire's daughter Bethel had not been present, terrified and hiding in a corner of the boathouse, Martine Maguire would not be alive today to confront and given testimony against her attack. (68)

The extract shows, it was a horrific scene of gang rape. It had been an attack intended to result in the death of Martine Maguire, who had been left to bleed to death, unconscious to the floor of a boathous in a secluded area of the park. Her daughter saved mother's life. So, she is able to give testimony against her attackers. Now she



has psychological, physical and emotional injuries. Further deputy prosecutor, Diebenkorn argues addressing to Judge Schapiro:

Mrs. Maguire had suffered critical physical injuries, had been on life support at St. Mary's Hospital and subsequently hospitalized for several weeks, and at the present time was still recuperating from the attack. Your Honour, Mrs. Maguire's presence in the courtroom today is something of a miracle. (68)

This extract shows, Mrs. Maguire has suffered critical physical injuries. She is a real victim. She is hospitalized for several weeks. So she needs justice from the court of law.

Teena spoke slowly and haltingly and not very coherently as Diebenkorn led her through an abbreviated testimony. It is clear that Teena has suffered neurological damage; often pauses for several seconds to search for correct word. She has recovered only partial memory of the rape. She has been able to positively identify only three of the rapists with a shaking hand Teena points out, "Marvin Pick, Lloyd Pick and Jimmy DeLucca, who were sitting immobile at the defense table staring frozen-face at her" (72). After that she hides her face in her hands and wiped at her eyes. But case goes beyond their control because of plea-bargains, trails, sentencing misjudgment of the case which causes, Oates shows women's humiliation at the trial.

Rape survivor, Teena enters a new social world of court. This world is unique not only because of its formal roles and rules of interaction, but also because its subject matter is the personal details of the rape survivor's life. When Teena enters the courtroom for the preliminary hearing she faces the criminals for the first time since they had raped her. She is emotionally overwhelmed with feelings of fear and she finds that it is very difficult to respond to even basic questions.

Despite her best efforts to suppress her tears, Teena is unable to complete the direct examination without sobbing uncontrollably. Rape survivor's effort to control her emotions are integral part of her court performances though it is acceptable when Teena is in tears and breathing irregularly. Judge does not depend on rape survivor's willingness and ability to support the case, she constructs against the defendant. Prosecutor takes advantages of it and turns violent sexual attack, "a gang-rape" into the consensual sex causes trauma forever.

Sharon Marcus's concept of the continuum of sexual violence and language suggests that "rape scripts are used to help set up or justify a rape, and that victims often contest these scripts in the context of sexual violence as well as in the process of representation" (qtd. in Hasford 198). Research on the narrative account of convicted male rapists demonstrates the relationship between action and language and how rape is both a material and a discursive site of struggle for cultural power, how rape is rationalized and storied by convicted rapists illuminates, how the practice of rape is often described and justified as a debt collection, a repayment, a reasonable revenge, or a re-balancing of justice.

In many narrative accounts of rape the rapist perceives the victim as exercising bodily power; thus the practice of rape is justified as a means of putting the victim in her place. As Kellet points out, some convicted rapists describe rape as "an attempt to assert voice in the face of his own devalued otherness" (qtd. in Hasford 198). The rapist reconstitutes himself as a powerful sexual subject and constructs the woman as the oppressor who must be silenced and resisted. Victims are created both rhetorically and physically, and the domination of rape is disguised rhetorically as a form of resistance. Such narratives illustrate how rapists appropriate the dominance–oppression dialectic to legitimate crimes of violence against women.

To appropriate dominance, operation and to justify rape, defense attorney Kirkpatrick twists language. Kirkpatrick demonstrates the relationship between action and language that how rape is both a material and a discursive site of struggle for cultural power. Addressing to the Judge Schapiro, Kirkpatrick argues:

The defense's rebuttal of the charges against the defendants was a simple one: there had been no rape.

No rape: None

Actually there had been sex. Multiple act of sex.

But the sex had been entirely consensual. (73)

Above lines clarify that what had happened in Rocky Point Park is not a rape, it is sex, multiple act of sex. It had happened with their agreement. It explored the relationship between words and wounds. It showed how words deal with trauma.

Further he argues:

The sex had been for money and the deal had gone wrong. The young men admittedly under the influence of alcohol [ . . . ], had fought back when she attacked them. Bethie did not actively see any acts of rape, only just heard them. The girl is a victim, yes: a victim of her mother's outrageous negligence. She was confused at the time of the alleged rape and may have been purposefully misled by Maguire at a later time. Her testimony, like her mother's is entirely fabricated and misleading. (73 – 74)

Extract explores the idea that Maguire had wanted more money than she had been promised and the young men had less to give her. They were under the influence of alcohol. When she attacked them they had fought back, is the cause of her physical injury. Bethel Maguire was confused, panicked at the time of the assault. Bethel

Maguire had not witnessed any actual act of rape. So, how can the child be sure? How can we believe her and her mother's testimony? How can a child of twelve testify? Therefore, her testimony, like her mother's is entirely fabricated and misleading. All these incidents make clear is that the character's trauma is not overcome rather extended in the gradual development of the novel.

Amanda Knoradi points out false male made general stereotypes about the women's nature, "women are deceitful and vindictive, women ask for it and women want it, on the basis of this male want to hide themselves behind the law" (8). Same thing happens in the case of Teena. Defense attorney, Kirkpatrick's sum up interpretation is: Teena fabricates stories about rape to achieve power over specific men. She seduces attackers by the way she behaves which is a subliminal or unconscious expression of her true desire. She fantasizes about being overcome and, in general, desires aggressive sexual relations. After such interpretation in the court of law criminals had been out of jail and were living openly in their community.

The problems that rape survivor faces in the criminal justice process are not simply the result of the adversarial nature of court, defense tactics, or her own emotional reactions to violent sexual domination. Problems emerge from several factors including the following: the social networks in which Teena is situated, her variable access to emotional and financial resources, her lack of knowledge about the formal and informal practices of courtroom, her lack of structural power in the criminal justice process, and standard procedures employed by prosecutor and police.

According to Helen J. Lauderdale "Rape trauma syndrome testimony does not involve any mysterious and unfathomable testing procedure" (1391). Jurors frequently require to evaluate testimony given by physicians, psychologists, trained social workers and other mental health professionals in criminal trials. Expert's description

and conclusion about the emotional, physical and psychological condition of victims are based on observation made during face to face examination of the victims, during counseling sessions, and through self administered psychological tests. Courts also have allowed the expert to offer an opinion as to whether the complainant is raped or suffers from rape trauma syndrome. After that courts recognize the relevance of the victim's emotional, physical and psychological condition after rape and their response to an attack. Hearing trial, sentencing and justice are possible until and unless courts follow this procedure.

But in terms of Teena and Bethie there is not expert testimonies or any examination. Hearing begins and ends without proper evaluation of the event. This is a complicated case involving a complicated legal procedure. It is wonder, why the state was requesting a single trial, with a single jury. There were eyewitness testimonies from the two victims. There were DNA and other forensic evidence linking these defendants. Bloodstains on these items would be matched against her mother's blood and her own, as semen found in and upon her mother's body would be matched against the suspects' DNA. Skin tissue beneath her mother's broken nails would be matched against their DNA.

In one of his seminal essay, "Truth and Power", Michel Foucault asserts, "Truth is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it" (1145). The internal network of discourse, power and truth is vividly unfolded in the above quote. Discourse creates knowledge of particular subject or object to which it represents. And whosoever creates such discourse establishes oneself powerful. One becomes powerful because of knowledge at his disposal. Hence, truth is interpretation made by powerful person. Teena is a subject of the novel. She is raped by a drunkard gang. After rape, in hearing Kirkpatrick, defense

attorney creates a discourse and turns reality upside down saying there has been "No rape. There has been sex, multiple act of sex" (73). The sex has been for money. The deal has gone wrong because Teena Maguire had demanded more money than she had been promised and the young men had less to give her. By creating such discourse Kirkpatrick interprets rape as consensual sex. On the basis of that interpretation her identity is formed as bitch, whore and liar. In Niagara County Courthouse in September specially male Kirkpatrick creates discourse because he is a power holder. He is known as a powerful man. Since than Teena is known as a morally paralyzed woman. It sets in the mid of everybody. Later Bethie faces its impact in school with her classmates. This created discourse is a cause of trauma which Bethie faces from middle to the end of the novel.

Thus, she should consider how representation of rape, trauma, and resistance can become sites for discourse and how categories of class, race and gender shape the cultural politics of rape. Feminist and postcolonial scholars have offered important analysis of how male anxieties and cultural fantasies of domination penetrate literary representation of women and rape. But what critics have not paid as much attention to is how women's representation of rape and trauma can also become sites for the reinscription or contestation of cultural and national fears and fantasies of those in position of power.

After the hearing, there is an air of shock in the Courtroom. Teena and Bethie have seen attackers walk free from court; Teena's lover, Ray Cassy whose feelings have changed since the attack; John Dromoor a young police officer, whose concern for Teena is matched by his desire for Justice; Haried Diebenkorn, the deputy prosecutor, thinks for the true justice. It is the end for Teena Maguire in Niagara falls.

She cannot bear it. Never can she testify now. Never can she reenter any courtroom. Narrator says, "She has no faith in any fucking prosecutors and judges" (81).

Teena is living with Grandma, where Bethie is also living. She hires a nurse's aide to help with Momma for as long as necessary. And a physical therapist comes to the house several times a week, to help Momma walk again. Grandma has been a widow for twelve years and she has learned to cope with what she calls the inescapable facts of life and so she does not foresee trouble: "those animals are guilty, justice will be done" (57). Grandma has uttered these words so frequently and so vehemently.

After that day she has hospitalized again. She is diagnosed as anemic, severely depressed and suicidal. Doctor prescribes her antidepressant medication. Wendy S. Hesford says, "Stress or blow that may produce disordered feelings or behaviour" (195). After hearing Teena shows different behaviour. Sometimes she takes medication, more often not. She ceases even to speak with Ray Casey on the phone. She refuses to see her own mother in whose house on Baltic Avenue she is living. Often she refuses to see her own daughter. Similarly she does not like to be touched by any man. Teena says, "Leave me alone can't you for Christ's sake. I'm sick. I'm so tired. I can't give a damn you or anybody else" (82).

She wants to live alone. She is sick and tired. She wants to live without touch of any human being. It means, she doesn't want to remember the past. But in her loneliness she remembers what had happened to her in Rocky Point Park in Fourth of July and in the Niagara County Courthouse in September. Her physical wound compels her to think her past. It seems that she has not been able to negotiate with the present. For peace and solace she again prays with God, "God help me. God, give me peace God" (83). Trauma caters the bitter past experiences into present through the

medium of memories and this sort of bitter disgusted memory ceased the life in present. In general sense, the shady past which is neither attainable nor avoidable haunts and tortures them at present.

To forget her own horrible past she drinks Italian red wine. Narrator describes, "She'd been drinking again. And she was sick. She refused to take medication, see her therapist" (84). She is haunted by the traumatic experiences. Her wounds are not only physical but also psychological, which are more painful than physical and remains long lasting. The torture of the rape has made her mentally disordered. She finds humiliation, pain, sorrow, frustration, depression which make her an anxious and fearful person. In order to avoid this sort of problem she indulges in drinking but her traumatic memory doesnot overcome rather it is strengthened in the form of distorted memory. She wants to make wine as a tool for remedy but it cannot work properly.

After hearing, Bethie finds disordered feeling and behaviour of her mother. So, Bethie cannot sleep except when momma sleeps. She cannot eat except when momma eats. She cannot smile except if momma smiles with her swollen, lacerated mouth. Her inner side can never be right. These bloodsuckers who hide behind the law, she prays God that if there is rule and justice on the earth they will be punished.

According to Jenny Edkins, "Trauma is the betrayal of a promise or an expectation" (109). Trauma can be seen as an encounter that betrays our faith in previously established personal and social worlds and calls into question the resolutions of impossible questions that people have arrived at in order to continue with day-to-day life:

What we call trauma takes place when the very powers that we are convinced will protect us and give us security become our tormentors: when the community of which considered ourselves members turns



against us or when our family is no longer a source of refuge but a site of danger. (109)

So, what trauma or a traumatic encounter does, is the way in which the social order is radically incomplete and fragile. It demonstrates in the most shocking way that what people call social reality is nothing more than a fantasy and betrayal.

First time Diebenkorn comes to the house on Baltic Avenue to speak with gang-rape victim, Teena Maguire. As Diebenkorn utters with breathy speech, "I must see her I am a deputy prosecutor with the county district attorney's office" (88). Agnes Kevecki, mother of Teena doesn't let her to visit Teena. She is not in the condition of trusting Diebenkorn. She bursts with anger:

Not just those animals but you people at the courthouse have destroys her life. That man, calling my daughter a Whore! A hooker! My poor daughter who was almost killed! A trial would kill her. A trial would kill all of us. Every day in the newspaper, on TV—it would kill our family. The man turns truth upside down. (88–89)

Given extract shows Agnes Kevecki's anger. All, not only criminal but also judge and Prosecutor are guilty. American mass media tend to focus on criminals' psychological, sociological, political and material forces that facilitate and sustain violence. Their trial and hearing compel them to live traumatic lives forever. The man turns truth upside down. Trauma permanently changes a person. It contrasts to its stressful experience, which challenges an individual's capacity to cope. Trauma destroys multiple dimensions of security and exceeds the limits of human capacity to process and integrate horrible experiences into a coherent perception of self and self – in – relation to their and the world. Again she quotes:

He is a black magician. He should be disbarred. Everybody in Niagara Falls knows that the rapists and their attorneys are lying. It is a story created by the black magician Kirkpatrick. The entire story is an invention of Jay Kirkpatrick. So, he should be disbarred. (89)

Agnes Kevecki wants to express that Kirkpatrick is a black magician. People of the Niagara Falls know reality. So, he must be kicked out from the court for the betterment of the innocent people.

Next time Diebenkorn comes to the house on Baltic Avenue but Agnes Kevecki refuses to answer the door. It shows her deep attachment with the past memory and anger with prosecutor though Diebenkorn who speaks in favour of Teena and Bethie. Agnes Kevecki is not in the condition of trusting deputy prosecutor, Diebenkorn. Later she meets Bethie. She says what had happened in the Niagara County Courthouse in September was injustice. Similarly, she tries to give emotional support saying whole story is invention of Jay Kirkpatrick. It is meaningless, unreasonable and ridiculous. Any reasonable jury will reject it. She says, "Believe me, Bethel. And tell your mother" (91). She becomes serious:

Bethie, my life is bound up with this case, too. It isn't just a 'case' to me it's – it has to do with my life as a woman, too – for when one woman is viciously attacked, the way your mother was, all women are being attacked. That's why rape must be punished as a serious, violent crime. (91)

Given extract deals with the position of women in particular society. No matter what role a person fulfills in a society should be same in the eye of justice. Everybody should enjoy equal rights. There should be no law that gives privileges and more

rights and chances to some and less to other. In this kind of social environment individual cannot explore their potentials.

Female prosecutors, like Diebenkorn is feeling humiliation after the defense attorney's interpretation of rape as a consensual sex. It is male biasness towards female. They are taken as second sex. Her identity is bound up with the identity of Teena in particular, overall women in general. Kirkpatrick gives privilege to male and takes female as an other. In such condition female cannot explore their potentialities. Therefore rape must be taken as a serious and violent crime for the betterment of the humanity.

Everybody in Niagara Falls knows that the rapists and their attorney are lying. The entire story is created and invented by Jay Kirkpatrick. There is possibility of re-hearing and trial. Kirkpatrick who is their legal counsel has fear about the case. Therefore, once he gives instruction to Pick brothers:

No talking about the case, and no approaching the Maguire woman and her daughter. How many times they'd been told, the gang of them. Stay away from Baltic Avenue. No cruising west of the park to intimidate the Maguire's or any other witnesses who'd seen them in the park that night. No trying to contact the Maguire's. Not Martine, not the daughter, and not the grandmother. Or any other relative. The judge had okayed something called an injunction. Meaning stay away. (114)

Pick brothers follow instruction of their legal counsel. They also have sense of fear. They want to escape from the case. So, they leave Baltic Avenue and went to Canada. Later they are reclassified as fugitives from justice.

Walt Pick is an old man. Now he has not money. He is declared as bankruptcy. His two criminal sons are vanished and declared fugitive. Hot tears role down from

his eyes. He is angry with his son and expresses his dissatisfaction, "Those fuckers! sons of bitches ! All I done for them! All I done for them" (107)! He is a responsible father. He has done what they need. But in return he gets pain. In this way he is not beyond the circle of the trauma and dies of a stroke within eighteen months. Death of Walt Pick is cause of the corrupt nature of attorney and immoral activity of his sons.

Bethie has not money for any private school. She is reading in public school where she is feeling humiliation and fear. Environment of the school is not suitable for her because her classmates who are related to the rapists or who are their neighbors or friends. Those classmates who are sympathetic with the rapists because they have heard nasty things about Martine Maguire and Bethie. She is fearful to enter a lavatory. There she sees word "HATE B.M. – FUCK BETH M" (133). Classmates remind her past in distorted form. She turns her eyes from such scene. Not only in Lavatory but also on the outside of her locker, students have written non-sense and vulgar words, "B.M. SUKS COKS FUK B.M" (133). School custodians cannot remove their words easily. They don't remove them for days. Sometimes they use to draw clumsy cartoon instended to symbolize female sex organ.

Her classmates' activity, their word and cartoon hurt Bethie. Their activities shows her mother is gang raped woman and she is that girl Teena Maguire's daughter as if they have not other characteristic. It is their sole identify. In this way school's environment becomes worst. All these things and activity reminds her past. In school, in society and in house, she gets image of fourth of July. In distorted form, society reminds her traumatic experiences time and again though she tries to forget. It compails her to live in traumatic circle.

Pick Brother has gone Canada. They are declared fugitive from the justice. DeLucca is another criminal killed by the police officer Dromoor. Now Bethie has

feeling of fear of Haaber. She feels insecure and says, "He will kill me" (135). She expresses her insecurity with grandmother thinking, "She will tell Momma, Momma will call Drommor" (136). Dromoor, who had saved their lives. So, she believes him. He is in favour of justice but not in the judicial instrument of justice. Self-defense is better tool for him. He used to say "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth" (122), time and again.

Suddenly, unrecognizable corpse is discovered in the late morning of November 23, 1996, at the end of a narrow access road a quarter mile from the Niagara Falls Airport, near the underbrush and stunted trees. It does not require experienced medical examiner to determine that the body has been dosed with gasoline and set afire. An empty gallon can of gasoline is close by the corpse. A car is near the roadway. Niagara Falls Police Department officers inform that the vehicle is registered in the name of Fritze Haaber, 3392 Eleventh Street, Niagara Falls, New York. Besides that dead body there is a handwritten note "god forgive me and my family I am very ashamed. This will make things right, F.H" (147).

Gladys Haaber, mother of Fritz Haaber is mourning because of unexpected death of her son. She is giving interview for a cover story in the "clarion." She says, "He was living despair life of being haunted by the Niagara Country DA's office" (148). He was living frustrated life but she did not know the cause of his frustration. After his death, she comes to know the reality. Than, she curses those bloodsuckers who hide behind the law. She says, "I pray god that if there is justice on his earth it is exacted in the right place and on the right people, soon" (148). She wants to point out that the mechanism of judicial system of the country is not systematic. Therefore, crime and criminals are increasing, and victims and criminals are living traumatic life.

Teena is alone. In her loneliness, she starts writing a letter to her daughter. She writes in the beginning of her letter, "It's Heaven here" (149)! Teena is not living in heaven. She is living in hell where she has not any feeling of life and privacy. But in her letter she mentions "other side of this card" (149) which is about Bethie. She wishes decorated life of her daughter "I love this new life with Gods grace. I think of you there, Gods bless and keep happy" (149). During the Niagara Falls, they are doubly victimized: physical and sexual violence. Just to cure the psychic wound, Teena tries to console herself by imagining colorful life of Bethie.

But, Bethie is not living so colorful life imagined by her mother. Often being suffered by the trauma, Bethie continues her living her pathetically with her past memories. The reason behind this is Bethie's compulsion to close the secret of a gang's rape, cruelty, brutality and inhumanity where Oates seems successful to fulfill her intention through the fictionalization of the story.

She has already been tidying her room. So, now she puts on a nice dress, good shoes, fixes her hair, brushes her teeth, even puts on the some lipstick, but when she sits down on the bed, she loses herself in that memory of the Niagara Falls. Although her mind seems often to dwell in the before, she insists that she does not want to return to that actual time. Her memories serve, rather, to recall the privileged potential that she once enjoyed and to give imagination shape to the potential perfection that Bethie might have attained.

She is only surviving her pathetic life. What emotions, feeling imagination and happiness have to be seemed within her is not there.

It is years later. It is another world. This world is urban New York City where Bethie and her husband live. There is no way of touching with the last world of her Niagara Falls girlhood though she is haunted by the emotional trauma. She is not

ready to share her feelings with her husband, because she infers that her husband may not give positive response. Perhaps she will get more pain. Therefore narrator quotes:

Always unexpectedly. Always it's a shock. When will you tell him?

May be never. For why tell him? He would not understand. There were ugliness in that world but there was beauty, too. There was hatred but love. Only one man could understand and your husband is not that man. (153)

"He would not understand" means she never get sympathy or emotional support from her husband. So, she will never open her traumatic text with her husband which had happened in Rocky Point Pick and Niagara County Courthouse in September. Both are ugly things which remain long lasting. Love and beauty are tangible, remain for very short period. Only one man can understand the traumatic life, her husband is not that man.

Trauma represents destruction of basic organizing principles by which we come to know self, other and the environment. Trauma affects deeply in a way that challenges the meaning of life. Thus, trauma leaves a catastrophic effect in the victim. After marriage she gets love and affection from her husband but he never seems to see who and what has captivated her attention so that she stands transfixed. She feels a wave of heat rising into her face as if she has been slapped. Narrator quotes, "you looked so lonely, suddenly. As if you'd forgotten I'm here" (154).

Traumatic memory clarifies that memory is not straight forward, especially traumatic memory. So forms of state hold in contemporary society are produced and reproduced themselves through social practices, including practices of trauma and memory. In this way, the essence of the trauma is precisely that it is too horrible to be remembered, to be integrated in this universe. They cannot forget, and some are haunted by unimaginable horror.

Her ideas reinforce the fact that trauma can't be forgotten. It gives emphasis on the part of latency, the temporary delay which should not be misunderstood as repression because trauma by its nature, displays with vengeance over a period of time, especially when triggered by a similar event. For the person who has expressed unbearable pain, the psychological defense of dissociation allows life to go on but at great internal cost.

In patriarchy there is a notion that female is intellectually inferior. The intellectual inferiority of a female is caused by patriarchy. Because of patriarchy female lacks proper exercise of their reason. Mary Wollstonecraft, highlighting the female inferiority and suppression caused by patriarchy writes, "Females, who are made women of when they are mere children, and brought back to childhood when they ought to leave the go-cart forever" (395). So, in patriarchal society a woman suffers from double existence when she is merely a child, she is expected to behave like a grown up woman and when she really becomes a woman, she is forced back to childhood.

When Bethie, a traumatic character is in her childhood, she is expected like a grown up woman. So, narrator says, "your childhood ended when you were twelve years old" (17), means she should behave like a matured woman. She should be responsible. Now she is really a matured woman. She is feeling fear of her husband because if she expresses her feeling, she will be forced back to childhood. Her husband is a representative of patriarchy. He doesn't let her to exercise her reason.

Trauma is specially related to physical and psychological problem. It lasts for longtime in her life and makes her helpless and anxious. Physical torture or psychological impact of past always haunts her and makes her upset. Mostly such past experience, especially of a childhood, remains all over the life. Matured person may



get rid of such experiences but the threat which she faced or get rid of such experiences but the threat which she faced or experienced in her childhood cannot be omitted whether she is matured or strong in her present time but the childhood horrible experiences cause her to remain under threat. Such traumatic experiences always defeat her control and make her live under pressure. Human mind always faces such experiences by placing themselves in same situation. While recurring past crucial events she acts same as a kid but not as a mature man. The same threat which she faces in her childhood remains same even after her maturity.

She is a traumatic character. She does not want to share her traumatic experience with her husband even after her marriage because her husband never seems to see who and what has captivated her attention with such circumstances, if she opens her past he will ignore the sentiments, feelings, pain and experiences of her. It cannot be justice for her. Bethie realizes the truth about her marriage which has been not a meeting of mind and hearts but a performance. Therefore, she does not express her feelings. She doesn't feel her existence there. Thus, she forgets herself. She doesn't know where she is.

Traumatic experience is extremely unpleasant and it causes characters to feel upset or anxious. Past crucial events which they face as bitter experience in their life may also termed as their traumatic experiences. Such experiences haunt them time and again and make them weak mentally and physically. Such bitter experience always hovers round them as a mental illness. The shock of past event puts threat upon their mind and they suffer in present.

### III. Gang-rape and Its Aftermath

Joyce Carol Oates' *Rape: A Love Story* deals with the character's traumatic experiences. Teena Maguire goes through a severe sense of trauma due to the gang-rape on the floor of the filthy Boathous at Rocky Point Park. Bethie Maguire, a twelve year daughter, has parental anxiety over the loss of father and rape of her mother. In the novel, *Rape A Love Story* past is more important than present. Throughout the novel the characters are motivated by the shady, bitter and horrible past memories which not only block their attempt to forget it but also hunt their present sound livelihood. In particular, Oates demonstrates characters' physical and psychological suffering from beginning to the end of the novel.

Trauma is defined as a severe emotional shocking having a deep effect upon the personality. Characters' beautiful and decorated life ruined by their emotional shock. The whole novel is furnished with the smell of rape and corrupt nature of attorney, Jey Kirkpatrick who has misled the case. He demonstrates the relationship between action and language to appropriate the dominance and operation, and to legitimate crime of sexual violence against Teena. In this sense, trauma can never be purely individual event, in the same way as there cannot be a private language because it always already involves the community or the cultural setting in which characters are placed. The smell of rape haunts almost all the characters in the novel.

Too much consumption of wine by Teena Maguire, Marvin Pick, and Lloyd Pick is to forget their traumatic pain and suffering but it does not console their suffering. They want to avoid their shady and bitter past which is closely attached to them. As soon as Bethie and her mother are dragged into the boathouse at Rocky Point Park, they begin to exist in 'after.' Never again can they exist in 'before.' The

more characters want to avoid their past the more they are close to it, because their traumas compel them to cope with past memory and bitter experience.

Hence, this research on Oates' novel *Rape: A Love Story* tries to analyze the traumatic experiences of the characters especially, Bethie and Teena Magurie whose lives are triggered by rape and their humiliation at trial and its consequence throughout their lives.

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