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Articulation of Vicarious Trauma in Louise Erdrich's *The Round House*

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## Articulation of Vicarious Trauma in Louise Erdrich's *The Round House*

### Abstract

*This research paper attempt to explore thearticulation of vicarious trauma in Louise Erdrich'sThe Round Houseby applying the protagonist himself, his father, his friends and most of the people from the community. In order to show how indirect victim of trauma can became victimizers, who in turn became traumatized by the violence they commit and witness. Louise Erdrich,is selecting the life like story of GaraldineCoutt, a Native American woman, in order to show her pain and suffering that triggers the mind of her son which ultimately results empathetic unsettlement. It tells the readers how Erdrich identifies Joe with Garaldine and articulates that suffering through imagination. Moreover, through this fictional text, this research analyzes the figure of the protagonist from the perspective of vicarious trauma and brings secondary people's traumatic situation at the center. To complete the task, the researcher takes the theoretical insights primarily from literary based on trauma theory text such as Dominick LaCapra'sWriting History, Writing Trauma, and Laurie Anne Pearlman et al's. Treating Traumatic Bereavement. By using these theoretical tools, the researcher finds how Joe himself being secondary victim in the situation of Garaldine and come up with her tragic traumatic situation. The secondary traumatic experience of Joe helps remake the situation of Garaldine from her pain and suffering and give relief from vegetative stage. Hence, projecting the situation of emphatic unsettlement of the protagonist, this research paper attempts to expand the reactions of Joe after knowing about the tragic situation of Garaldine.*

**Keywords:** Empathetic Unsettlement, Compassion Fatigue, Vicarious Trauma, Secondary trauma, Sexual Violence, Testimony

This research paper aims to analyze Joe's character from the perspective of vicarious trauma. He is a secondary victim, whose life is similarly affected, even if he doesn't go through the trauma directly. He himself is not experiencing actual trauma but he is introducing himself as if he were suffering like his mother, or he is exposing his mother's pain through his feeling as victimizer. When his mother was raped, not only is her life shattered, but also the entire family is shaken. He is an empathetically closed with his mother's suffering and gets victimized to experience her pain and suffering. The close connections and familial relations between him and his mother have created vicarious trauma. Taking the idea from Dominick LaCapra's notion of "empathetic unsettlement" which is called compassion fatigue, the researcher tries to highlight the experiences of empathetic unsettlement experienced by Joe in Geraldine's trauma. Thus Joe articulates this trauma in order to show the whole novel is dealing with articulation of vicarious trauma.

This fictional text by Louise Erdrich presents the traumatic representations of Joe, a Native American boy, who has to cope with a traumatic event on the reservation where they live, the rape and attempted murder of Geraldine by non-Native American boy Linden Lark, and remained in a vegetative state following the assault. Her pain and suffering makes her son also suffer and he experiences through a secondary traumatic situation. As an adult, Joe accounts looking back for his mother's processes of acting out and working through of trauma, as well as the investigation process. He carries out together with his father, friends and other members of the community with the purpose of discovering the victim's identity.

An individual who is indirectly affected by trauma and portrays the troubled can have an impact on others aside from the victim. This situation leads the researcher to pose the questions like, why does the narrator present the fragmented experiences? How

does he expose his mother's suffering? How does vicarious trauma work with individuals experiencing trauma? What are the roles of the body and narrative process within vicarious trauma? These types of questions arouse in the researcher's mind after reading the novel *The Round House*. So, this research paper attempts to answer of these questions and its imbedded meaning in this research.

This research paper analyzes the empathetic unsettlement of the protagonist as represented in the text. The working framework basically deals with text itself and literary based theories on vicarious trauma in Lisa McCann, Laurie Anne Pearlman and Dominick LaCapra's "empathetic unsettlement" to justify the argument. This research paper basically deals with qualitative approach based on textual reading and also takes some authentic reviews and other relevant source for extension of argument. Furthermore, library consultation, valuable suggestions by supervisor and relevant internet sources, websites and wide range of other references materials as the focus of this research the articulation of vicarious trauma which is represented in the text.

Erdrich is the Native American writer who has written fifteen novels as well as volumes of poetry, children's books, short stories, and a memoir of early motherhood. The novel *The Round House* won the National Book Award for Fiction. She is standing up for the protection and rights of Native American women. It is clear that the women themselves do not have much of a voice in the story. The novel is to expose the charge of sexual violence and the cultural suppression of the reservation in an Ojibwe community, where a mother is brutally raped. But the novel is told from her son's perspective as their family tries to heal and they attempt to catch the person who commits these horrible acts. It underlies a specific social justice issue, while most of the perpetrators of rapes on reservations are non-Native, and most are not

prosecuted. Erdrich shines a light on that injustice, which is of course terrible for Native women.

Many scholars have studied this novel from multiple perspectives. Foremost, Julie Tharp in "Erdrich's Crusade: Sexual Violence in *The Round House* insists," *The Round House* also provides personal, collective, and generational analysis through Joe with the focus on both the trauma of sexual violence and the trauma of being denied justice. The beginning points for that; analysis is the history of tribal disenfranchisement" (26). Author underlies the aspects of trauma of sexual violence and trauma of not giving justice to the victim. It further explains that the denial of the rights to vote to the Native American.

Similarly, Richard Mace in *Rocky Mountain Review*, notes, "Like many of Erdrich's works, *The Round House* revolves . . . similar themes and the reappearance of characters found in several of Erdrich's works, she does break new ground in *The Round House* by taking a more political tone and highlighting historic legal difficulties faced by the Chippewa due to laws and policies created by the U.S. government" (162). She emphasizes the suffering faced by the Indians due to the laws and rules of American. This novel as a politically engaged narrative denounces through Joe's testimony the numerous sexual attacks that native women suffer on reservations. Thus it points out the historic political difficulties of Native American. Erdrich tackles the problematic situation of jurisdiction in her novel and the history of difficulties that Native Americans faced in their attempts to get justice through the U.S. legal system.

Likewise, A. J. Verdelle in "A Question of Safety", points out, "The novel foregrounds the catastrophic rape of a Native woman on a reservation. The rapist meant to follow the sexual assault with murder, but the woman picks herself up

and saves her own life, wife . . . suffer emotionally as well, alternating among hyperactivity, shock, grief, and despair" (25). It highlights the domination of the American to Native American where Native women are raped and attempted to kill in the reservation camp. The consequence effects to the son as well as her husband emotionally. It emphasizes the difficulty and the breakdown of the investigation due to uncertainty about whether the matter is the legal jurisdiction of federal government. By emphasizing the problem of attaining justice in the face of a brutal attack, Erdrich reiterates the long standing argument that Indians have repeatedly been the victim of federal law.

Furthermore, Prama Tagore includes Erdrich's *Tracks* as one example of literature as historical testimony. She writes: "*Tracks* endeavors to account for the losses and deaths of colonial history, including personal and collective traumas of the past and the present. The novel tells the story of different generations of witnesses. Who finds themselves and haunted by histories of colonial violence and erasure" (70). This emphasizes a common purpose that bearing witness to some of the many disappearances and violence that structure histories of colonization, focusing particularly on the lives and experiences of women, who for the most part, remain missing from the official archives.

Likewise, some intellectuals such as John Greenya have considered that "it is the seeking of revenge and not justice which drives Joe to plot what the author calls a plan of revenge, the novel reinforces the stereotype of the violent and revengeful Indian, which Native Americans are always trying to fight" (128). It highlights paying attention to the context and history of Native Americans, which attempt to demonstrate that Erdrich complicates stereotypes of Native Americans as Joe's fearful action cannot be easily categorized as the result of a revengeful behavior.



Most of the writers tend to focus more on the victim and the perpetrator while disregarding other individuals who have been affected as well, but no study has focused on vicarious trauma. These discussed intellectuals such as Julie Tharp underlies the aspects of trauma of sexual violence and trauma of not giving justice to the victim. Similarly, Richard Mace points out the historic political difficulties of Native American. Likewise, A. J. Verdelle emphasizes the novel foregrounds the catastrophic rape of a Native woman on a reservation. However they have not interpreted the novel from the perspective of vicarious trauma. Thus, the researcher, in this paper is attempting to deal this text through the lens of "empathetic unsettlement" or "vicarious trauma" showing narrator's situation after involving empathetically with his mother's pain and suffering. Thereafter, gender biasness is significant issue which invokes the violence and rape in the society and leads the victim as well as people who commit and witness towards traumatic incidents.

While defining trauma, it is a psychological wound or shock that remains for a long term effect in a person's mind. On the one hand, people experience trauma directly, and on the other hand they can experience indirectly. In order to understand secondary trauma, it is important to understand the subjective experience of trauma. Secondary traumatic stress has been described by Charles Figley "a natural consequence of caring for another individual who has had a traumatic experience. An individual refers to PTSD-like symptoms that occur following indirect contact with traumatic events experienced by a significant other" (66). Trauma occurs in the mind not in the body and it comes when someone experiences it when he/she repeats it. Nonetheless, it is difficult to overcome trauma and the traumatic repetitions of the experience what LaCapra calls acting out victims of trauma can work towards a process of healing by working through their trauma. During this process, the memory

work entailed in the narrativization of traumatic memories allows the subject to distinguish between the traumatic past and the present, and therefore to work through his or her trauma (66).

An individual who interact with those who experience traumatic experience difficulties related to secondary trauma and possibly vicarious trauma. The term "vicarious trauma" is attributed to Lisa McCann and Laurie Anne Pearlman in the field of medical science who identified that working with trauma victims may cause severe and lasting psychological effects. People who work with victim of trauma, as witnesses they also suffered from vicarious trauma. McCann and Pearlman define, vicarious trauma as "one may experience profound psychological effects, that can be disruptive and painful for the helper and can persist for months or years after work with traumatized persons" (133). People who continue to work with victims of trauma as witnesses they also suffered from vicarious trauma. At increased risk for experiencing the psychological effects, as a result of the constant emotional engagement and continuous exposure to victim.

Vicarious trauma and secondary Trauma are frequently used interchangeably to refer to the indirect trauma that can occur when we are exposed to difficult or disturbing images and stories in indirectly. This can occur by traumatic stress through observing, exposing oneself, hearing stories of traumatic events or suffering of an individual, viewing graphic news reports, reading tragic story of rape, or frightening television shows and various other media, viewing crime scene evidence where disturbing images are described and many other ways in which we can be indirectly affected by the content or visuals of some others living creature's suffering.

Similarly, vicarious trauma is also called compassion fatigue and empathetic unsettlement by Dominic LaCapra who is best known for his work in intellectual

history and trauma studies. Compassion fatigue is the cost of caring for others in emotional pain, when someone is directly in contact with traumatized persons when they are working as doctors, police, nurses and others workers are indirectly contact with traumatic materials such as listening from others. In this way, vicarious trauma occurs in helping professionals when they work with peoples who have experience trauma. The term "empathetic unsettlement involves bearing witness to trauma by putting oneself in the others position while recognizing the difference of the position" (41). It is a dangerous situation in which a witness begins to imagine himself/herself in place of the victim and replace the victim's narrative with his/her own perceived victimhood.

The term secondary trauma refers to the observation that people such as, family, friends and other members, who comes into continual close contact with trauma survivors may also experience emotional distraction becoming indirect victims of trauma. Likewise, Charles Figley defines secondary traumatic stress as "the natural consequential behaviours and emotional resulting from knowledge about a traumatic event experienced by a significant other"(10). It emphasizes the vicarious trauma faced by the narrator, who comes into continual close contact with his mother's trauma. He is an empathetically closed with his mother's suffering and gets victimized to experience her pain and suffering. His emotional distraction becomes indirect victims of trauma.

Geraldine, who works as a tribal record keeper she has access of anybody's secret. She was raped by racist white man called Linden Lark, when she tried to avoid him from seize a file containing personal information about Mayla Wolfskin, a young Indian girl from the Coult's family reservation, whether Linden wants to run away with Mayla and the shut up money her employer. The South Dakota governor, Curtis

Yeltow, gave her under the condition to enrol her baby in the tribe and register him as the father to save him or to blackmail him (34). It becomes clear in the novel, when Geraldine gets occupied in Linden's business; she is brutally attacked together with Mayla. Although unlike Mayla whose body disappears after brutally killed by Linden Lark, Geraldine Coult manages to run away, and then she becomes traumatized.

However, she describes her condition of depression motivated by the traumatic event by referring to her erratic sleep habits and loss of desire. It represents her traumatic expression in the text, "She slept and slept, like she was sleeping for a sleeping lengthy. She ate little. Wept often, a grinding and monotonous weeping that she tried to muffle with pillows but which vibrated through the bedroom door" (29). It represents her traumatic condition through her erratic sleep habits loss of all the desire which demonstrates her traumatic expression. Similarly, the protagonist's secondary traumatic stress reaction represents his mother's fear and responses of nervous attention, he is not actually traumatized by the violence but he is suffering like as his mother.

Similarly, vicarious trauma faced by the protagonist. For instance, in the text, he claims:

I was just behind my father . . . Cradling her elbows; he lifted her from the car and supported her as she shifted toward him, still bent in the shape of the car seat. She slumped against him, stared past me. There was vomit down the front of her dress and, soaking her skirt and soaking the gray cloth of the car seat, her dark blood. (10)

This horrific picture trying to demonstrate that vicarious trauma faced by the narrator, after immediately rape of his mother. The violence with the intention of his mother has endured by residence on the vomit and blood in her dress. His attention to specify in

this explanation underlies the reality that bearing in mind his mother immediately after her rape makes clearly traumatized him. It is heartbreaking to see a thirteen year old experience a condition like him, if the book would have been narrated from an older person's point of view. Such as his father, the situation still would have been horrific. But possibly less intense, in a sense that it would not mould an older character's way of life quite as much. The reader is able to see Joe change and develop a huge source of anger.

Although he faced with the pressure to act as an adult and basically lose his parents for sometime, which is incredibly difficult for a kid of his age. As people grow older they tend to become more and more numb to the terrible things that occur in the mind. Sometimes it is easy to forget how traumatizing things can be especially for kids. Therefore the story is told through the eyes of Joe, the reader has an easier time to understanding how rape and violence effects to everyone, especially to other members of the family.

Similarly, the he describes the details of traumatic effect in the text, his high opinion for Worf saying: "Worf didn't enjoy sex with human females because they were too fragile and he had to show restraint" (18). It is an exciting and confusing coincidence to differentiate his statement with the anger. It represents in the act that was performed against his mother. Another example of this behaviour is the way he describes Sonja. When describing her, he says "I felt differently about her breasts-on them I had a hopeless crush" (21). These two examples demonstrate that Joe does not in fact have an absolute struggle on the truthful destruction the crime committed beside his mother causes the victim. Rather, he sees the pain that his mother is undergoing and is seeking revenge based upon his love for his mother, and specific pain, rather

than the specific crime. It allows us to see the ways in which a crime like this can impact most essentially the victim but also those around them.

Likewise, McCann and Pearlman define vicarious trauma as "the negative transformation that takes place in a therapist through empathic engagement with traumatized clients and a commitment or sense of responsibility to help" (374). It represents the negative transformation that takes place in a helper through empathetic engagement with victims and sense of responsibility to help. Similarly, to having Joe as the narrator is the same as the possibility.

The text illustrates the vicarious trauma of the narrator. For instance he points out:

The sun fell onto the kitchen floor in golden pools, but it was an ominous radiance, like the piercing light behind a western cloud. A trance of fear came over me, a taste of death like sour milk. I set the glass on the table and bolted up the stairs. Burst into my parent's bedroom. My mother sunk in such a heavy sleep that when I tried to throw myself down next to her, she struck me in the face. It was a forearm back blow and caught my jaw, stunning me. (20)

It represents Joe's innocence recognizes the sign of vicarious trauma from his mother and his helplessness to help her and deal with her. He sees his mother's pain that she was undergoing and is seeking revenge based upon his love for his mother. He is an empathetically closed with his mother's suffering and gets victimized to experience her pain and suffering. He is acting as the narrator makes it so we, the audience, don't get the whole story and are choked-up from knowing what is going through Geraldine's mind as she heals both physically and mentally. This novel would have been even more unbelievable had it switched narrators every few chapters. It would have been even more powerful if the story had been told by his mother. So, not only

could the audience see the effects that her assault had on her through the perspective of son. But also actually know exactly how she was coping and processing through everything that had happened.

Though Geraldine finally starts a process of working through, as evidence in her return to her family and job she transmits her trauma to her son. Though, experts such as psychiatrist Vamik Volkan have acknowledged the possibility of a transgenerational transmission of trauma which takes place when an older person unconsciously externalizes his traumatized self onto a developing child's personality and the child becomes a lake for the unwanted, troublesome parts of the older generation. He states, "Such transmission eventually makes the traumatized self-images passed down by members of the group . . . become part of the group identity" (43). Significantly, Joe finds himself wishing he could turn the clock back to the days when his mother cooked dinner every night and she laughed and he seems unable to cope with his mother's behaviour after the attack. Since, most of the time he tries to avoid having contact with her.

Similarly, the narrator brings the issue of vicarious trauma in the text. He argues:

I looked at the green sky on that vase, the willow, the muddy water and awkwardly painted rocks. I was to become overly familiar with this glazed scene during those dinners because I didn't want to look at my mother, propped up staring wearily at us as if she had just been shot, or rolled into a mummy pretending to be in the afterlife. (105)

Consequently the narrator expresses as if it were a defence mechanism for fighting his secondary traumatization. He takes refuge in his and his investigation expected at finding out with the victim's identity, which runs parallel to law enforcement to

investigation with which his father collaborates. Indeed, he himself confesses to his mother that his aim is to put an end to Linden's life for his mother. As a result, Levine states, an individual can become stuck in the ongoing nervous system reflex, often producing a chronic immobility response that can profoundly disrupt many aspects of life (95). It represents his reaction to fight with perpetrator which broke up or overridden by his various part of the brain. His mind became stuck in the ongoing nervous and often producing a chronic immobility response which can profoundly disturb his many aspect of life.

Next illustration of vicarious trauma is the details of traumatic effect. In the text, the narrator points out, "I'm going to find him, I'm going to burn him and I'm going to kill him for you . . . There is nothing to stop me. I know who he is and I'm going after him. You can't stop me you are here in bed, you cannot get out" (63). It represents his anger while he was thinking about his mother's attacker. His intention is take revenge to justice for his mother by killing the rapist. During his own eager investigation, he learns that perpetrator never might be brought to court due to the land dilemma over reservation territory which makes difficult action of crime for him.

Perpetrator decided intentionally to intimidate and humble Geraldine and Mayla in the round house. A place located in a legal limbo between competing jurisdictions as it covers three classes of land: tribal trust, state and federal (160). As a consequence, firstly because conventional law cannot bring peace and justice to his mother, and secondly, because his father is unable to protect them due to his coronary problem, although he decide to take justice into his own hands. The challenges that come from opening up Joe's heart and mind to his mother's suffering can trigger personal growth and a greater appreciation for his blessings.



Likewise, McCann and Pearlman define, "Vicarious trauma leads to permanent transformation in the inner experience of the people that comes about as a result of empathic engagement with others. It involves a transformation in the people's enduring ways of experiencing the self, others and the world as a result of engaging empathically with a people" (128). People are shocked and traumatized by seeing such kinds of painful incident due to that the group of people from the same community came to strike because they were also in fear that such incident can happen anytime in their life too. It shows the serious human expression of feeling which experiencing pain and suffering.

The narrator was hunted by the vicarious traumatic event. He claims in the text,

Three times I pushed it out, each time harder. I hummed to myself. I tried to talk, but my mother put her finger to her lips and pointed at my father, who was asleep. The thought came again, more insistent, and this time I let it in and reviewed it. I thought this idea through to its conclusion. I stood back from my thought. I watched myself think. (169)

Joe influenced by the tale that his grandfather, Mooshum, tells in his sleep about Nanapush and his mother who is falsely accused of being a wiindigoan evil human-bodied spirit that devours other humans and that, according to tradition, has to be killed so as to protect the tribe. Then he decides to kill his mother's attacker. He struggles with his conscience. Nonetheless, these two ideas from Father Travis's lessons human beings are free to choose good over evil, but the opposite too and every evil.

He convincing him by morality, he claims "Whether moral or material results in good"(166). It represents the end up convincing him by the morality of his desire to

kill his mother's attacker. Material evil, that which causes suffering without reference to human but gravely affecting humans. We can't do anything; we have to accept that their existence is a mystery to us. Moral evil is different. It is caused by human beings; a person does something deliberately to another person to cause pain and torment.

Revenge to justice he wants to kill his mother's attacker, he claims, "I was dedicated to a purpose which I'd name in my mind not vengeance but justice" (260). These words indicate that, he was dedicated to purpose with his parents, he couldn't bear of his mother's pain and sufferings. He is trying to kill his mother's attacker not vengeance but revenge to justice. As Volkan maintain, "due to the traumatized elder's influence on the child. He or she absorbs their wishes and expectations and is driven to act on them. However such an extent that it becomes the children's task to mourn, to reverse their humiliation and feelings of helplessness" (43).

Hence Volkan's insights, we could regard Joe's decision to kill Linden as an attempt to change the helpless and humiliating situation of his parents, especially, his mother are undergoing and that conventional law seems unable to give justice. The author reinforces the idea when she comments that Geraldine's rape. By killing his mother's attacker although, the novel suggests that it is his friend Cappy who actually gives the coup of grace to Linden. Joe himself in the gray zone in which victims become executioners and executioners become victims.

Another symptom shown by Joe's haunted mind is an apparent sense of fear, guilt and shame illustrated by his intruding nightmares. There have been claims of wide-ranging and potentially severe consequences of vicarious trauma with authors such as Pearlman and Saakvitne asserts, "The effects of vicarious traumatization are widespread; its costs are immeasurable and that can affect anyone who engages

empathically with trauma survivors" (281). It emphasizes the indirect trauma of Joe that occurs in the inner experience which comes about as a result of empathic engagement with his mother.

The narrator examines the suffering of being traumatized. In the text, he claims:

As always I woke shouting Cappy's name to muffle sound, I'd stuffed a towel at the base of my door. I peered out in the fresh light hoping no one had heard me. I listened . . . my heart was jumping. I rubbed my hand on my chest to calm it and tried to slow down my breathing. Each dream was more real every time it occurred, like it was wearing a track into my brain.(209)

It represents his victims of shame feel inferior since he perceives himself as deeply flawed and defective or as bad individual. Likewise, he may experience a brief moment of painful feeling followed by irrational and often repetitive replaying of the shaming scene together with a painful confusion and unwanted physical manifestations.

Likewise, Timothy Schroer explains that killer's reactions such as rages, vomiting, substance abuse and intrusive dreams are responses caused by a mixture of disgust, guilt and pity for the victim which form the basis of their self-pity at having to assume the burden of these stress-inducing acts (35). Hence precisely because Joe presents a similar behaviour and he becomes sick with high temperature, these symptoms evidence the overwhelmingly presence of feelings of shame and regret in the protagonist's mind. However, within many traumatic experiences, this fight or flight response is broken up or overridden by various parts of the brain.

Similarly, he is not experiencing actual trauma but he exposing his mother's trauma as victimizer, indirectly he expose his mother's pain and suffering through his

feeling as victimizer. He claims: "I was sick for real now, with the summer flu, just as I had pretended . . . I was running a fever of alternating sweats and chills and my sheets were sodden. While I was ill, I watched the golden light pass across my walls. I could feel nothing, but my thoughts ran wild"(199).

It represents his upset reaction that he was really sick but he pretended to be running a fever of alternating sweats and his sheets were sodden. While he was ill he imagined that he watched the golden light pass across the wall. It means to say that, he has deep feeling of something which is not less than the sick one. Not only that it is making him the real sick up to now, which he reflects upon his past life, could be regarded as a confession of the killing which haunts the protagonist until his adulthood. It demonstrates that, after a traumatic event, individuals lose their capacity to put the traumatic experience into words. Therefore, to remember that terrifying experience, they talk about it and share it with others.

Increased awareness and research about these neurobiological changes have contributed greatly to understanding the various implications of trauma on individuals and within families. Charles Figley notes that empathy is a major resource for those trying to help traumatized clients: "The process of empathizing with a traumatized person helps us understand that person's experience of being traumatized, but in the process we may be traumatized as well" (455). Although he acknowledges how he profound his mother's emotional scarring after her attack. Evidentially, his father cannot adjust to Geraldine's weakness, and by acting as if everything is normal, he accidentally triggers her fear.

Though his father wants Geraldine's life to return to normal, he seems unable to really understand her trauma which she has faced. Like in other parts of the novel, Erdrich implies that men cannot fully process woman's trauma from gendered

violence. Likewise, Bazil's choice to fake his bad cooking reflects his desire to get Geraldine back to her former routine. While, he wants what is the best for her. He tries to help by manipulating her into acting like things are normal, rather than listening to her reasons for not being ready to resume her normal life. But ultimately his unhelpful attempts to make her recover demonstrate the difference between the desires of women coping with trauma and the understandings of the men trying to help them.

Similarly, vicarious trauma is the details of traumatic effect. In the text, the narrator points out:

Now I felt what happened to her in my gut. I dug a hole for the mass and covered it with a heap of dirt. I sat there, weak. When I heard the voices and bikes, the drag of Cappy's breaking feet, the shuts, I jumped up and started sleeping at my arms. I couldn't let them see me shaking like a girl. When they got to me I pretended it was the cold water. (45)

It represents the vicarious trauma through his expression, which referred to the transmission of his traumatic stress through observing and exposing his mother's trauma. He is in deep mental pain by the words. He was suffering by secondary trauma and showing different kinds of psychological traumatic expression. Though he doesn't know what he should do what should not, he is a child but it seems that there is no difference between him and his mother. He feels emphatically closed with his mother and he could not like that because he is covered by pain and suffering due to his mother's rape.

LaCapra writes, empathy that resists full identification with, and appropriation of, the experience of the other would depend both on one's own potential for traumatization (related to absence and structural trauma) and on one's recognition that

another's loss is not identical to one's own loss (118). It underlies the empathetic engagement with other and appropriation of, the experience of the other would depend both on one's own potential for traumatization. The narrator breaks the linearity of his narrative to remind the reader that he is telling his story in retrospect, and his account of traumatic events is highly subjective. As he admits to later looking through his mother's case files again. Which indicate that his mother's rape and its aftermath continue to traumatize him, as Clemence counsels Joe about Geraldine's trauma?

It is clear that Clemence, perhaps because of her identity as a woman, she understands how violent rape like the one that Geraldine endured can affect not only physically but also can have harmful long term effects on individual's mind. Meanwhile, Joe's youth shows as he asks immature questions and tends to fall asleep during difficult traumatic situation. His ability to successfully imagine himself as the attacker seems to inform his later concern, after killing Linden, that he shares Linden's capacity for violence. Though, he feels my lips were blue and offered me on unfiltered camel in the water. He was pretending he seems he is in cold water like the camel in the water. His life is like the camel in the desert.

Another argument by the narrator brings the issue of vicarious trauma. He points out:

We are back at the golf course in the moment. I locked eyes with Lark, that terrible contact, then the gunshot. At that moment, we exchange slaves. Lark is in my body, watching. I am in his body, dying. Cappy runs up the hill with Joe and gun, but he doesn't know Joe contains the soul of Lark. Dying on the golf course, I know that Lark is going to kill Cappy when reach the overlook. I try

to call out and warn Cappy, but I felt my life bleed out of me into the clipped grass. (209)

It represents Joe, who misses Geraldine's paying special attention mothering before her rape, tells Geraldine to come back to life perhaps suggesting that he thinks Geraldine's earlier comment about digging a grave referred to her. Geraldine commands Joe not to be a part of 'this . . . violation' implying that, by refusing to let Geraldine heal on her own terms and by asking her to recount the story of her rape before she is ready, Joe is participating in the violation of her autonomy, similarly to the violation of her rape itself. Geraldine's comment implies that the trauma of rape can be exacerbated if victims lack agency in the aftermath.

Although LaCapra emphasizes the secondary witness who resists full identification and the dubious appropriation of the status of victim through vicarious or surrogate victimization may nonetheless undergo empathic unsettlement or even muted trauma. Indeed the muting or mitigation of trauma that is nonetheless recognized and, to some extent, acted out may be a requirement or precondition of working through problems (23). It emphasizes the vicarious trauma is changes in spirituality. Not all of the spiritual changes that come from humanitarian work are negative. Many humanitarian workers feel they have grown and matured as the result of things they have seen and experienced. You may feel you gain a broader and more balanced perspective on life and end up better able to understand and empathize with others.

In fact that he turns into the victim in his dream is noteworthy since, as Hillel Glover explains, those who feel guilty tend to have dreams in which they are killed (17). Furthermore, firstly because he is haunted by the traumatic event his mother endured as well as its aftermath, and secondly, because he has killed a man, his sense of self breaks. This self-fragmentation is so severe that he experiences an identity

crisis, and so does Cappy. This identity crisis is illustrated when Cappy asks Joe, What are we? . . . What are we now? And Joe answers back I don't know man, I don't know (90). In fact, Joe, like many victims of trauma, tries to mitigate his anxiety and identity crisis.

The narrator has felt the experience of seeing ghost like figure. He sees the figure in his mind and is haunted by vicarious trauma. He claims:

I could see that face close up. There was glow behind its head. The lips moved but I couldn't make out words except it seemed to be repeating the same words. The hands drew back and the branches closed over it. The thing was gone. I feel asleep as soon I lay my head on the pillow, perhaps exhausted by the mental exertion required to admit that visitor into my consciousness. (57)

It represents the narrator has felt the experience of seeing ghost like figure. He sees the figure in his mind. It shows that the narrator is haunted by vicarioustrauma. Whether explicitly spoken or left unsaid, the effects of trauma can still communicate loudly, and often do so in surprising, unexpected ways. Furthermore, not only does trauma disrupt memory and consequently identity, but it also makes the sufferer persistently re-experience the event through intrusive flashbacks, recurrent dreams. It shows the pain and suffering of human being, human feeling could not detach male and female.

The narrator is exposing his mother's pain through his feeling as victimizer. He claims: "I didn't know exactly where I was. I kept my eyes closed. My mother's voice and the childhood sensation of her hand stroking my ankle, which was always how she woke me, flooded me with peace. I allowed my consciousness to sink to an even younger hiding place where nothing could touch me" (179).



It represents the vicarious trauma of the narrator in order to show the connection between mother and son. Mother can only forget her pain and suffering in front of her son and the son can only enjoy with his mother. He is going back to his past, which was always how she woke me, flooded me with peace. She wants to flood with peace; there is no difference between him and his mother in case of trauma. He has taken his mother's pain and suffering as own. He becomes traumatized by his mother's rape. "Every word sticks with me, every single word, the way of things, in a dead voice, then cheerful, then dead again" (111). As he thinks of this historical weight and the fact of his mother's attack, he is perhaps overwhelmed not only by the violence done to his mother, but also its context in a larger history of cultural violence.

Similarly, the concept has been described by Figley "empathy relates to understanding the distress of another person, emotional contagion is the reflecting and experiencing of that distress, at a more unconscious level. An individual observe the another persons and then feels emotions which are parallel"(455). Trauma affects all of us, whether we have directly or indirectly experienced a traumatic event. The ripples of this distraction increase outward, weaving in and out of the fabric of daily life, relationships, and families.

Furthermore, narrator has explained the vicarious trauma in the text. He claims:

I lay under this spell for maybe half an hour, and then it went way. I hadn't known whether it would not. I had clenched my whole body so tightly that it hurt to let go. I was sore when I got up off the floor, like an old man with joint pains. I shuffled slowly up the stairs to my bed. Pearl had stayed by me along. She'd huddled next to me. I kept her with me now. As I fell into a darker sleep, I understand that I had learned something. Now that I knew fear, I also knew it

was not permanent. As powerful as it was, its grip on me would loosen. It would pass. (180)

In this conflict scene, Joe sees his mother's extremely upset reaction when Bjenke and Bazil ask her about the file. Bazil tries to use Joe to bargain with Geraldine and get her to cooperate. Obviously, the messy, unhealthy dynamic being played out between Geraldine, Bazil, and Joe is the result of each of their very different traumas and their collective trauma stemming from Geraldine's rape. Nevertheless, this act brings him limited relief as it makes him suffer from vicarious trauma.

Likewise, Mac Nair notes, "intrusive symptoms and sleep problems are greater for those who are involved in a killing act due to the anxiety that their executions provoke in themselves" (97). Thus, because Joe is able to create a narrative memory by telling to empathic listeners his traumatic memories in relation to the attack against his mother and his atrocious act, his confession could be interpreted as part of his healing process. The symptoms of vicarious trauma can echo those of direct trauma including, nightmares, disrupted sleep patterns, fearful thoughts, intrusive images, suspicion of others motives, depression, despair, sense of futility, and reactivity. These symptoms can occur in short-term reactions or persist long term as alterations to trauma healer, thoughts, beliefs, and ideas regarding self and others.

The narrator recurrently dreams of the victim. He claims:

I either have that dream, or one where I see the backward ghost again. The same ghost Randall saw in the sweet lodge – his sour gage and rigid mouth. Only this time, like with Randall, the ghost is leaning over me, talking to me through a veil of darkness, backlit, his white hair shinning. And I know he's the police. (209)

It illustrates that the protagonist was suffering by his mother's suffering he recurrently dreams of his victim. He imagines appearance of ghost "I either have that dream, or one where I see the backward ghost again" (209). The same ghost Randall saw in the sweet lodge – his sour gage and rigid mouth. Only this time, like with Randall, the ghost is leaning over me, talking to me through a veil of darkness, backlit, his white hair shinning.

As claimed by Sandra Bloom, when confronted with a traumatic situation or event, individuals can use dissociation as defence mechanism to cope with the physiological overload of the brain and the body provoked by it (200). Therefore, Joe's depiction of Cappy and himself after Linden's death reveals dissociative symptoms, Joe's trauma becomes evident. The author claims, "We were speaking without emotion. Like, we were talking of other people. Or as if what we did had just happened on television. But I was choking up"(194).It represents his emotional distraction exposing his traumatic expression. The intention turned toward those who are indirectly exposed to traumatic events and occurrences by watching, hearing about, or bearing witness to the aftermath of trauma for those who have experienced it.

Similarly,next illustrations of vicarious traumatic experience faced by the narrator. In the text, he points out, "One thing that sent through me a shock that registered as a surface prickle and then went deeper, all that day, all evening, then that night, until I saw it again the moment I was falling asleep and started awake" (136). This shows that the narrator has illustrated the experience of vicarious trauma faced by his expressions. All the time he was thinking of his mother's suffering and he feels as if he is suffering by the violence. That sent through him to shock which registered as a surface prickle and then goes to deeper and he is falling asleep and started awake.

Vicarious trauma is the result of opening up heart and mind to the worst in human experience. In the text, the narrator claims, "I fell into a drowse sudden as a fainting spell . . . I opened my eyes and started straight up the flowing lines of black cloth to the wooden cross and Father Travis's rope belt" (68). This emphasizes the experience of vicarious trauma faced by the narrator. He fell into a drowse sudden as fainting spell and he opened his eyes started up the flowing lines of black cloth to the wooden cross. Similarly he claims, "I needed to find out about the ghost and described it, I told him that the ghost had come to Randall" (92).

It examines the appearance of psychological ghost not real one. Although the physical ghost is no more there but it seems that the ghost is can come in our psychology when we are in real pain. When we witness the suffering of people we care about and feel responsible to help them. In fact, Erdrich presents Linden's killing as a haunting or possessive influence which continuously makes Joe's past present through intrusive imagery such as flashbacks, nightmares and unwanted thoughts.

Garaldine's trauma occupies the centre stage in whole world where all issues seems to emerge from her tragedy and the story hunts the reader long after the final page has been turned. The tragic pain and suffering of victim is shifted to secondary trauma when a group of people feel pain of victim as their own. The trauma they realize, hunt them, throughout their life. They suffer as surrogate victim and experience through secondary traumatic situation or "empathetic unsettlement". Her pain and suffering is triggering the people and they are becoming the victims of secondary trauma. They identify themselves in the situations of her trauma. Her tragedy shows the empathetic state of the people like her son, her husband, her friends and most of the people from the community. Joe blurs the boundary between victims and victimizers. To recognize his story together with the difficult circumstances that

lead them to impose pain and sufferings to his mother and to understand that just as victims do he need to work through his trauma.

Thereafter, Garaldine's unbearable trauma and suffering is directly associated with public and her pain is felt and configured by other members of the community. This shows how people from around community are emotionally attached with her pain and suffering. Garaldine's pain and suffering is hunting deep down in the mind of people and they not only show the sympathy but they are empathetically attached with her. Empathy remains as an important reader response, it precise as important factor to raise the voice of victim in the society.

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