

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the social and inner conflicts in Union Street by Pat Barker, I would like to draw a conclusion. In the novel, I have found seven female major characters who have to face their own conflicts. In my opinion, Barker wants to show the reader how difficult it is to be a woman. Each character should struggle to cope with her conflicts in order to have a better life. By writing Union Street, Barker wants every woman who faces social or inner conflicts to make the best decision for life and never give up. From the seven female characters, I only focus on three of them: Kelly, Lisa and Alice.

Kelly is an eleven-year-old girl who faces conflicts with her mother. She needs attention and love from her mother but her mother does not care about Kelly. After Kelly is raped by a stranger, her mother is still indifferent to her and the conflict makes Kelly have no sympathy towards her mother and she becomes a loner. Kelly also faces an inner conflict. She does not feel comfortable with her body, but she should accept that later on, she will become an adult. She decides to change her appearance into a boy's. In the end, the solution of the conflicts is that although Kelly is still a loner, she tries to survive by herself as well as she can.

The next character is Lisa. She is twenty-two years old with two sons and she is pregnant of her third child. She experiences conflicts with her husband, who after being fired, becomes an alcoholic and often hits Lisa. Lisa feels disappointed with her husband's behaviour. She wants her husband to look for another job and take care of the family. Lisa also experiences an inner conflict concerning her feeling about the baby. She does not want to have her baby who is a daughter because her daughter is different from her sons, but actually she also loves her baby. As a result, Lisa realizes that she cares for her baby and she tries to accept and love her own daughter.

The last character whom I have analyzed is Alice Bell. She is a seventy-six-year old woman who has a stroke. Her conflict starts when she is forced by her son to stay in the Workhouse: a convalescent home for old and poor people. Her son thinks that in the Workhouse, Alice will be safe and there is someone who will take care of her. However, Alice does not want to stay there because for her, the Workhouse is a terrifying place for her and she will feel uncomfortable there. Afterwards, Alice decides to run away from her house and goes to the park. In the end, she dies in peace in her own surroundings.

I choose these three female characters because in my opinion, each character represents the beginning, the middle and the end of a woman's life. Kelly represents the early life of womanhood. A girl starting puberty commonly has problems dealing with parents and the uncomfortable feelings from her growing-body. After that, a girl becomes an adult and experiences her married life. This character is represented by Lisa. The life of a married woman commonly deals with children, household, pregnancy and the relationship with the husband.

The last character, Alice, represents women who face illness, old age and finally, death.

Having analyzed the conflicts in this novel, I am of the opinion that Pat Barker has succeeded in delivering her message that it is difficult to be a woman. Through this novel, I learn that women who can survive in all their problems are very strong indeed. They keep struggling to get the solution of the conflicts through difficulties and obstacles. Until the end, they have to choose the right decision for their own future. As women, they should be appreciated and respected because most of them deal with a lot of burdens of life which makes them desperate and under-pressure but they have to lean on themselves to get a better life and to prove their existence and their effort to survive.