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School Bullying: Power Abuse and Resistance in Jodi Picoult's Western American Nineteen Minutes (2007) and Tareq Helal's Eastern Egyptian Scarab (2019)

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ABSTRACT	<p>This paper explored school bullying as reflected in two narrative texts of two different cultures: the western American novel, <i>Nineteen Minutes</i> (2007), by Jodi Picoult, and the eastern Egyptian novel, <i>Scarab</i> (2019), by Tareq Basem Helal. Attention was paid to how school bullying is conceptualized, particularly according to the role that is attributed to power. Regard will be taken to the power of the bully and the resistance of the victim or bullied. This paper claimed that anti-bullying in schools is a new genre in the Egyptian narrative fiction. It examined how school bullying began to invade eastern literature as a new phenomenon in the Egyptian novel. The analysis highlighted various relationships; parent-child, boyfriend-girlfriend, peers, and sibling rivalry. It also attempted to prove that ableism and physical shape affect student's self-esteem. The study investigated whether the causes and results of school bullying in the western societies differ from those in the eastern societies. It elaborated how power/resistance affects school bullying as well as exposes this negative function that school context performs. The conclusion considered what this comparative analysis suggests about power abuse in schools and the similarities of school bullying between the discussed eastern and western narratives.</p>
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Introduction:

Differences between cultures have disappeared to the extent that the world seems a global village now. As a result, the term ‘bullying’ which is a term adopted by Western society begins to appear in other societies and cultures like the Eastern Egyptian culture (Horton 2011, 269). Studying and comprehending fiction narratives are recognized as an effective way to consider troublesome features, like bullying (Dutro 2008, 423). Therefore, school bullying has become a critical area of research across disciplines that show effective tools for dealing with this increasing problem. Young adults could have an opportunity to evaluate their affections and reactions concerning any matter throughout those narratives which explore the most vital emotions and affairs of their life. So, fiction writing may offer a good opportunity for examining matters which could be regarded troublesome and odd. Novels can be effective in highlighting topics such as school bullying. So, a new sub-genre; anti-bullying fiction, of young adult literature is developed which carries an anti-bullying theme. Since scientists and researchers survey adolescents’ violence and hostility, specially bullying, as a serious social issue (Cook 2010, 65), this sub-genre of fiction has increased as a result of the enlargement of this influential problem all over the world (Wiseman 2018, 190).

This study highlights how this increase spread all over the world, from the west to the east. It, also, shows how this genre of literature can promote vital discussions, urging readers to manifest the way “systems of meaning and power affect the lives they lead” (Leland 2000, 507). Accordingly, in her *Nineteen Minutes*, Picoult states that: “If we don't change the direction we are headed, we will end up where we are going” (2007, 1). This paper focuses on bullying in the school setting throughout a critical analysis of two contemporary young adult

anti-bullying narratives selected to reflect various types of bullying themes, including class, ableism, gender, sexuality, suicide, school shootings, power, resistance, and intervention strategies.

This sub-genre of fiction considers the importance of a bystander who has the capacity to make a positive difference (Ansary 2015, 27), and examines those powerful teens who subjugate others using hegemonic practices or who are haunted by bullying depending on ableism and suppression. This article implements narrative elements to explore many school bullying procedures in accordance with Foucault's theory of power and resistance. The analysis examines two descriptive narrative texts which manifest in what way students start to bully others, show depictions and illustrations of power and highlight subject formation in addition to the possibility of resistance and change. These antibullying novels will critically be analyzed. Throughout a protagonist, an antagonist, plot, and thematic material, each novel shows bullying from different viewpoints and includes the bully, the bullied, and all those who act as bystanders when someone is being bullied. These two fictions display concrete examples of the bullying circle and show that no one, except the victim, is innocent.

This understudy analyzes two different novels published in two different cultures; the Western *Nineteen Minutes* (2007) by the American author Jodi Picoult and the Eastern *Scarab* (2019) by the Egyptian author Tareq Basim Helal. It tries to shed light on what is known as man/society conflict, to analyze the power of the bully, to show young adult school violence, to address how power and dominance can influence bullying behavior, and to show how these novelists—from two different cultures—are similar in depicting bullying features, the bully, the bullied and the bystanders. Both novelists claim that power affects social interactions and bullying. So, this paper is going to explain how powerful students suppress

powerless and subjugated peers, how these practices create bullying oppression and subjugation for some teenagers and how these bullied victims may resist. Each novel deals with bullying in a unique way showing what students are doing in their classrooms in addition to the poor family life of the bullied.

So, the objectives of this paper are to show how fiction depicts a community feature like school bullying, declare how school-bullying phenomenon began to appear in Arabic (Eastern) literature as a new genre in the Egyptian novel, analyze various relationships (parent-child, boyfriend-girlfriend, peers and sibling rivalry), prove that ableism and physical shape affect student's freedom and equality, show whether the causes and results of bullying in the western societies differ from those in the eastern societies, invoke power and resistance effect throughout school bullying, show how eastern and western novelists depict the role that school context plays in bullying, and point out whether or not did Picoult and Helal indicate that highlighting the ways of interactions in the classroom can treat, help and calm abused students who tend to be subjugated.

School Bullying: Power Abuse / Resistance

Cart assumes that “the very rapid emergence of a subgenre of young adult literature that continues to explore the many aspects of this issue with insight and empathy” (2010, 113) is the only good and useful result of Columbine high school shooting. In accordance with “sport, fights, fagging, inter-house and inter-school rivalry” (Kirkpatrick 2003, 11), bullying is considered one of the regular aspects of the school affairs. Throughout such texts, Kirkpatrick claims that “misery and unhappiness were confined to the weakling, the swot, the unathletic, the misfit” (2003, 12). Bullying is defined in Heinemann's book *Mobbing* (1972) as aggressive and destructive

acts by one individual or some persons towards a single person or a number of people. Heinemann claims that those who bully “are not deviant children per se, but rather ordinary children who partake in bullying in particular group situations” (qtd. in Horton 2011, 268). Heinemann defines “the situation” in bullying as the fatal and crucial factor in how and why bullying takes place.

Dan Olweus asserts that an individual is “bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students” (1993, 9). Olweus develops his definition of bullying as a portion of aggressive actions marked by “repetition and an imbalance of power...a student is being bullied or victimized when he/she is exposed repeatedly and over time subjected to negative actions on the part of one or more other students with the intention of hurt” (Ibid). Throughout his analysis of Olweus’ Bullying Circle, Coloroso claims that “[i]t is one thing to have a policy; it is wholly another to make sure the policy is not just placards on the school wall or an inspirational piece of writing at the beginning of the student handbook” (2003, 178). So, adult anti-bullying literature allows students to view their school settings well in order to grant greater derivation and understanding of power abuse.

Randall Collins emphasizes that bullying is a repeatable and frequent confrontation, a “locally institutionalized pattern” (2008, 158) such as mocking and jeering; exclusion from the group; stealing; and physical aggression. Collins also points out that bullies develop their own network. They tend to surround themselves with other people that have similar tendencies towards violence or people whom they can manipulate or victimize. Additionally, the school environment represents a typical area for bullying to occur because of its structured and confining format, limiting the control of the

individual to determine who they spend time with; which creates a perfect situation and setting for bullying (Baker 1998, 32).

Bullying can be divided into four types: 1) verbal 2) physical 3) relational, and the latest trend is 4) cyber bullying. Bullying is a particular shape of aggression; direct or indirect. Direct bullying contains verbal and physical attacks that take place face-to-face. The most common form of direct bullying is verbal because it is the easiest to get away with, as Coloroso affirms. According to her, a bully can launch his/her attack without the slightest threat of detection by anyone (2003, 15). Moreover, verbal bullying involves demeaning labels, insults, offensive phone calls, cruel criticism, false accusations, whispers, and gossips directed at an individual or a group. When done in the presence of peers, verbal bullying leaves the bullied humiliated, embarrassed, and worthless. As it will be manifested throughout the analysis of the two novels understudy, these feelings can cause problems that are far more destructive than the initial embarrassment.

Behaviors such as exclusion and spreading rumors have also been called relational aggression because they use interpersonal relationships as a mean to harm the victim. Relational aggression is a “behavior that intentionally harms another individual through the manipulation of social relationships” (Coloroso 2003, 642). This type of bullying is the hardest form to perceive; it can be destructive at the time when teens are trying to find their place in society, especially with girls. A student who faces this type of bullying suffers from ignorance, isolation, or neglect. Rumors are another part of relational bullying. The bullied does not even know what the rumor is, but still suffers from the social exclusion that accompanies relational bullying. In the *Anti-Bullying Handbook*, Keith Sullivan says that “[i]ndirect aggression by girls gets overlooked, probably

because it is subtle and there is no outward sign of damage. It is, however, as harmful for girls as physical bullying is for boys, and more attention needs to be paid to it” (21). Physical bullying can easily be detected. The results of this form of bullying are typically evident on the bullied body or possessions. The physical bully may strike, scratch, kick, bite, pinch, punch, or damage property of the victim (Coloroso 2003, 16). Physical bullying can often lead to broken bones, bruises, concussions, bites, torn clothing, and in the worst cases; permanent brain damage (Sullivan 2004, 27). The last form of bullying is cyber bullying carried out through aggressive e-mails, humiliating text messages, and messages and posts on social media websites. Cyber bullying is the hardest form of bullying to detect. Unless it is reported, the bully may never be caught.

Novelists from different cultures present bullying as a symbol for injustice and prejudice which highlight discrimination and sovereignty and invade young adult culture. Trites declares that American teens fiction has an abundance in young adult characters “whose personal growth is a metaphor for the author’s ideologies of social change” (2007, 52), despite the difficulty of that change. She assumes that teenagers in these narrative fictions have to “navigate” (Trites 2000, 21) tyrannical microcosms represented by high schools managed by bullies who impose hegemony and supremacy by suppressing the weak peers, or, as Michel Foucault exclaims, “a whole micro-penalty... of behavior” (1995, 178).

Tisha, in Jaime Adoff’s *Names Will Never Hurt Me*, may portray this tyranny of power abuse inside schools when she argues that each individual must “be in a box—be like a pair of socks. Matchin’ with everyone else. The smart with the smart, jocks with the jocks, geeks with the geeks, freaks with the freaks” (2004, 41). Throughout the two narratives analyzed in this paper, bullying can be portrayed as a

flawed teen practice, showing hegemonic forces based on class, ableism, physical shape, sexual attitude, and identity. Thus, the examined narrative texts explore and acknowledge the relationships of power and dominance among young adults and how victims resist.

Bullying interactions, as social relations, are so connected to power. Foucault states that power is “not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society” (1980, 93). It can be defined as how the individuals position themselves within that strategic situation that allows them to exercise power. In other words, it is not the school that controls the power but the students in the school. If the individual does not take a stand and exert his/her power to change what is currently the status quo, the existing situation will not change. Horton asserts that a student “is not just aggressive, passive or provocative, but rather has to navigate a range of power relations” (2011, 269). Considering power relations through bullying, Horton quotes Foucault arguing that it may be great to consider power as a behaviour “that is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations” (Ibid., 271). Simply, power is everywhere and must be examined continuously from all directions. Foucault’s assertion “where there is power, there is also resistance” (2008, 95), provides a foundation for the notion that power is exercised from innumerable points, is not equal and always mobile (Ibid., 271). Actually, bullying actions are repetitive and invisible to others, and they are not directly involved. Therefore, when the bullying victims stand up for themselves, they resist subjugation. In *Nineteen Minutes*, Peter resists bullying by killing his bully, while in *Scarab*, Aabid (Farkha) resists bullying by isolating himself from others in order not to struggle.

School Bullying in *Nineteen Minutes* and *Scarab*

Ken Rigby handles power notion in order to supply and nourish a list of the kinds of power imbalance set in schools: harming others physically; trying to be superior to others; showing more confidence in oneself, having more forceful personality than others; having superior verbal cleverness which means having the ability to terrorize by one's selection of terms and the way he/she talks; to have greater cultured expertise; to revolt against someone; excluding others; and maintaining prominent degree and the whole sovereignty to suppress others (2008, 232). Some interactions between adults and youth involve repeated attacks and an imbalance of power; just like the interactions between parent-child, siblings and peers that are depicted in the two texts discussed in this study.

Jodi Picoult's *Nineteen Minutes* Sheds light on school bullying, school context, and the possibility to modify culture. Picoult writes in the acknowledgments section of the text, "[t]o the thousands of kids out there who are a little bit different, a little bit scared, a little bit unpopular: this one's for you" (2007, 3). The narration shows how students at Sterling High School spend their daily routine. One day, a sharp noise rises from the school garage. Recently, the noise is claimed to be a bomb exploding in Matt's car. Following that bang, gunshots have been fired. When Patrick, the attorney, arrives, he searches the school to detect the gunman and discovers that it is one of the students who killed ten people and wounded many other people. The detective conveys that it is Peter Houghton, the shooter, who commits all these crimes and locks him in a room where he finds Matt Royston and Josie Cormier resting on the floor and the blood encloses them in all sides. The former, the only victim shot twice, is dead. While the latter is just traumatized to the extent that she is unable to retell the accident.

The narration goes through flash backs before and after the school bang. Peter and Josie are intimates. Peter is regularly and severely bullied while Josie usually approves and supports him. However, they gradually become less familiar. In order to secure herself against humiliation, Josie joins the favored group. She believes now that her intimation to Peter humiliates her. Throughout the novel, Picoult depicts the absence of family role; Peter is rejected and subjugated at home too. Lacy, Peter's mum, is ignorant about the sibling, Joey, humiliation against Peter. As a result of this inadequate family relationship that causes a lot of bullying for young adults, neither Lewis, Peter's father, nor Lacy observes Peter's scheming for something dangerous. Bullying causes Peter to retreat into a world of violent computer games. He, even, designs a video game in which gamers kill athletes as well as popular students in a school. Lacy discovers, after the shooting, that he hides bomb-making components inside his cabinet. Parents feel their responsibility for Peter's problems and inquire what caused Peter to act so vigorously.

Peter's home life was upsetting despite his mother's best efforts. He is convinced that Joey wins their parents favuor. Peter is usually blamed. His father irritably tells him "I don't remember Joey losing his lunchbox three times during the first month of school" (2007, 99). Despite Joey's status as an approved clever student and athlete, he humiliates Peter to keep himself superior and powerful. He makes up lies about Peter fabricating a story that he is a foundling, and his mother is a prostitute. Unfortunately, Joey usually teases his brother and even eggs on the bullying. After Joey's death in a car accident, the parents become too distressed to care for Peter, creating a larger gap between the parents and their remaining son. Both Peter and Josie fall victims to the subjugation and pain of being outcasts in school. During their second year in high school, Josie starts dating Matt using him as a shield to stay popular. As a popular student, Matt

provokes his classmates, John Eberhard and Drew Girard, to bully and subjugate Peter. Actually, the bully is used to suppress “his own spiritual nature to the extent that he doesn’t give a damn about or considers the other person. If he for a moment puts himself in the position of his victim and had some sensitivity, he simply wouldn’t do it” (Marr 2001, 94).

Picoult reflects relational bullying in *Nineteen Minutes* when she depicts Peter as, often called by Matt, a homo or a gay, causing Peter to doubt his sexual attitude. On the other hand, Matt keeps Josie away from other boys. So, when Peter tries to talk to Josie after school, Matt oppresses, torments, and humiliates him in the presence of their classmates. “The bully sees his target as an object, as a non-human being” (Marr 2001, 84). Matt appears manipulative; he becomes physically abusive towards both Josie and Peter. However, Josie never leaves Matt. Josie has to join Matt and other aggressive students and to leave Peter, because of her self-confidence struggle and repeatedly conflicts to conceal her real character from her classmates and appear as what she wishes herself to look like. Most young adults sympathize with Josie because they have the same terror of being an outcast among their friends who may reject them for being fake persons. While she superficially pretends to hate Peter, Josie hates herself. She is confused and perplexed between the “cool” kids and the “outcasts” and even though she realizes the shallowness of her group, she cannot leave those popular mates. Josie is afraid of social opaqueness and bullying. She fears Matt's and her peers’ hostility against the less popular mates. This assures what O’Brein claims that gender and gender roles are linked to power and control on the notion of power in bullying scenarios (2011, 263).

After a quarrel between Matt and Peter, Josie shivers and tells Matt that she does not like the way he treats peers “who aren’t like

[them]...just because [Matt does not] want to hang out with losers doesn't mean [he has] to torture them." "Yeah, it does," he says. "Because if there isn't a them, there can't be an us. [...] You should know that better than anyone" (2007, 219). Josie informs Matt that he does what he has to do "to cement your place in the pecking order. And the best way to stay on top was to step on someone else to get there" (Ibid.). She acts sometimes as a bystander when Matt bullies Peter and other times as bullied when Matt bullies her. Matt dates Josie, Peter's girlfriend, just to humiliate and bully both of them. The flashbacks also show many subplots intensifying bullying: the severe parent-child relation between Josie and Alex in addition to Josie's pregnancy and subsequent miscarriage without informing her mom. Alex always pressures Josie hoping to see her ideal in all life areas.

In the beginning of *Nineteen Minutes*, the reader views Peter as an antagonist. However, reading further, he appears to be the protagonist of the text. Furthermore, the reader response now is whether Peter, the shooter, is a victim or a criminal. In other words, is Peter a bully or a bullied. During school days, teachers rarely take part to prevent bullying, however their intervention frequently sharpens the power abuse. Peter is usually pushed, teased, and verbally abused. Wearing glasses, makes Peter a frequent target of teasing. When Josie leaves Peter, he starts a new friendship with Derek and both design video games together, to the extent that Matt accused Peter of being "homo." So, Peter is so cautious not to like his new friend, Derek.

The inciting force for Peter's resistance occurs one month before the shooting when Peter sends Josie an email expressing his love for her. Peter becomes a cyberbullying victim when Courtney Ignatio reads Peter's email then asks Drew to forward it to all their peers. Convincing Peter that Josie loves him, he invites her to have lunch

with him, just to be subjected to public degradation, subjugation, and physical bullying. On the morning of the shooting, Peter bursts hysterically once he switches on his PC and discovers that all his peers have read the email he sent to Josie. Peter has been imprisoned after the shooting. Jordan, the defense lawyer, justifies Peter's crime using tyrannized person complex resulting from fierce power abuse and oppression in order to persuade the committee that the criminal's violence is only a resistance for his misery. On the first day of school, Peter's mother gives him a brand-new Superman lunch box then makes sure that he gets on the kindergarten bus. The attorney informs the judge, "by the end of the ride to school, that lunch box had been thrown out the window. From that very first day in kindergarten," resuming, "Peter experienced a daily barrage of taunting, tormenting, threatening, and bullying" (2007, 517-18). Jordan claims that Peter is affected in his decision by bullying and his behavior is a way of resistance. So, the lawyer rehearses a bit of these sufferings:

This child has been stuffed into lockers, had his head shoved into toilets, been tripped and punched and kicked. He has had his private email spammed out to an entire school. He's had his pants pulled down in the middle of the cafeteria. Peter's reality was a world where, no matter what he did — no matter how small and insignificant he made himself — he was still always the victim. (2007, 518)

According to Foucault, Peter has to resist as there is irresistible power. Foucault emphasizes that the dominator persistently exercises power, but actually power is maintained by everybody. He, totally, rejects the "zero sum" prospect of power. Moreover, "power is

everywhere” (1995, 63), it is not maintained and applied by some, while missed by others. The strong exercises power over the weak but the weak, also, exercises his own power over the strong using his power of resistance. No one is powerless; there are just various kinds of power. Jordan argues that Peter is in an alienation state at the time of the shooting; he is resisting bullying. Josie, at the end of the trial, confesses that she is the responsible for Matt’s first shot using a cannon that dropped out of Peter's sack. Then, Peter fires the deadly second one. As a result, the court passes a life sentence for Peter to be imprisoned for ten counts.

Words do not just hurt young adults; but lead some to believe that the only way out of their situation is death. Consequently, suicide, because of being bullied, has become widespread, that it now has its own term "bullycide," which was coined in 2001 by Marr and Field in *Bullycide: Death at Playtime*. It usually takes place with young adults who cannot survive the persistent abuse of power, do not find any other technique to get rid of it, and choose to end their life by committing suicide just to stop their misery. “It is when a victim of repeated bullying chooses to take his or her own life” (Serani 2018, 1). As a victim of bullying, Peter has been so mentally beaten down that his low self-esteem leads him to end his life. When he feels disconnected from the world around him and an end to his torture is not in sight, he thinks that death is the only option. Wallace states that “many victims of bullycide suffer vicious verbal abuse but often are not physically assaulted by their tormentor. By words alone, perpetrators of bullycide kill their victims without ever laying a hand on them” (2011, 741). There are many young adults who choose to commit bullycide. So, Coloroso says that “[b]ullying is a learned behavior. If it can be learned, it can be examined, and it can be changed” (2003, 24).

Pointedly, citing the Chinese proverb in Picoult's *Nineteen Minutes*, "when you begin a journey of revenge, start by digging two graves: one for your enemy, and one for yourself" (2007, 150). Therefore, finally, Peter decides to end his life and just to be a bullycide victim. In the court, Peter's lawyer, defending Peter, says "[t]here was a point where the events of your life became a tsunami [...] The only [...] choice you had was to move to higher ground while you still could" (Ibid., 165). As Marcia, the vet's assistant, tells Lacy that death "robbed you of your vocabulary for comfort" (Ibid., 196). So, through bullycide, Peter looks for comfort. Unfortunately, it is his fate that his parents, peers, teachers, and school managers fail to put an end to that power abuse which causes his tragic end.

As shown, the school shooting is the key moment of Peter's resistance against Matt's tyranny, having the opportunity to be powerful for the first time. Peter's power depends on his awareness of the school regime and the silence of bystanders who fear Matt's cruelty. According to Foucault, "'truth' is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements" (1980, 133). The rules of the school, the "rules of power" (Ibid., 94), resemble regime, however, teachers, students as well as bystanders participate similarly in the assignment of Matt's tyranny and brutality, assisting the provision of his authority and sovereignty.

As reflected in *Scarab*, students can study, act, and play in schools where ableism, power, and dominance control social skills and communication among them. This Egyptian novel considers bullying from the perspectives of ableism and human's will to subjugate others (Solórzano 2000, 60). It declares how young adults' affairs are controlled by their powerful state. Indeed, power abuse has an influential impact on adolescent's protection and fortune (Rodriguez

2018, 17). Subjectivity is described throughout *Scarab* when the author depicts how the abuse of ableism power has bad effects on the suppressed students who have faced and still face pursue to confront this subjugation and bullying which damage their liberty and justness (Ladson-Billings 1999, 212).

Scarab narrates the story of Farkha (Aabid), a victim of bullying who is bullied by Fajr and his friends. One of Fajr's bullying behaviors against Farkha and others is dating many/several girls in order to prove that he is powerful and beloved by girls. Throughout the novel, relational bullying is perfectly depicted when Fajr subjugates and humiliates Aabid calling him: Farkha (chicken). Farkha is exposed to constant harassment, mocking, insults, social exclusion, and intentional isolation from friends and parents as well. He faces a lot of relational bullying idioms like, "[y]ou can't play with us," "I won't be your friend if you talk to her," or "You can only be my friend if..." (Bauman 2006, 220). Sheri Bauman and Del Rio report that relational bullying is the most harmful type of bullying. It can go on for long periods of time because it is the hardest to detect (2006, 220). Aabid's powerlessness and weakness encourage even those who are not powerful to bully him. "This boy is not one of the 'powerful' boys, but Farkha's fear that is so clear encourages him to bully Farkha" (Helal 2019, 16 own translation). Power can be enacted through the silencing of the victim (Cross 2011, 105). As a bully victim, Farkha not only suffers at the hand of the bully but also feels socially excluded and embarrassed. The bully attracts attention from the interaction, whereas the bullied tries to keep the situation as private as possible. As a result, the victim, like Farkha, often fears judgment or consequence (Wang 2013, 296).

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault exclaims through selected idioms how power abuse affects negatively the subjects: "[I]t

‘excludes’, it ‘represses’, it ‘censors’, it ‘abstracts’, it ‘masks’, it ‘conceals’” (1995, 194). Those who bully their friends cause physical harms and pains to the bullied. Fajr humiliates Farkha by hitting him on his testis many times. This behavior is popular among male teenagers who are used to humiliate and subjugate powerless students. Those who bully Farkha humiliate him to the extent that he walks with a bowed head. They often laugh and mock at him. When students throw a dead raven on him, he even does not resist or oppose because if he does, they will increase their humiliation and mockery.

Those who bully Farkha, humiliate and bully him just to feel they are superior to him. Once they find a powerless student whom they can oppress, they do not hesitate to subjugate this victim in order to feel superior. The bully is sure that this powerless victim is unable to resist. Unfortunately, Farkha’s only way to resist is to keep back and to avoid them. Each time he tries to resist, he fails and starts to tremble and perspire (sweat) out of fear.

Farkha’s irregular heartbeats starts to be normal just after few minutes of sitting in a far place where he can see no body. His hands stop trembling and the beads of sweat completely dry. He, finally, rests and stops to respire as if his lungs are a vacuum cleaner (Helal 19 own translation).

Even, he is not bold enough to speak to the girl whom he admires. As a result, he prefers playing video games and watching unrated sexual videos in order to forget his misery; just like the western protagonist and bullied victim Peter in Nineteen Minutes.

In spite of the fact that Farkha knows that his mom is the only one who loves him, he does not complain to her because she always criticizes him and does not support him. It seems that his mom plays

a great role in Aabid's bullying out of her continuous criticism and lack of kind parental emotions and feelings. On the contrary, she shouts at him and insults him. Her behavior increases his misery. It seems as if she, also, bullies him. Farkha's mother does not care nor bother herself about what her son does on his computer despite she is sure that he watches unrated films. It seems that she does not want to bother herself with what her son does. This reflects her selfishness. "He's always perplexed! Does his mother care for him or not? She asks him to keep silent. She also hates his complain about any problem. However, she advises him to pray, recite Quran and etc." (Helal 24 own translation).

Farkha's relationship with his father is also bad. He fears his dad, 'Zezo,' as called by Farkha's mother. Farkha feels that his mother cares more for his dad. She behaves kindly to her husband and always scolds and reproaches Farkha to the extent that she asks him not to tell his father about his problems or bullying at school. This absence of the family role is the main cause of Farkha's powerless and subjugated characteristics and traits. Helal, tries to depict through Aabid's family lunch time that the father is selfish and that there are no harmony feelings between the parents and Aabid. Aabid's father used to bully his son by humiliating him and mocking at him just like what happens when Aabid sees a cockroach on the wall of the bathroom and fails to kill it. After Aabid's failure to kill the cockroach, he stands silently waiting for his scolding as usual.

His mom, too, used to compare between Aabid and other teens in front of him; showing the merits of others compared to her son's demerits (Helal 33 own translation). As a result, Aabid fears communication with people. He used to look at the floor and not to raise his face in order not to confront them and see how they pity and humiliate him. At school, students are used to spit at Aabid as he sits

in the first desk. This indicates that there are a lot of bystanders who do not try to help Aabid, even the teachers act as bystanders in order just not to bother themselves (Ibid., 33-4). Often, when a child is too afraid of his persecutor or ashamed to tell an adult, the physical signs of bullying can be explained away. Some children may use the excuse that they fall on the playground, thus explaining any bruises, or they are hit with a ball during gym class. Ripped articles of clothing are explained as being caught on a tree or fence and even missing items can be excused as simply being lost. However, Farkha tells his mother the truth, as if he does not care for her reactions or feelings. In addition to the influence of one's family, we have to seriously consider the responsibility of bystanders represented by Josie through *Nineteen Minutes* as well as Doha and Azooz in *Scarab*, who may encourage bullying. In fact, bullying incidents are observed by bystanders who may take on roles as sidekicks or reinforcers and actively support the bullying behavior through assistance, laughter, or other positive feedback; others may adopt outsider roles and passively observe the behavior. Bystanders actively attempt to help victims in only few cases.

Teens, in *Nineteen Minutes* and *Scarab*, commit the same odd behaviors. Young adults fabricate and exchange direct sexual jests and snubs. They watch uncensored films and get involve in informal and permanent sexual relations. As shown in *Scarab*, teens are sexually attracted to older women. Girls, in the American text, tease classmates' breasts, wear sexy clothes and dance on sexual provocative lyrics. The western and eastern texts alike portray teens' abuse of illegal drugs. When Joey dies in a car accident, Lacy observes a lot of heroin in his bedroom. Western and eastern young adults are similarly depicted by the two novelists as got drunk at parties.

School bullying increases and lasts because the institutional setting of the school brings students together in one place for several hours a day, five days a week with little to no way of escaping tormentors. The victims of bullying are trapped in an environment that gives the bully easy access. Students report that bullying is a normal part of school life that often goes undetected or is not reported because students fear retribution from the bully. In addition, teachers are unwilling to intervene or deal with bullies reinforcing the belief that it is an accepted part of the school culture and not recognized as a violation (Horton 2011, 268). Consequently, the school environment provides an environment for bullying to occur.

All in all, class, ableism or merely one's style may be considered as causes for abusing and bullying others. Both novels reveal that behaviors of the bully expose the "rules of power" (Foucault 1980, 94). Thus, Matt and Fajr often try to legitimize and confirm authority exercising hegemony and tyranny to control the powerless. However, without this negative attitude of schools, both Matt and Fajr could not manage such power and subjugate their friends. These literary fictions depict schools that have no power to protect bullied students. Schools may be able neither to join students together, offer assistance, nor to set up any kind of communication between students and teachers (Cotterell 2007, 199). Peter's and Aabid's schools are unqualified to control bullying; despite their trials to protect and aid the bullied teens, they fail to control the abuse of power fabricated and imposed by tyrannical bully students. Definitely, a negative school management increases and supports bullying attitude. Schools do not just represent students or buildings, but have personalities and attitudes (Orpinas 2006, 80). Schools are not usually fair; they favour students according to a power hierarchy (Sullivan 2004, 9). In spite of the fact that Peter and Aabid have to inform teachers about the name of the bully in order to protect them, they may face more power

abuse according to schools' inadequacy to protect them. The resolution of the narrative reveals this school inadequacy when Lacy tells Peter's teacher about his sufferings, the teacher claims that:

The behavior of these other boys is not being tolerated. When we see it, we immediately send the child to the principal... It's just that unfortunately, that response can have the opposite effect. The boys identify Peter as the reason they're in trouble, and that perpetuates the cycle of violence...I'm showing Peter how to stand up for himself. If someone cuts him in the lunch line, or if he's teased, to say something in return instead of just accepting it... I can tell you what you want to hear... I can tell you that the school will teach tolerance and will discipline the boys who've been making Peter's life miserable, and that this will be enough to stop it. But the sad fact is that if Peter wants it to end, he's going to have to be part of the solution (Picoult 2007, 71-3).

The entire kinds of school-bullying "increase the likelihood of depressive symptoms in both boys and girls" (Landstedt 2013, 396). In addition to low self-esteem and depression, both Farkha and Peter have extra effects like horrible beliefs about death, social isolation, no sense of a future, powerlessness to express feelings, and silly guilt. They reach the extent that they blame themselves for their situation and feel guilty, even rationalizing that they deserve it. To punish themselves, they turn to drinking, drugs, sniffing and eating disorders (Marr 2001, 99). The physical and mental effects of bullying that the victims Peter and Farkha have been exposed to have

led to lifelong problems because of the absence of a professional or parents help.

These narrative texts manifest Foucault's belief that power considers and examines moments of resistance as well as the procedures of power. He believes "Just as the network of power relations ends by forming a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions, without being exactly localized in them, so too the swarm of points of resistance traverses social stratifications and individual unities" (2008, 96). Thus, these two narrative fictions display the Foucauldian power/resistance throughout the power abuse of adolescents and victim's ability to resist. Throughout narration, the character of the bully is so perplexing, and the binaries of powerful and powerless students in these narratives intensify Foucault's claim that:

[O]ne should not assume a massive and primal condition of domination, a binary structure with 'dominators' on one side and 'dominated' on the other, but rather a multiform production of relations of domination which are partially susceptible of integration into overall strategies (1980, 142).

Peter and Farkha represent the dominated side of that binary, so they are depicted as suppressed and tyrannized victims with whom readers show sympathy. Throughout these narratives, bullying is shown as an imperative fact in teens' life; thus, the dominators Matt and Fajr may not be able to change; and the suppressed may transform either into strong and powerful resistant like Peter or into a much more flexible character like Aabid. School bullying is the humiliation and dehumanization of a fellow student to let the bully seem superior or to gain popularity among fellow peers. Therefore, to

prevent bullying, one must not imagine that s/he can merely see bullying and stop it as the tactics which bullies employ can often go unnoticed. Really, bullying is not an issue between the bully and the bullied, rather it is an act that everyone around gets involved in.

Conclusion

The two narrative texts examined in this paper assume Foucault's claim that knowledge is power. To change the direction we are headed, the more information you provide your children with, the better qualified they will be to handle certain situations. Young adults get great benefits from reading about real world issues and dangers. Reading literary fictions that revolve around character interaction and growth creates empathy. Young women might be able to feel sympathy for Josie, understand her position and anxiety, and even learn from it, thereby preventing another statistic. In addition, almost every reader can identify with the horrors of being bullied, and more easily so within a narrative.

Picoult and Helal try to persuade the reader to sympathize with the bullied. They try to approve and support the dominated and help those implied readers who may be bullied, along with tuition and advice to expected dominators. This suggests the difficulty of improving bullies who lack kindness and sympathy. Thus, following Foucault, this paper examines the procedures exercised by powerful and popular students to subjugate and hegemonize their powerless subjects in addition to the resistance of the bullied victims.

As shown in the two narrative texts from different cultures there is a clear connection between ableism or physical shape and bullying. Not all students can have high status, so one student's status must decrease for another's to increase. Bullying is one way that students try to decrease the status of others and increase their status in the

eyes of their peers. So, both Matt and Fajr bully Peter and Aabid in order to raise their status. Regarding the struggle for status in schools, Picoult and Helal claim that aggression increases as one moves up the ableism hierarchy. More popular students bully others more than less popular students bully others. The two narratives claim that insults are often directed at others with equal or lower status but they are rarely directed at those with higher status. The bullies are often much stronger and popular than the bullied. As emphasized by Foucault, power cannot be abolished. Power is everywhere; a student is either practicing power as a dominator bully or resisting the abuse of power as a bullied.

The two novelists enforce influentially the belief that such bullying phenomenon—in addition to Peter and Aabid—severe subjugation and humiliation and are due to dysfunctional parenting, decayed families, low socioeconomic degree, siblings or the regime of power that control behaviour at schools which they are unable to reform. Both Western and Eastern victims are unable to protect themselves against neither psychological nor physical bullying. As a result, Peter and Aabid feel depressed, small, anxious, enraged, resentful, lost, and isolated. On the other hand, Matt and Fajr are forever bullies; they bully others and are never bullied. Each person can be hard, cruel, or brutal according to each person circumstances that shape behavior; it is not easy to say that a specific child is cruel while the other is not. It is not simple to specify bullying at schools since students are always either exercising power or are subject to power.

Finally, these two narrative texts address issues that teenagers today wrestle with: violence and bullying. They discuss and reflect modern and real concerns. Reading narrative fiction can affect readers more than reading nonfiction. So, it seems imperative to have

the eastern narrative text *Scarab* which is considered the first Egyptian novel that depicts, frankly, bullying in the Egyptian society proving that the causes and results of bullying and the behaviour of the bully and the bullied are similar in the eastern and the western cultures. Eastern and Western school bullying behaviour seem similar. Just like Farkha, in order to flee bullying, Peter yields to the world of video games. Josie's terror of being an outcast is similar to Doha's. In addition, both Peter and Aabid worry about being gay as if victims of bullying confront the same problems. The two narrative texts, also, claim that the negative school climate affects school bullying.

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