

## Gender-Based Violence, Trauma, and Strategies for Coping in Colleen Hoover's Novel *It Ends With Us*

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### Abstract

This paper examines the portrayal of trauma and gendered violence in the novel "*It Ends With Us*" by Colleen Hoover. The analysis utilizes trauma theory and the concept of gendered violence and domestic abuse, as well as Dorrit Cohn's theories on diary novels, dissonant narrators, and consonant narrators. The results demonstrate that the main character, Lily, copes with her trauma and experiences of gendered violence represented by the men in her life; her father during her teenage years and by her husband later on by maintaining a diary, effectively utilizing script therapy. Moreover, she tries to overcome her trauma by denial mechanism; that she is not the same as her mother and her husband is good and better than her father. However, when this approach proves insufficient, she actively suppresses her issues and tries to overcome the trauma and revolt against her mother's submission to her father and asks for divorce only to save her children from the suffering she has endured. The paper also reveals that Cohn's notions of dissonant and consonant narrators contribute to the depiction of Lily's character development throughout the novel.

**Key words:**Trauma, gender-based violence, dissonant and consonant narrators, domestic abuse, violence, submission, denial mechanism, diaries, Colleen Hoover

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## Gender-Based Violence, Trauma, and Strategies for Coping in Colleen Hoover's Novel *It Ends With Us*

Colleen Hoover's contemporary romantic novel, *It Ends with Us* (2016), delves into the trauma experienced by the protagonist, Lily Bloom. Reflecting on her past, Lily shares, " Throughout my life, I was certain of how I would react if a man ever treated me like my father treated my mother. The solution was straightforward: I would leave, ensuring it never happened again" (242). Lily's upbringing in an abusive household, where her father often mistreated her mother, has a profound impact on her. At twenty-three, she finds herself in a similar situation, now the victim of physical abuse. Lily experiences her childhood trauma anew but ultimately escapes the cycle of domestic violence.

Freud characterizes trauma as " an injury inflicted not on the body but on the mind" (3). Lily Bloom's experiences exemplify this definition as she endures a traumatic environment by witnessing her mother's physical abuse and later suffering emotional and physical rebukes from her own partner. Judith Lewis Herman asserts that trauma survivors have a paradoxical desire to both discuss their traumatic experiences and simultaneously forget them. This concept is illustrated in *It Ends with Us*, where Lily conveys her distress through diary entries addressed to Ellen DeGeneres, rather than speaking about her ordeal. Writing becomes Lily's primary outlet for her suffering. Eventually, she seeks to escape her trauma by relocating to Boston, distancing herself from her parents. This move also enables her to confront her partner, Ryle Kincaid, and acknowledge the oppression her mother faced during her childhood.

Furthermore, understanding the definition of domestic violence is crucial for analyzing the novel. Domestic violence is described as any incident involving threatening behavior, violence, or abuse between adults who are or were intimate partners, regardless of

gender (Harne & Radford). This comprehensive definition helps frame the narrative in *It Ends with Us*, providing a clear context for the abusive relationships depicted in the story. By examining domestic violence through this lens, one can better appreciate the complexities and nuances of the characters' experiences and the broader societal implications of intimate partner violence 3). Although the definition does not involve any reference to gendered or masculine violence, it is evident in the novel that both the mother and the daughter (females) are physically mistreated by men (both the father and partner) which is a direct innuendo to gendered violence.

It is unequivocal that domestic violence profoundly affects children who witness such abuse within their homes. Mary Allen, in her 2013 work *Social Work and Intimate Partner Violence*, highlights that children who witness family violence are susceptible to enduring extensive physical, psychological, and emotional repercussions over the long term. These adverse effects can significantly impact their overall well-being and development, necessitating immediate attention and intervention from social work professionals to mitigate these risks. Allen emphasizes that the duration of exposure to family violence correlates with the severity of its detrimental effects (116). This insight underscores the critical need for addressing and mitigating domestic violence to protect the well-being and development of children who are involuntary witnesses to such harmful environments.

Lilly not only suffers from witnessing the suppression of her mother, but also she survives the same fate by being maltreated by an abusive husband. Contrary to her mother's approach, Lily employs various strategies to cope with her suffering. She initially attempts to alleviate her distress through diary writing and by denying the abusive nature of her partner. In the end, Lily is able to break free from the cycle of abuse by terminating her relationship with Ryle, as portrayed in the novel's final chapters.

This decisive action underscores her strength and determination to change her circumstances, providing a powerful conclusion to her journey. This decisive action signifies her departure from the patterns of her past, showcasing her resilience and determination to create a safer and healthier future for herself. Lilly is completely different from her mother who bears her father's torture throughout her entire marriage without any response only but surrendering to her fate.

This paper aims to explore the trauma and gender-based violence endured by Lily Bloom, the protagonist of *It Ends with Us*, and to examine the coping mechanisms she employs to manage her ongoing trauma from childhood into adulthood. The analysis will utilize trauma theory, emphasizing gendered violence within the domestic sphere. Lily's use of diary writing as a means of coping with her trauma will be a focal point. Additionally, Dorrit Cohn's concepts of the diary novel, alongside the notions of dissonant and consonant narrators, will be applied to understand the retrospective narratology evident in the novel's flashbacks through Lily's diary entries.

Trauma, originally associated with physical injuries, has evolved as a concept within literary studies over the past century, branching out from its foundations in psychology and medicine. Notable critics and theorists, such as Cathy Caruth and Anne Whitehead, have made substantial contributions to the field of trauma theory. In her 1996 book, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*, Caruth contends that in modern contexts, "trauma" is primarily perceived as a psychological injury rather than a physical one, a view influenced significantly by Freudian psychoanalysis (3). Kai Erikson, in his 1991 article "Notes on Trauma and Community," posits that trauma can arise from a range of life experiences, including sustained exposure to danger, abrupt incidents of terror, persistent abuse, or isolated attacks (457). In *It Ends with Us*, the protagonist Lily Bloom endures

gender-based violence from her childhood and continues to encounter it in her adult relationship with her partner. This continuous exposure profoundly impacts her psychological and emotional well-being, highlighting the pervasive nature of trauma across different stages of her life. As a result, her trauma is rooted in the prolonged exposure to domestic violence during her upbringing, as well as the recurrent episodes of abuse inflicted by her partner. This dual source of trauma exacerbates her psychological distress, underscoring the long-term effects of sustained and repeated violence on an individual's mental health and emotional stability.

Additionally, Herman asserts that traumatic events generally entail circumstances that threaten an individual's life or physical well-being, often involving "a close personal encounter with violence and death" (33). Thus, violence is frequently linked to trauma. While not every act of violence results in trauma, it is evident that trauma can be a consequence of violence. Individuals of any gender who are subjected to ongoing domestic violence endure authentic traumatic events, rather than simply recalling them, irrespective of whether the abuse is physical or verbal. These traumatic experiences have the potential to trigger the development of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The continuous nature of the violence significantly impacts their psychological health, leading to long-lasting emotional and mental repercussions.

In her discussion of PTSD, Herman identifies three specific categories within the disorder: "hyperarousal," "intrusion," and "constriction" (35). Hyperarousal refers to the state in which the survivor remains perpetually vigilant, constantly anticipating potential threats. Intrusion involves the survivor's recurrent reliving of the traumatic event, as if it were continually happening in the present. Constriction denotes the survivor's perception of having no control over the traumatic event's outcome, leading to a

suppression of self-defense mechanisms. Within the context of *It Ends with Us*, hyperarousal is illustrated by Lily's persistent fear and anxiety towards her partner, Ryle, following episodes of physical abuse. A deeper analysis will further elucidate how hyperarousal manifests in the novel.

Caruth argues that trauma is not limited to the initial traumatic event but also encompasses the repeated memories and experiences that follow, emphasizing that the trauma must be relived multiple times (7). Unlike physical wounds that heal relatively quickly, mental wounds resulting from trauma may take years to recover from. In the 1995 edited volume *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, Cathy Caruth articulates that trauma is "a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event... which takes the form of repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, thoughts, or behaviors stemming from the event" (4-5). Caruth's definition emphasizes the persistent and intrusive nature of traumatic responses, which can manifest as recurring hallucinations, dreams, thoughts, or behaviors related to the initial traumatic incident. This perspective highlights the enduring impact of traumatic events on an individual's mental health, often resulting in significant psychological distress long after the event has occurred. This definition underscores that repetition is a fundamental characteristic of trauma, manifesting through various persistent and intrusive symptoms that originate from the traumatic experience.

Anne-Laure Fortin-Tournès explores a related idea in her 2012 chapter, "From Traumatic Iteration to Healing Narrativisation in *Shalimar the Clown* by Salman Rushdie: The Therapeutic Role of Romance." In this work, Fortin-Tournès examines how the process of narrativizing traumatic experiences, particularly through the lens of romance, can facilitate healing. She delves into the ways storytelling and the romantic elements within Rushdie's novel contribute to therapeutic outcomes, aiding individuals in

overcoming and integrating their traumatic memories. Anne-Laure Fortin-Tournès posits that the path to healing for trauma survivors involves transforming their traumatic memories into a coherent narrative. She asserts that without this crucial process, individuals remain trapped in a "frozen present time," continually reliving the traumatic experience through endless imaginative repetition (204). This persistent state of re-experiencing trauma hinders psychological recovery and underscores the necessity of narrativizing traumatic events to facilitate healing and move forward. This perspective aligns with the views of Caruth, highlighting the necessity of narrative formation in overcoming trauma. In their 1992 work, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub expand on this concept by explaining that a traumatic event does not possess a definitive temporal framework; there is no distinct sense of before, during, or after the event (69). They argue that the experience of trauma disrupts the chronological perception of time, leaving the individual unable to place the event within a clear temporal context. This lack of a coherent temporal structure further complicates the process of understanding and integrating the traumatic experience into one's personal narrative. Consequently, trauma survivors remain trapped in a cycle of repetitive traumatic experiences. According to Felman and Laub, the creation of a narrative is essential for breaking free from these persistent memories (69). This theoretical framework underscores the importance of narrative in the therapeutic process of trauma recovery.

In her 2004 book, *Trauma Fiction*, Anne Whitehead notes a significant rise in the portrayal of trauma in contemporary literature. She argues that trauma fiction seeks to reveal both the essential characteristics and the inherent limitations of narrative. Additionally, such works aim to depict the devastating and distorting impacts of traumatic experiences on individuals and their stories (82). Whitehead emphasizes that this genre not only

addresses the challenges of representing trauma but also highlights its profound effects on the human psyche and memory. However, she points out that much of this genre focuses on themes such as war, colonialism, or supernatural elements, as the sheer horror of trauma often eludes rational explanation and is sometimes portrayed through metaphors of supernatural or witchcraft occurrences (83-4). This emphasis creates a gap in the literary depiction of trauma arising from other sources, such as abuse, thereby restricting the scope of trauma fiction to more dramatic historical events. Consequently, the representation of trauma in contemporary fiction often overlooks the pervasive and enduring effects of personal and domestic abuse, limiting its exploration to significant historical incidents. This narrow focus underscores the need for a broader narrative approach that encompasses a wider range of traumatic experiences.

In *Trauma and Survival in Contemporary Fiction* (2002), Laurie Vickroy examines how many trauma narratives highlight the mother-daughter relationship, particularly focusing on the daughter's identification with her mother. Vickroy observes that daughters often experience conflicted emotions, including a protective fear for their mothers and a profound dread of replicating their mothers' traumatic experiences (4). Although Vickroy's analysis is primarily situated within the context of colonization, these dynamics are also present in contemporary literature, such as *It Ends With Us*. In this novel, Lily's fear of leaving her mother alone with her abusive father is deeply intertwined with her anxiety about potentially undergoing the same trauma her mother faced. This duality reflects the broader thematic concerns of trauma and survival within familial relationships.

The recollection of traumatic experiences is a pivotal element in trauma theory, with ongoing discussions and differing viewpoints among scholars. Cathy Caruth has advanced a notable



theory asserting that trauma survivors are often unable to recall the traumatic events until they manifest later as nightmares or flashbacks. In her book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*, Cathy Caruth posits that a traumatic event occurs "too soon, too unexpectedly, to be fully known," and consequently remains inaccessible to consciousness until it reemerges repeatedly through nightmares and repetitive actions of the survivor (4). Caruth's argument highlights the delayed understanding and continual resurfacing of trauma, underscoring how such events evade immediate comprehension and later manifest through intrusive recollections and behaviors. This perspective sheds light on the persistent and intrusive nature of traumatic memories in the lives of survivors. Nonetheless, contemporary research has begun to question and reevaluate this perspective.

In his 2005 article "Debunking Myths about Trauma and Memory," Richard J. McNally argues that, contrary to some trauma theories, evidence indicates that traumatic events, which are exceedingly terrifying at the time, are highly memorable and are rarely forgotten (821). Critics of trauma theory often contend that the intense nature of such events makes them difficult for the human brain to process, resulting in abnormal memory functions. McNally's perspective challenges this view, suggesting that the severity of traumatic experiences typically ensures their retention in memory rather than their suppression or erasure. However, McNally's research challenges the claims made by Caruth and similar theorists. Richard J. McNally underscores that the reluctance of trauma survivors to speak about their memories does not imply an inability to remember them. Rather, it reflects a conscious decision to withhold discussion. For example, in *It Ends With Us*, Lily retains vivid recollections of her traumatic experiences but opts to suppress these memories during her adult life. This deliberate suppression highlights the complex relationship between memory retention and the choice to remain

silent about past traumas, illustrating the nuanced ways individuals cope with their traumatic histories.

In the context of domestic violence, it is essential to recognize that it involves a consistent pattern of coercive and controlling behaviors that are both repetitive and potentially life-threatening. Such actions can have dire consequences for both women and children (Women's Aid qtd. in Harne and Radford 4). This pattern of abuse underscores the critical need for interventions that address the persistent and severe nature of domestic violence, aiming to protect and support those affected. Domestic violence affects not only the women who endure it but also their children, who are often significantly impacted by the abuse inflicted on their mothers. Growing up in an abusive household, children witness the abuse, whether through overhearing it or witnessing it directly, and this can lead to fear and anxiety (Harne and Radford 58). In Lily's case, she was isolated as a child and did not have the opportunity to form friendships or have a normal social life.

Domestic violence includes various forms of abuse, extending beyond physical violence to encompass verbal abuse as well. In this discussion, the term "gendered violence" will be employed to specifically refer to domestic violence against women. When Judith Herman's book *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence – from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* was released in 1992, the term "domestic abuse" was more frequently utilized in discussions of such violence (Shearer-Creman and Winkelmann 10). This terminology reflects the linguistic and conceptual framework of the period, emphasizing the prevalence and recognition of domestic abuse as a critical issue requiring attention. Women who have endured abuse may remain vulnerable even after leaving an abusive relationship, as they might encounter similar patterns of abuse in subsequent relationships (Shearer-Creman and Winkelmann 10). Furthermore, numerous women who endure abuse encounter

substantial confusion because of their reliance on their husbands. Despite the abusive behavior, these women often have deep emotional attachments and economic dependencies on their spouses. This dependence complicates their situation, making it challenging to reconcile their love and financial reliance with the reality of the abuse they face. The intricate dynamics of emotional attachment and economic dependence significantly contribute to the complexity of their experiences and decisions (Colton 121).

In literary studies, the topic of gendered violence has been relatively underexplored and underrepresented (Haaken 80). According to Haaken, narratives of domestic violence can be categorized into three genres: stories of deliverance, stories of bondage, stories of reparation and struggle. Stories of bondage typically feature a female protagonist who is ensnared in an inescapable marriage and household, a theme frequently found in Gothic literature. Stories of deliverance focus on a female protagonist who actively plots her escape. Stories of struggle and reparation explore the complexities of violence, including reasons for the abuse and society's role in it (Haaken 84).

*It Ends With Us* exhibits elements of both bondage and deliverance narratives, yet it transcends a single genre classification. This complexity mirrors the intricate nature of gendered violence and the contexts in which it occurs. Attempting to categorize the novel into one genre may oversimplify and misrepresent the realities of trauma, gendered violence, and the experiences of survivors. Gendered violence is a multifaceted issue, and the circumstances surrounding it are equally complex. Recognizing the novel's intricate narrative structure enhances the representation of gendered violence in literature, providing a more nuanced understanding of these critical issues.

Additionally, Haaken observes that in narratives involving bondage, the female victim often perceives the abuser as embodying two separate personas, distinguishing between their

positive and negative traits. This dual perception complicates the victim's understanding of the abuser, as she tries to reconcile the caring or loving side with the abusive and harmful behavior. Such a dichotomy in perception highlights the psychological complexity faced by victims as they navigate their relationships with their abusers. Lily's perception of her partner Ryle is not polarized into wholly good or entirely bad; rather, she sees him as a fundamentally good person who makes serious mistakes. In narratives of deliverance, the female protagonist often escapes from the abusive partner and may find support from a contrasting "Good Man" (Haaken 89). In *It Ends With Us*, Lily ultimately separates from Ryle and receives some support from Atlas, her childhood love. Her journey to freedom also involves processing her trauma by revisiting her old diary entries and employing other coping mechanisms.

In her book, "Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self," Susan J. Brison underscores the importance of expressive writing as a therapeutic tool for recovery. Brison highlights that engaging in narrative writing allows individuals to process and articulate their traumatic experiences, facilitating emotional healing and the reconstruction of their identities. This method of expressive writing serves as a vital coping mechanism, enabling survivors to confront and make sense of their trauma in a structured and meaningful way. Brison argues that recounting traumatic experiences can help survivors process and potentially overcome their trauma. In *It Ends With Us*, Lily does not pursue professional assistance to narrate her traumatic memories. Instead, she recounts her trauma through diary entries written as letters during her youth, which also provide flashbacks for the reader. Felman and Laub contend that trauma survivors are ensnared in a "traumatic reality" and must construct a narrative of their experiences to escape this entrapment. Vickroy agrees and suggests that constructing a "narrative reconstruction" can diminish the power of traumatic memories. Similarly, Herman

asserts that reconstructing the trauma story is crucial for recovery from a traumatic event.

Extensive research demonstrates that expressive writing, such as recounting traumatic experiences through letters, diary entries, or storytelling, can serve as a therapeutic tool for trauma survivors. In her book *Shattered Subjects* (2000), Suzette A. Henke coined the term "scriptotherapy" to describe the healing process of writing and reenacting traumatic events. This technique enables survivors to process their traumatic memories by forming a coherent narrative. Additionally, in *Opening Up by Writing It Down: How Expressive Writing Improves Health and Eases Emotional Pain*, James W. Pennebaker and Joshua M. Smyth assert that writing about painful and traumatic events can be significantly healing, emphasizing the fundamental human need to share experiences. Furthermore, a study by Karen A. Baikie and Kay Wilhelm titled "Emotional and Physical Health Benefits of Expressive Writing" concludes that expressive writing is an effective therapeutic practice, beneficial in both clinical settings and as a self-help strategy (339).

*It Ends With Us* is predominantly narrated in the first person, with Lily serving as the main narrator. Her diary entries from her teenage years can be interpreted as a method of narrating her personal experiences. In *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction*, Dorrit Cohn discusses the diary novel, emphasizing that diarists primarily write for themselves. Although *It Ends With Us* is not strictly a diary novel, it incorporates elements typical of the genre, blending personal reflections and narrative storytelling. This incorporation of diary-like entries enhances the intimate and introspective nature of Lily's narrative, providing deeper insight into her thoughts and emotions. Cohn points out that diary novels focusing on past events resemble memory monologues, as the entries often take the

form of a one-sided conversation addressing another person. This is evident in Lily's letters to Ellen DeGeneres within the novel.

To comprehend Lily's character development in *It Ends With Us*, it is essential to analyze the specific narrative style employed in the novel. In her analysis of retrospective narratives, Dorrit Cohn distinguishes between "dissonant self-narration" and "consonant self-narration." These two modes of self-narration offer different approaches to how narrators recount their past experiences. "Dissonant self-narration" involves a narrator who critically reflects on their past self, often highlighting the changes and contrasts between their past and present perspectives. Conversely, "consonant self-narration" features a narrator who maintains a consistent and harmonious view of their past and present selves, with little emphasis on change or conflict. Cohn's differentiation provides a framework for understanding how narrators construct and convey their personal histories in literature. A dissonant narrator creates a separation between their past and present selves, reflecting on the past with a sense of distance and demonstrating growth and enhanced understanding. Conversely, a consonant narrator remains closely connected to their past self, maintaining identification with their younger persona. In *It Ends With Us*, the combination of general narration and diary entries exemplifies traits of a dissonant narrator. Lily's perspectives and emotions evolve over time, leading her to renounce previous statements by the novel's conclusion. The analysis section of this paper will provide a detailed examination of how both dissonant and consonant self-narration are represented in the novel. This exploration will demonstrate the ways in which these narrative techniques are utilized to portray the protagonist's evolving self-perception and identity. Through a careful analysis of the text, the paper will highlight the interplay between critical reflection and consistent self-view in the protagonist's recounting of past experiences, shedding light on the complexity and depth of the narrative structure.

It is evident that the linear reading of *It Ends With Us* serves in understanding the character of Lily; her development and progress. The initial signs of hyperarousal are evident at the beginning of the novel when Lily Bloom, a young woman in her twenties, meets Ryle Kincaid, her future partner. The chapter begins with Lily seated on a rooftop, where she is soon joined by Ryle, who is visibly agitated and kicks a chair in frustration. It is revealed that Lily has just returned from her father's funeral, while Ryle, a neurosurgeon, is distressed over losing a patient. Despite being strangers, Lily opens up to Ryle in a lengthy conversation about her father's abuse toward her mother. This aligns with Herman's observation that trauma survivors often have contradictory tendencies to both avoid and draw attention to their trauma. It is evident that Ryle is among the few individuals to whom Lily confides her suffering and her experiences of gender-based abuse. She articulates her emotions and the impact of this abuse, stating:

My father exhibited abusive behavior, which was directed solely at my mother rather than at me. Their disagreements frequently intensified, leading to instances where his anger manifested in physical violence against her. Following these incidents, he would spend the next week or two trying to make amends by buying her flowers or taking us out for nice dinners. As a child, I learned to foresee their arguments because I understood that any instance of him striking her would be followed by two weeks of positive gestures and outings. This pattern of behavior became predictable, as the violent episodes were always succeeded by attempts to make amends through kindness and activities (Hoover 16-17).

This paragraph acquaints readers with the traumatic experiences that Lily endured. At the beginning of the novel, Lily feels anger towards both of her parents because of the abuse she witnessed. She holds her mother accountable for remaining with her father despite the violence, perceiving it as an inevitable aspect of their marriage. Lily confides in Ryle, revealing that the

abuse became a normalized part of their family life: “But the abuse was inevitable with their marriage, and it became our norm” (17). This context highlights the pervasive impact of domestic violence on Lily's perception of relationships and family dynamics. Remarkably, Lily admits that as a child, she would anticipate and even welcome the abuse, as it led to a brief period of relief from the ongoing tension and fear.

This ties into the concept of hyperarousal previously discussed. According to Judith Herman, hyperarousal entails a continuous state of heightened vigilance, as if the threat could reoccur at any moment. Lily and her mother lived in perpetual fear that her father might resume his abusive behavior. They adhered strictly to his rules and strove to appease him to prevent provoking his anger. Herman elaborates that individuals experiencing hyperarousal remain in a heightened state of alertness, with their bodies constantly vigilant for potential threats. She observes that survivors in this condition maintain "an elevated baseline of arousal," meaning their bodies are perpetually prepared to respond to danger. This chronic state of hypervigilance significantly impacts their physical and psychological well-being, as they are unable to relax and are always anticipating potential harm (36).

The first instance of Lily's expressive writing occurs after her father's death when she revisits her old diary entries in search of strength to forgive. By rereading her teenage writings, Lily adopts a retrospective perspective, creating a dissonant narrator, as described by Cohn. The diary entries serve as flashbacks, allowing readers to glimpse into Lily's past. However, it is crucial to recognize that *It Ends With Us* is not classified as a diary novel. Instead, it incorporates diary entries as a narrative device within the broader context of the story. This technique allows for deeper insight into the protagonist's inner thoughts and emotions while maintaining the overall structure of a conventional novel.



The early diary entries concentrate on Lily's initial meeting with Atlas, her childhood sweetheart who was experiencing homelessness. These entries delve into their burgeoning relationship and the significant impact Atlas had on her during their formative years. Through these diary segments, readers gain insight into the deep bond and emotional connection that developed between Lily and Atlas despite the challenging circumstances surrounding his homelessness. She writes about observing someone entering the abandoned house behind hers. In a casual manner, Lily mentions shuffling cards as her parents argue. As a young girl, Lily was isolated without friends, and those who were meant to support her were instead the sources of her trauma. She never pursued professional help to address her experiences. Instead, she turned to her diary as a coping mechanism, writing entries as though they were letters to Ellen DeGeneres. She begins one entry with, "Dear Ellen, Before I tell you what happened today...". This imaginative approach provided Lily with a means of processing her feelings and finding solace amidst her difficult circumstances (30). The letters to Ellen served as a way for Lily to feel like she was talking to someone rather than just writing for herself. This behavior supports Pennebaker and Smyth's assertion that humans possess an intrinsic need to share personal details with others. Their research emphasizes the essential role of self-disclosure in emotional well-being, highlighting how communicating personal experiences can aid in coping and healing. By writing her thoughts and feelings in the form of letters to Ellen DeGeneres, Lily satisfies this fundamental need for self-expression and connection, despite the lack of direct human support in her life. However, it contrasts with Cohn's view of the diary novel, where the protagonist writes solely for themselves. In Lily's situation, she writes in her diary as a means of seeking connection with someone, despite not expecting anyone to ever read her entries. This act of writing allows her to express her emotions and experiences, fulfilling her need for

communication and connection in the absence of an actual confidant. Although these diary entries are private, they serve as a crucial outlet for Lily's thoughts and feelings, providing her with a sense of interaction and understanding. This aligns with Cohn's ideas. Additionally, Brison highlights the importance of survivors narrating their trauma as a means of processing it. For Lily, writing in her diary and pretending to address Ellen DeGeneres allows her to discuss and narrate her experiences, providing her with a necessary outlet, she writes:

*I was in bed shuffling cards. I know that sounds weird, but it's just something I do. I don't even know how to play cards. But when my parents get into fights, shuffling cards just calms me down sometimes and gives me something to focus on. (Hoover 31)*

Lily documents the events unfolding in her life through writing, primarily because she lacks companionship and someone to confide in. She finds herself without friends, and her parents do not engage in conversations with her about the happenings in their household. Consequently, she copes with her traumatic experiences by maintaining a diary. In this particular section and subsequent entries, Lily does not mention her father's abusive behaviours. The subsequent entries in her diary depict Lily's growing friendship with Atlas. Their initial conversation leads to Lily inviting Atlas to her home to take a shower while her parents are at work. During this time, Lily experiences overwhelming panic and anxiety, terrified at the possibility of her parents returning and discovering a stranger in their house. This intense reaction supports Harne and Radford's assertion that children who grow up witnessing gendered abuse are more susceptible to heightened fear and anxiety compared to those from non-abusive environments (58). Additionally, it resonates with Herman's concept of hyperarousal, where individuals remain in a constant state of heightened alertness due to past trauma. Lily writes about

how her heart raced, expressing her awareness of the potential trouble she could face, she states:

*My heart was beating so fast, because I knew how much trouble I could get into if my parents came home and found a homeless guy in our shower. I'd probably very well die. But I just couldn't watch him walk back to his house without offering him something.*  
(Hoover 36)

Her fears extend beyond the risk of being punished; she is also deeply worried about her father potentially harming Atlas or her mother. Up to this point in the novel, Lily's father has not physically hurt her, so her anxieties are centered on the safety of others rather than her own well-being. This concern for the safety of those around her highlights her protective instincts and the impact of living in an abusive household.

The second instance of Lily's expressive writing occurs six months later in the novel, during a period where dissonant and consonant narration intersect. This is significant as it highlights Lily's growth and her gradual distancing from her teenage self, while also exposing the unresolved emotions she still harbors. This section of the novel begins with Lily showing her mother a property she purchased using the inheritance from her father's passing, with intentions to transform it into a flower shop. While they are at the shop, a woman named Alyssa enters seeking employment. It is later revealed that Alyssa is Ryle's younger sister. As the narrative unfolds, Lily hires Alyssa, initiates the renovation of the space, and eventually reconnects with Ryle. This development sets the stage for the evolving relationships and the central plot of the story. Tentatively, they initiate a relationship. As Lily continues reading her old diary entries, she comes across a section that addresses direct violence. In this entry, she describes the first and only time her father accidentally hits her. At the age of fifteen, Lily notes in her diary that her mother typically parks her car in the driveway, reserving the garage for her father.

However, on this particular day, her mother decides to park in the garage to facilitate the unloading of groceries. While her mother's car remains in the garage, Lily's father arrives home. This deviation from their usual routine sets the stage for an unfolding event. She explains:

*I am uncertain about what occurred when my mother returned outside. I heard a loud crash followed by her scream, prompting me to rush to the garage, thinking she might have slipped on ice. Ellen, it is difficult for me to recount what happened next, as I am still in shock from the incident. When I opened the garage door, I initially did not see my mother. He had her pinned down on the car hood, his hands around her neck, choking her. The following moments are hazy, but I remember screaming at him. I jumped on his back, hitting him on the side of his head. The next thing I recall is being thrown off, though I am not entirely sure what happened in between (Hoover 109-110).*

After finishing the process of reading her diary entries, Lily finds herself lying in her bed crying. She reflects on her emotional state, initially believing that revisiting the journal would facilitate healing and create distance from the past: "Each time I pick up this journal, I tell myself that I will be alright—that the events occurred so long ago that I will no longer feel the emotions I did back then" (119). These passages illustrate a tension between Cohn's concepts of dissonant and consonant narration. Lily has suppressed her childhood and teenage experiences to the extent that she convinces herself she has accepted and moved beyond them. This form of emotional distancing exemplifies the characteristics of a dissonant narrator. However, as she revisits her old diary entries, she still partially identifies with the girl she once was, a characteristic typical of a consonant narrator. The act of revisiting her diary serves as a means of healing. As she delves into her past memories, Lily realizes the extent of her personal growth since those moments. She also acknowledges her empathy

towards her mother, recognizing that she had not previously considered the hardships her mother endured: " I have not given much thought to all that she endured before my father's death. I realize it likely still causes her pain" (119).

Several months into her relationship, Lily experiences a gendered abuse directed towards herself for the first time. During an incident where Ryle hurts his hand and Lily laughs, his anger escalates, and he pushes her forcefully, causing her to fall and injure herself:

I find myself on the floor, my hand pressed against the corner of my eye. In an instant, Ryle's arm struck me unexpectedly, causing me to fall backward. The impact was strong enough to make me lose my balance, and as I fell, my face collided with one of the cabinet door handles. Immediately, I feel an overwhelming weight pressing down on me. The gravity of the situation crushes my emotions, causing everything within me to break—my tears, my heart, my laughter, and my soul. (Hoover 185)

In this section, Lily momentarily identifies with her mother as she experiences being struck, which triggers a flashback to her father's abuse of her mother. Instead of hearing Ryle's apologies, she perceives her father's voice apologizing to her mother: "I don't hear Ryle's voice this time. All I hear is my father's voice" (186). This blending of past and present illustrates how Lily's current trauma is intertwined with her memories of childhood abuse, highlighting the deep psychological impact of her experiences. Caruth's concept of survivors reliving traumatic events is pertinent here. While experiencing trauma in the present, Lily has a flashback to her childhood. Although she has suppressed these memories as an adult, they resurface momentarily when she finds herself in a situation similar to her mother's. This scenario aligns with Vickroy's idea that trauma literature often centers on the mother-daughter relationship. Lily has long feared replicating her mother's circumstances, and now she suddenly faces a similar

predicament. Although the scene primarily focuses on Lily and Ryle, it is clear that her mother's past experiences continue to have a profound impact on her.

As the situation unfolds, Lily remains torn. When Ryle apologizes and begins to kiss her, she feels a strong urge to retaliate, wishing to react as she had hoped her mother would have when her father hurt her. Simultaneously, she wants to believe that the incident was truly an accident, insisting that Ryle is not like her father: "I always wish my mother would have reacted when my father hurt her, but deep down I want to believe that it really was an accident. Ryle isn't like my father. He's nothing like him" (188-189). This reflects a denial of the harsh reality that Ryle is indeed an abuser. Haaken notes that in narratives of abuse, it is common for the victim to perceive two "faces" of their partner, the abuser. Building on Haaken's ideas, Lily's love for Ryle prevents her from leaving him at this stage in the novel because she cannot accept that he resembles her father in any way; she continues to believe in Ryle's inherent goodness. She wishes to forget the incident entirely. Nevertheless, she cautions Ryle that any future incidents of harm will result in her departure: "But Ryle? If anything like that ever happens again... I'll know that this time wasn't just an accident. And I'll leave you without a second thought." This statement underscores her resolve to end the relationship should such behavior recur, emphasizing that she will not hesitate to leave if he repeats his actions (191).

The concluding diary entry penned by Lily during her teenage years, which she revisits in adulthood, narrates a distressing episode in which her childhood friend Atlas suffers serious injury at the hands of her father. This reflective entry highlights the profound impact of the traumatic event on her, revealing the long-lasting emotional scars carried into her adult life. Overwhelmed by the event, Lily wishes to forget it and chooses to suppress her memories. McNally's assertion that traumatic events are highly

memorable and rarely forgotten applies here. Although Lily can recall her traumatic experiences, she actively decides not to talk or think about them.

In her adulthood, Lily revisits her diary entries after reuniting with Atlas, whom she had not encountered for several years. As she seeks to find closure regarding their past relationship, particularly given her current relationship with Ryle, she reads her reflections on Atlas. During a dinner outing, Atlas, now a chef, observes the cut near Lily's eye and Ryle's bandaged hand. He pieces together the situation and confronts Lily about it. Refusing to accept that Ryle's violence was intentional, she insists it was accidental. Atlas urges her to leave Ryle, but when she defends him, he retorts, "Funny. You sound just like your mother" (197). Throughout her childhood, Lily harbored fears of either becoming like her mother or enduring similar hardships. In one diary entry, she recounts her mother saying, "'It's not like that, Lily... you're too young to understand it.' It got really quiet for a minute, and then I said, 'I hope to hell I never do'" (156). This recollection aligns with Shearer-Creman and Winkelmann's assertion that women who have suffered abuse are not necessarily secure even after escaping such situations. Despite growing up witnessing her mother's abuse, Lily later finds herself in an abusive relationship as an adult. Although hearing Atlas compare her to her mother is deeply hurtful, she remains unwilling to leave Ryle, adamantly believing that their circumstances differ from those of her parents.

While reviewing her diary, Lily comes across an entry that recounts the harrowing incident when her father barged into her bedroom and brutally attacked Atlas upon discovering them together. This entry vividly describes the traumatic event, highlighting the violence and fear she experienced during that moment.

*My father overheard a conversation in my room and, upon bursting through the door and finding Atlas in bed with me,*

*became enraged beyond anything I had witnessed before. Atlas, taken by surprise, was unprepared for the ensuing violence. That moment is etched in my memory—my profound helplessness as my father assaulted him with a baseball bat. The horrifying sound of bones breaking was the only thing that pierced through my screams (Hoover 215).*

Following the traumatic events, teenage Lily ceases writing in her diary and distances herself from her painful experiences. Rather than using expressive writing as a coping mechanism, she opts to suppress her memories. In her final entry, she confesses that writing no longer brings her comfort and that thinking about Atlas is too painful: "Writing to you reminds me of him, and it all hurts too much... I'm just going to keep pretending to be okay" (217). Despite this, she still feels compelled to document all her memories, suggesting a need to release them in some way. According to Felman and Laub, the survivor must "repeat" and transform traumatic memories into a therapeutic process by creating a narrative (69). It is crucial for survivors to express these memories, whether by writing them down or by recounting them verbally. This process allows for the articulation of their experiences, aiding in the healing journey and providing a means to process and understand the trauma they have endured. Although Lily finds it too painful to discuss or think about Atlas, she narrates her trauma one final time as a means of release.

It can be deduced that Lily feels a profound sense of responsibility for the incident and lacks the necessary support or guidance to process her experience. Her father faced no legal consequences, her schoolmates bullied her for her association with Atlas, and she lost all contact with him. Atlas, who was not only her childhood sweetheart but also her first genuine friend, was taken from her due to her father's abusive actions, a loss that is overwhelmingly difficult for her to endure.



Upon commencing her college education, Lily is resolute in her decision to leave her hometown and her parents behind. Despite her father's illness, which rendered him incapable of harming her mother any longer, his presence continued to instill in her a strong desire to flee from Maine altogether. Consequently, she acted on this impulse and left the state: "Even though he [her father] was sick and could no longer hurt my mother, he still somehow made me want to escape the entire state of Maine, so that's exactly what I did" (218). Besides repressing her memories, Lily physically distances herself from her father by relocating to Boston. At this juncture in the novel, she does not yet draw comparisons between herself and her mother, nor does she recognize any similarities between Ryle and her father. Lily maintains that Ryle is a good person and believes that the love he has for her is on par with what Atlas once felt: "Things with Ryle are still fairly new, but I feel that same depth with him that I used to feel with Atlas. He loves me just like Atlas did" (218). Although Lily had always harbored a desire to leave her hometown during her childhood, she only acted on this impulse when her father became too ill to harm her mother. She feared experiencing the same suffering as her mother and resented her for not leaving her father, which intensified her urge to escape. At the same time, she felt guilty for not staying to support her mother. However, when her father was diagnosed with cancer, it "completely changed the dynamic of their relationship and I no longer felt obligated to stay in Plethora to make sure she was okay" (39), prompting her departure. This scenario aligns with Vickroy's concept that daughters experience a conflicted sense of protective fear towards their mothers. Lily felt a profound sense of responsibility for her mother's well-being, and it was only when her father's illness incapacitated him from causing further harm that Lily felt she could finally leave.

After Ryle's second act of violence towards Lily, she starts to relate more to her mother. However, she eventually realizes that her circumstances are distinct from her parents'. This realization

happens after Lily reunites with Atlas, who provides her with his phone number as a precautionary measure. During this specific incident, Ryle uncovers the concealed number inside Lily's phone case. As Ryle prepares to depart, Lily attempts to prevent him, but he responds by forcefully pushing her down the stairs.

*“You fell down the stairs.”*

But I *didn't* fall.

He pushed me. Again.

That's twice.

*You pushed me, Ryle.*

I can feel my whole body start to shake with the sobs. I have no idea how bad I'm hurt, but I don't even care. No physical pain could even compare to what my heart is feeling in this moment. I start to slap at his hands, wanting him away from me. (Hoover 231)

In the aftermath of the incident, Lily finds herself grappling with a whirlwind of emotions and internal conflicts. While part of her wants to hate Ryle for his abusive behaviour, another part feels a sense of fear and vulnerability around him. Additionally, she experiences a sense of sympathy or pity for him, realizing that his actions might be influenced by his own unresolved trauma.

Lily's confusion is evident in her candid admission that she doesn't know how to feel, as she questions whether she should despise Ryle, be terrified of him, or even feel sorry for him. This emotional turmoil reflects the complexity of her situation and the difficulty she faces in making sense of her own feelings.

When Ryle attempts to apologize, Lily's initial instinct is to remove him from her life. However, Alyssa, Ryle's sister, intervenes and pleads with Lily to give him a chance. Alyssa believes that Ryle's violent behavior stems from a deep-rooted trauma—specifically, the tragic accidental shooting of their older brother during their childhood. Ryle's inability to cope with the

traumatic event, despite seeking professional help, leads to episodes of uncontrolled anger and memory loss.

Despite the conflicting emotions and the desire to leave, Lily decides to stay and give Ryle an opportunity to explain himself. It's a difficult choice driven by compassion, her connection to Alyssa, and perhaps a glimmer of hope that Ryle can confront and overcome his demons.

Nevertheless, even as Lily chooses to remain in the relationship, her conflicted feelings persist. She must navigate a complex dynamic, torn between her love for Ryle, her own well-being, and the need to protect herself from further harm. The journey ahead is fraught with challenges and uncertainties as Lily grapples with her conflicting emotions and attempts to find a resolution that ensures her safety and happiness.

Despite everything he has just confessed, I am still struggling to forgive him. I always believed I knew what to do if a man ever treated me like my father treated my mother. It seemed straightforward—I would leave. But I didn't. Now, I bear bruises and cuts inflicted by the man who is supposed to love me, yet I continue to try and rationalize what happened. I am supposed to be the strong woman my mother never was. My father never had a justification for his anger, nor did he apologize immediately. His treatment of my mother was far worse than what has transpired between Ryle and me (242-243).

Lily finds herself making excuses for Ryle's abusive behavior, attempting to rationalize and provide some sort of justification for his actions. While Ryle may not exert complete control over Lily in a brutal manner, as pointed out by Colton (121), he does manipulate her love for him, a common tactic in abusive relationships. Lily recognizes the striking similarity between Ryle's behavior and that of her mother, the inability to leave the abusive situation and the struggle to harbor hatred towards the one

causing harm. This epiphany leaves Lily feeling both pathetic and weak: “It makes me feel pathetic and weak. I am supposed to hate him. I am supposed to be the woman my mother was never strong enough to be” (242). This realization underscores her internal struggle, as she grapples with the expectation to despise him and embody the strength her mother lacked. The awareness of her perceived inadequacy intensifies her emotional turmoil, highlighting the profound impact of her situation on her self-perception and resilience. She draws parallels between her situation with Ryle and her parents' relationship, but eventually acknowledges the differences in their circumstances. In her mind, she has a valid reason to stay with Ryle—his efforts to improve for her sake. Lily believes that Ryle is not inherently bad, that he genuinely loves her, and that his harmful actions are unintentional. She asserts that his positive attributes far surpass his negative traits: “There is so much more good in him than bad” (244). In essence, Lily is trying to persuade herself that Ryle is fundamentally different from her father. By focusing on his good qualities, she attempts to rationalize her belief that he is not like the abusive figure she grew up with, thus justifying her continued involvement with him.

Furthermore, within this section of the novel, we witness Lily experiencing heightened states of hyperarousal, a concept briefly mentioned in the earlier analysis. It becomes more prominent in the narrative as we reach the third and final instance of Ryle physically harming Lily. Additionally, elements of stories of bondage and stories of deliverance can be discerned (84). Ryle discovers that one of Lily's magnets was a gift from Atlas, which incites his jealousy and anger as he pieces the situation together. He begins to interrogate Lily about the magnet, but she avoids giving a direct answer, fearing his potential reaction. Although Lily is not experiencing hyperarousal, her actions align with Herman's concept of trauma response, as she exhibits fear of the unknown and displays a "fight or flight" reaction. Upon entering

their bedroom, Lily instantly realizes that Ryle has read her old diaries, violating her trust. He is already aware of the significance of the magnet, along with other intimate details.

He spins me, but my eyes are still closed. I'm too scared to look at him. His hands are digging into my shoulders as he pushes me toward the bed. I start trying to fight him off of me, but it's useless. He's too strong for me. He's angry. He's hurt. *And he's not Ryle ...* All I can see when I squeeze my eyes shut is my mother crying on our old living room couch; my father forcing himself on top of her. Hatred rips through me and I start screaming. (Hoover 265-266)

Lily finds herself re-experiencing the traumatic events of her parents' relationship, becoming ensnared in a similar predicament. This indicates that she has not fully recovered from her childhood trauma. This section of the book intertwines elements of both bondage and deliverance narratives, illustrating her struggle and the ongoing impact of her past. In bondage narratives, female survivors often perceive their abusers as having two distinct personas (86). Lily continues to hold onto the belief that her beloved Ryle would never be capable of such actions, leading her to think "he's not Ryle" (265) even when he inflicts harm upon her. She views him as essentially a good person who makes poor decisions. In deliverance narratives, the survivor usually escapes the abuser with assistance from a "Good Man" (Haaken 89). In this scenario, Atlas assumes the role of the "Good Man" by aiding Lily in reaching the hospital. There, she unexpectedly discovers her pregnancy, further intertwining their fates and reinforcing Atlas's role as her protector.

To make sense of her complex and muddled emotions, Lily decides to pick up a pen and write, an activity she had abandoned since her teenage years. She seeks sanctuary in Atlas's apartment, thereby distancing herself from Ryle and disregarding his text messages. Given Lily's psychological condition, Henke's concept

of scriptotherapy and Cohn's notion of the dissonant narrator are pertinent to this segment of the novel. Through her writing, Lily endeavors to achieve clarity and resolution, using it as a means to process her emotions and experiences. The final diary entry is penned after she learns about her pregnancy, signifying a significant turning point in her journey.

*I am in love with a man who physically harms me. It is incomprehensible to me how I have allowed myself to reach this point. How could my mother possibly love a man who physically abused her? A man who repeatedly struck her, vowed never to do it again, and then continued the cycle of violence. I am deeply troubled by the fact that I can now empathize with her situation (Hoover 281)*

In her diary entry, Lily articulates her difficulty in managing her emotions and her urgent need to express them in writing: "And true to my past, I realized that maybe I need to just get them out on paper" (281). This perspective aligns with Pennebaker and Smyth's assertion that there is an inherent drive to "reveal ourselves to others" (2), as Lily once again directs her thoughts to Ellen in her writing. Overwhelmed by distress, she feels the necessity to write down her thoughts and release them, much like she did in her teenage years. Henke's concept of scriptotherapy resonates here, as Lily finds solace in writing about her traumatic experiences as a form of therapy. She also reflects on her mother's decision not to leave her father, despite having better financial circumstances and more support. Her mother's reluctance to separate Lily from her father, valuing the presence of both parents, comes into focus (282). This situation illustrates Cohn's concept of the dissonant narrator. Younger Lily harbored resentment towards her mother for remaining with her abusive father, unable to comprehend her reasons for staying. This narrative tension highlights the internal conflict and misunderstanding that younger Lily experienced, demonstrating the complexity of her emotions and perspective. Now, as an adult, Lily turns to diary entries once more as a coping mechanism and acknowledges her past curiosity

about her mother's thoughts after her father's abuse (281). However, she now relates to her mother, distancing herself from her younger self's perspective.

In the concluding chapters, Lily ultimately resolves to end the cycle of abuse. After the birth of her and Ryle's daughter, she informs Ryle of her decision to divorce, prioritizing the well-being of their child. She asserts, "I don't want her to live like I lived. I don't want her to see her father at his worst" (360). This decision underscores her commitment to creating a safer and healthier environment for her daughter, free from the trauma she herself endured. While expressive writing served as a coping mechanism during her teenage years and allowed her to revisit and process her experiences as an adult, Lily ultimately decides to leave Ryle only after the birth of their daughter. She recognizes that Ryle would go to great lengths to protect their child, and it is at this moment that she makes a definitive choice about their relationship (357). Reflecting on her mother's decision to stay with her abusive father and its impact on her own upbringing, she admits, "I hated him [her father] so much more than I loved him... Five minutes of witnessing him at his worst couldn't make up for even five years of him at his best" (357). By revisiting her old diaries, Lily is able to confront and overcome her childhood trauma, ultimately breaking the cycle of abuse. Upon seeing her daughter for the first time, she realizes she cannot continue her relationship with Ryle, as living in fear of his potential violence would create a harmful environment for her daughter. Thus, Lily ends the cycle of abuse, ensuring it will not be repeated in her daughter's life.

### **Conclusion**

This paper aims to analyze the depiction of trauma associated with gendered violence in the novel *It Ends With Us* and to explore the various mechanisms through which the protagonist, Lily Bloom, manages her trauma. The analysis will focus on Lily's use of expressive writing as both a coping strategy and a healing process. Additionally, the paper will examine how Lily

consciously suppresses her traumatic experiences as a means of coping.

Moreover, the traumas Lily experienced during her childhood and teenage years have left her in a state of heightened arousal, especially during her adolescent years. This heightened state is clearly reflected in her diary entries, which function as a form of scriptotherapy. Felman and Laub's observations that children who witness gendered violence tend to be more anxious and fearful are consistent with Lily's experiences. She is constantly fearful of her father's reactions, prompting her to hide her relationship with Atlas to protect herself, her mother, and Atlas. However, Lily also finds solace in her diary, using expressive writing to express her feelings without having to confide in anyone. That is, until a traumatic incident where Atlas is severely harmed by her father, causing Lily to be unable to write about him. Subsequently, she suppresses her past experiences and chooses to stop writing in her diary.

After her father's death, Lily starts to confide in Ryle, a stranger, which aligns with Pennebaker and Smyth's idea that humans have an innate need to disclose themselves to others. Despite her efforts to avoid thinking about or discussing her father and her upbringing, Lily shares details of her childhood with Ryle.

Throughout the novel, Lily does not behave as someone who has experienced childhood trauma, apart from her anger towards her parents for exposing her to gendered violence. This can be attributed to her active suppression of memories. However, when Ryle starts physically abusing her, she once again shows signs of hyperarousal. This is evident when Ryle discovers her magnet and diary. Following the last instance of abuse, Lily writes another entry, using it as a therapeutic outlet and further connecting her use of diary entries to scriptotherapy.

Cohn's concepts of the consonant and dissonant narrator are prominently featured throughout the novel, especially as Lily revisits her old diaries. Initially, she identifies with her teenage self, but as the story progresses, she evolves into a more dissonant



narrator. By rereading her entries as an adult and experiencing gendered abuse firsthand, Lily gains a deeper understanding of her mother, contrasting with her teenage perspective. The analysis demonstrates that the novel cannot be confined to a single category, highlighting the complexity and multifaceted nature of stories of gendered violence, which incorporate elements from both stories of bondage and stories of deliverance.

Ultimately, Lily ends her abusive relationship with Ryle for the well-being of her daughter, resolute in her determination to break the cycle of abuse. During her teenage years, expressive writing served as a coping mechanism, and narrating her experiences proved beneficial in her journey. Rereading her old diaries was crucial in her decision-making process; without revisiting her past, she might not have arrived at the same resolution at that point in her life.

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## العنف القائم على التمييز الجنسي والصدمة واستراتيجيات التكيف في رواية "الأمر ينتهي معنا" لكولين هوفر

### ملخص

يناقش هذا البحث تصوير الصدمة والعنف القائمين على التمييز الجنسي في رواية "كل شيء ينتهي معنا" للكاتبة كولين هوفر. تم تحليل الرواية بناء على نظرية الصدمة ومفهوم العنف المبني على التمييز الجنسي والعنف المنزلي، بالإضافة إلى نظريات دوريت كوهن حول روايات اليوميات ورواة الاختلاف ورواة التناسق. تظهر النتائج أن الشخصية الرئيسية، ليلي، تتعامل مع صدمتها وتجاربها من العنف الذي تعرضت له من الرجال بالرواية ممثلاً في الأب خلال سنوات مراهقتها ومن الزوج فيما بعد من خلال تسجيل مذكرات يومية، وتستخدم بفعالية علاج الكتابة لتخطي الصدمة والتخلص منها علاوة على ذلك، تحاول التغلب على صدمتها من خلال آلية الإنكار؛ أنها ليست مثل أمها وأن زوجها صالح وأفضل من أبيها. وعندما يثبت أن هذا النهج غير كافٍ، تكبح مشاكلها بنشاط وتحاول التغلب على الصدمة والتمرد على خضوع والدتها لوالدها وتطلب الطلاق فقط لتتخذ أطفالها من المعاناة التي عاشتها. كما يوضح البحث أن مفاهيم كوهن للرواة المتناقضة والرواة المتناسقة تساهم في تصوير تطور شخصية ليلي على مدار الرواية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصدمة، العنف المبني على التمييز ، الرواة المتنافرون والمتناغمون، العنف المنزلي، العنف الجنسي، الخضوع، الإنكار، مذكرات يومية، كولين هوفر