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Battle of the Sexes in William's *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*

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Letter of Recommendation

This is to certify that Mr. DhanBahadurRawal has completed this dissertation entitled "Battle of the Sexes in William's *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*" under my supervision and guidance in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in English. I therefore, recommend this dissertation for final approval and acceptance.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “ Battle of the Sexes in William’s Cat on a Hot Tin Roof”
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Abstract

This research is about Tennessee Williams *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* from several references to the cat focusing on conventional woman's rights of heritage in her family. In the same way it indicates the resulting consequences from the Battle of Sexes. *The Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* refers to a particular fantasy of femininity and feminine desire. It develops the theme of mendacity symbolized by alcoholism. This play reveals a world of human frustration in which sex and violence underlie an atmosphere of romantic gentile of the post war American society of twentieth century. There are many sexual relationships in the play and all of them imposed upon each other. Most of them are troubled. Big Daddy admits that sexuality with his wife has been essentially joyless for him. Brick and Margaret no longer have a sexual relationship. Gooper and Mae appear to have the most fulfilling sex relationship. This sexual union which has produced five children seems to lack all the elements of compassion, deep feeling and tenderness which mark the less successful relationship in the play. The language is part of the whole creation, mixture of realism, fantasy, a personalized version of an authentic American idioms. Thus, the play is found having the issues of battle of sexes.

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I .Introduction to the Masculinity and Sexuality in Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*

This thesis attempts to study Battle of Sexes in William's *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. There are many issues of Sexual relationship in the play. To be more specific the research focuses only to those issues related to the conflict of homosexuality and heterosexuality. So this research investigates the disagreement and fight for power that exist between men and women known as Battle of Sexes. In the same way it explores the relationship between male and female and the role assigned to them. Basically the quest of this research is the impact of male authority over woman. Most of the Williams plays raise the issues related to biographical theme of ambivalence in sexual orientation, disaffection and difficulty in maintaining intimate relationship. Similarly twentieth century post war American society has been reflected in this play. His play reveals a world of human frustration in sex and violence.

William plays deal with the issue of sexual struggle in the play *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. The very opening of the play confines the place entirely to plantation home in the Mississippi Delta. In his words:

The set is the bed-sitting-room of a plantation home in the Mississippi Delta. it is along an upstairs gallery which probably runs around the entire house; it has two pairs of very wide doors opening onto the gallery, showing white balustrades against a fair summer sky that fades into dusk and night during the course of the play, which occupies precisely the time of its performance, excepting, of course, the fifteen minutes of intermission.

Williams describes the room further that the style of the room is Victorian with a touch of the Far East. Reference to the "Victorian" is to denote the past time when two men, notorious for homosexuality, existed. He says that it (the room) hasn't changed

much since it was occupied by the original owners of the place, Jack Straw and Peter Ochello, a pair of old bachelors who shared this room all their lives together. He intends to relate the past with the present as a continuation of notoriety of homosexuality. All the actions occur in the hall room and Brick's room. Actions rotate upstairs and sometimes downstairs. Most parts of the play perform in Brick's room- with the conversation between Maggie and Brick in the beginning and later between Big Daddy and Brick. So it gives the sense of Aristotelian unity of action, place and time. The play moves with the theme of homosexuality in depth though surface theme concern with the heritage. Athenians of the fifth and fourth century believed that homosexual love alone is capable of satisfying a man's highest and noble aspirations because it is based on truly spiritual love and they believed that heterosexual love is inferior because it is driven by a mere desire to satisfy inferior physical passion.

Human sexuality encompasses an array of social activities and an abundance of behaviors, actions and societal topics. It covers the cultural, political and legal aspects of the society. Human beings are always in search for a partner or interactions between individuals for physical or emotional intimacy. Different sexual practices are limited by laws in many places. Marriage laws may serve the purpose of encouraging people to only have sex within marriage. Sodomy laws were seen as discouraging same-sex sexual practices. Laws also ban adults from committing sexual abuses, committing sexual acts with anyone under an age of consent, performing sexual activities in public and engaging in sexual activities for money. Through courtship some people choose potential sexual partner. Biologically, human beings developed sexual struggle from the ancient time. Among heterosexual presumably middle class teenagers and adolescents were involved in the mid-twentieth century in America. It is possible for a person whose identity is heterosexual to get involved in sexual acts with

people of the same sex. Some people explore their sexuality with same sexual activity before defining their sexual identity. Despite stereotypes and common misconceptions, there are no forms of sexual activity exclusive to same sex sexual behavior that cannot be found in opposite sex sexual behavior. Among some communities, same-sex sexual behavior is sometimes viewed as solely for physical pleasure. The universal applicability of modern western concepts of sexual orientation has been questioned by the scholars in the twentieth century. Essentialists maintain that sexual identities reflect deeply rooted sexual desires which can be neatly classified as heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual. Some anthropological research has suggested men's desire for other man is understood as universal. According to this research a man's display of sexual interest in another man in social environments in which understanding is shared may not be seen as a sign of difference from the societal mainstream. The third sex is considered a separate gender category, and its members are not considered men or women but rather members of a neutral gender. Thus, sexual relations between a man and another man are not treated as equivalent to sexual relations between a man and a member of the third gender.

This play follows the pattern of a well-made play, with exposition in the first act, climax in the second, and resolution in the third. Maggie's background, her relationship with Brick, her concern for Big Daddy, and her antagonism toward Gooper and Mae, and also her antagonism towards Skipper in past, all reveal in first act. In the first act, there is monologue or one-sided conversation from Maggie, but her monologue develops the plot to the climax. The mysterious knot is untied in the second act from the conversation between Big Daddy and Brick. Skipper had a secret, homosexual love for Brick, of which Maggie was aware, but Brick was not. In Brick's absence she had confronted Skipper with this fact, and Skipper had tried, but failed, to

prove his manhood by attempting to have sex with Maggie. William used the classical form of dialogue to develop the conflicts in the opening scene between Maggie and in the second act between Brick and his father. Most important part of the play is the second act. It discovers the truth- truth of homosexuality and also truth of Big Daddy's cancer. Williams intended to remain contented with these two truths, the third act has been added from professional point of view.

The problem to study is that Tennessee William's *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* explores the theme of battle of sexes which appears throughout the play. Each and every character of the play engages in the sexual struggle. The complexity of the sexual relationship and its importance is a factor in the lives of human beings. Almost all the characters in the play are involved in sexual struggle. Big Daddy admits the sexuality with his wife has been essentially joyless for him. Brick and Margaret no longer have a sexual relationship, although by the end of the lay it is going to be slightly restored. Gooper and Mae appear to have the most fulfilling sexual relationship, but we should note that it is filled with irony. This sexual union which has produced five children seems to lack all the elements of compassion, tenderness, and deep feeling which mark the less "successful" relationships in the play. Sexual motivation determines much of the action of the play; also Skipper's homosexuality is in great part the motivating factor in Brick's detachment from Margaret. She has apparently justified her suspicions about Skipper by viewing his inability to make love to her as the result of his wrong headedness. Thus, distorted sexuality lies at the root of much of the action in the play. Secondary, the resolution of the play depends greatly up on the restoration of a normal sexual relationship between Margaret and Brick. In today's society, despite the fact that humans have never limited their sexual

pleasure to what we now call heterosexual intercourse, the history of homosexuality is relatively short.

The major argument of this research is that the sexuality of masculine is power, pride, oppressive, possessiveness and constraint whereas the sexuality of women is secondary, helplessness and joyousness. In the play, Maggie was a strong and competitive woman. She fight with her masculine power for love and sex from her husband, Brick, against homosexual lover skipper and also for inheritance against Mae and Gooper, elder son and daughter-in-law of Big Daddy and second towards inner conflict that has tragic potential, which relates with Brick, who suffers from "psychological problem" as well as "moral paralysis". Other directions may also be added to argue this research that exposing the corruption inherent in heterosexual love in American materialism, and in the existential process of living, revealing sympathy for the romantic yearning for transcendence and "uncommon tenderness" and self-integrity afforded by realized homosexual love. Like the Athenians of the fourth and fifth centuries who believed that homosexual love alone is capable of satisfying a man's highest and noble aspirations, and conversely that heterosexual love is altogether inferior- a mere "physical impulse whose sole object is the production of children."(372) Brick clearly regards his relationship with Skipper as vastly superior to the earthy love offered to him by Maggie.

Different critics have analysed the play form the multiple perspective which preserve the universal nature of the play. Most critical theme of homosexuality is related with the relation between Brick and Skipper. The relationship between Margaret and Brick is important for a number of reasons. Gooper and Mae are going to be dissatisfied in their attempts to disinherit Brick and Margaret. On the other hand, it must be restored to present Big Daddy with a third generation heir. Then the

relation must be restored to bring Brick out of the self-imposed exile and moral paralysis in which he finds himself. With regard to the theme of conflict between homosexuality and heterosexuality, two extreme types of characters and place all of them in the same scale in terms of relative proximity. Big Daddy says he was like Brick and loves and understands Brick's homosexual tendency, but he declares that one should live life with a wife, have children, and tolerate all the mendacity of the society and family one lives in. Maggie also thinks that even after the dream of life is over, life has to go on. She must have children and climb the ladder of prosperity and material gain. She urges Brick to have a child, much like Big Mama and Big Daddy. Poor Big Mama is a simple representative of the ordinary heterosexual and fertile woman, and she hates infertility. For Brick's dissatisfaction, Marian Price comments:

Brick and Maggie represents his opposing impulses the urge to abandon his work in disgust with himself and with a world in which the truth can't be told, versus the impulse for artistic survival at the cost of any lie or manipulation. Brick has lost the will to go on as a football player because he can no longer throw those "long, long!-high, high!- passes", as a sport announcer because he can no longer keep up with the action on the field, and as a loving husband, son, and brother because he has betrayed one who loved him in defiance of an iron-clad taboo. (102)

Big Daddy has a new lease on life and he wants to have a frank talk with his beloved son. Big Daddy's confessions of sexual appetite and ease with a world of dishonesty only disgust Brick who tries to end the conversation. Maggie always desires sexual relation with her husband but Brick fails to satisfy her desires as she wishes like many

other women in their marital life. Her wishes remain unfulfilled and Brick turns toward alcoholism after his partner skipper died. John S. Bak writes in his criticism.

What Maggie did not expect in bargain was the resultant challenge to Brick's sexual identity as well. For now in adopting Maggie's method of supposition and dubious tactics in eliciting the truth Mae and Gooper can equate Brick's refusal to sleep with Maggie with his incapacity for heterosexual performance. This psychological importance with regards to his seductive wife, coupled already with his exclusively homo-social preference for skipper, provide this eaves-dropping brother and sister-in-law with the opportunity to deduce Brick's homosexuality accordingly and thereby secure the plantation for themselves.(17)

Brick marries Maggie to prove he was a normal heterosexual man, and he proved to be a strong sexual partner. She believes that Brick will come back to normal life and sexual relation. She says that the victory of the cat on a hot tin roof is to stay on, with belief that she can overcome and change the situation. Brick is entirely apathetic, he does not respond to any feeling, suffering and any social need. He neglects his dying father as much as he neglects the demand of his wife. He ignores the need of dignity before his greedy elder brother, as much as he hates the idea of having a child with his wife. His responses are few but almost always void of feelings.

Brick is trying to escape from the harsh and inflexible truths of reality. It is an illusion which Margaret attempts to strip away, and which Big daddy finally succeeds in removing. If Brick is to be saved from the suicidal drift in which he is caught, his illusions must be shattered and he must be made to face the truth about his relationship with Skipper and reasons for his hatred. In *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, illusion

is seen as harmful to life, as a form of escapism which can eventually become destructive. Because of his unwillingness to give up his illusions, Brick is moving further and further from the world of the living. Brick married Maggie in order to prove that he was not a homosexual. But his condition becomes worse and turns into alcoholism. Mark Royden Winchell comments the relation between Brick and Skipper. He views that Brick's own view of his friendship with Skipper is both "complex and defensive". If Mae and Gooper are only casually homophobic; Brick is profoundly disturbed by the thought of unconventional sexuality (85). The play's central conflict revolves around the fact that Brick does not want to go to bed with his wife. Brick himself thinks Maggie had always felt something wrong in friendship of Brick and Skipper because they never get any closer than two people just get in bed, which is not much closer than two cats on a fence humping. Certainly, Maggie plays the role of the antagonist here in the exceptional, real and deep friendship of two men. The play moves around with the theme of homosexuality in the depth though surface theme concerns with heritage. To the reference of the homosexuality and heterosexuality, it would be quite fascinating to mention James Joyce's lines- "Love between man and man is impossible because there must not be sexual intercourse and friendship between man and woman is impossible because there must be sexual intercourse". (A Painful Case 268)

The relationship between Mae and Gooper is also a puzzling problem. The tension between fertility and the so called platonic idea of ideal friendship between man and man is also equally problematic. It seems that the author is suggesting that homosexual relation is better than the life full of greed and quarrels related to traditional heterosexual relation and family life. The best thing we can say about this play is that it is about homosexual culture in transition and crisis in the mid-twentieth

century. The theme of the play is more complicated by its many allusions to myths. Brick is identified to Narcissus, the mythical youth who died of self-love. The main issue and the crux of many related and interrelated problems in the drama *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* is the crisis faced by homosexuals of the 1950's. It seems that the dramatist wanted to explore the theme of homosexuality. As a dramatist explicitly and openly says in the most important of his unique commentaries, in Act Two, the drama is not only about a single character's problem, but about the "thundercloud of a common crisis", the crisis of homosexual minority. William argues:

Brick's detachment is at last broken through. His heart is accelerated; his forehead sweat-beaded; his breath becomes more rapid and his voice hoarse. The thing they're discussing, timidly and painfully on the side of Big Daddy, fiercely, violently on Brick's side, is the inadmissible thing that Skipper died to disavow between them. The fact that if it existed it had to be disavowed to "keep face" in the world they lived in, may be at the heart of "mendacity" that Brick drinks to kill his disgust with. It may be the root of his collapse. Or maybe it is only a single manifestation of it, not even the most important. The bird that I hope to catch in the net of this play is not the solution of one man's psychological problem. I'm trying to catch the true quality of experience in a group of people, that cloudy, flickering, evanescent-fiercely charged!- interplay of live human beings in the thundercloud of a common crisis. (*Act II*)

Though different critics have claimed in different ways, so this project shows about the conventional woman's right of heritage in her family and the conflict of heterosexuality and homosexuality. The issue related to homosexuality and

heterosexuality will be analyzed under the theoretical framework of gender theory. Actually sex refers to the biological fact which relates with the internal and external sex organs and chromosomes whereas the gender represents masculine and feminine which is given by the society and culture. In the society a real man is a male sex where masculine is his social role. On the other woman is female sex and the social role of her is feminine.

Male and Masculinity has been rapidly growing within feminist studies and gender studies since 1970, the field of study has grown and expanded worldwide basis. Foucault work is important for feminist analysis. His theory of power is itself gendered. Gender history refers to the history of the roles of men and women how culture and society have seen. In western societies woman bodies are produced by a phallogocentric desire therefore there is fundamental inequality in sex relation while men are expected to desire and seek for sex. But women must provide pleasure but not desire it. The analysis of bodies and pleasure must take the difference between masculine and feminine bodies seriously. Like feminism gender theory says that gender is caught between the notion of essentialism- the belief that women are naturally and fundamentally different than men based on their biological sex. Gender can be seen as a pattern constructed in society. According to Foucault, 'sex' not only functions as a norm but a part of regulatory practice. For Foucault men sexuality is knowledge, power, oppressive and women sexuality is secondary. Geography and space are related to analyze power inequities of female body. For women in patriarchal culture nation and geography are experienced in terms of internal belonging to the body. As they migrate and create new homes, reality fundamentally affects their cultural production, language and literary form are transformed in new location. Colonized people have a history of dealing with dominance and they are

forced to adopt using and transforming the master's tools. So, by writing our own history, culture & language we are liberating our self from the colonial power. Because of the linkage of sexuality to truth, sexuality developed into a marker of identity. In order to evidence this notion, Foucault alludes the invention of the concept of homosexuality (and in tandem, the invention of the homosexual), arguing once again that homosexuality was not discovered, but rather, produced through dialectical exchange: "Homosexuality appeared as one of the forms of sexuality when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphroditism of the soul. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species" (43). Homosexuality thus began to defend itself as a legitimate mode of existence, demanding its social and cultural recognition. Male has the power of independence, operating against the vulnerability of a woman whose world is centred on that male power. This is the dynamic of heterosexuality under patriarchy.

Foucault writes, "when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphroditism of the soul. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species"(50). Toward a Phenomenology of Sex-Right: Reviving Radical Feminist Theory of Compulsory Heterosexuality: it's important to note the extent to which lesbianism itself has been refigured by heteronormativity today as central to the heterosexual norm, that is, for the pleasure of men, there is a great likelihood that today, the sexual agency of lesbianism, rather than simply foreclosed by heteronormativity, is refigured in terms of men's access to women.

Women are colonized within their own body. They remain in the control of male because of biology. Male have such exploitation nature or patriarchal power.

History says that male is always in control society. Lack of identity, crisis and voicelessness is the characteristic of female so they urge for the power, equality and rights whereas male needn't have it. Now twentieth century masculinity is in crisis and under challenge. There is no harmony between man and women in relation to the status in the society. Women are silenced in the patriarchal ideology. Likewise, Sandra Gilbert views as; " The feminist criticism wants decode and demystify all the disguised questions and answers that have always shadowed of the connection between textually and sexuality genre and gender, psychosexual identify and cultural authority" (334). So, Gilbert here intends to make the clear relationship between male female sexuality, sexual identification and cultural dictation upon female by male.

The advantages of recognition of feminist criticism and theory which are useful to learn social institutional and personal power relation between the sexes. So Tori Moi says; " Feminist criticism then is specific kind of political discourse, a critical and theoretical practice, committed to the struggle again patriarchy and sexism, not simply a concern for genders in literature" (204). The male dominated society does not provide privacy to women. In such societies women long for their lost privacy. In patriarchal society females are separated or rejected when a male does not want her. The patriarchal society makes such rules so as to establish its supremacy. Female are always supposed to be enjoyed by male and thrown in a ditch where there are a lot works to do. Time and again women cannot let themselves get rid of sexual pleasure. They are more emotional than males so that they think each and every time about having sex and enjoying male body. William uses lyrical dialogue in his play which is a unique style of the development of drama in 1950's. He has used a typical southern American dialect, with a lot of ordinary slang without feeling hesitation. Reference to homosexuality was made in Brick retorts at his father;

" No, I can't we talk; you talk, in circles! we get nowhere, no where! It's always the same, you say you want to talk to me and don't have a fuckin things to say to me!"(339).In homosexual culture, sexuality involves two individuals of the same sex. It is also possible for a person whose sexual is heterosexual to get involved in sexual acts with people of the same sex. Homosexual people who pretend to lead a life of heterosexuality are often referred to as living 'closeted' lives, that is , they hide their sexuality in " the closet". 'Closet case' is a derogatory term used to refer to another homosexual that hid his or her homosexuality. Homosexuality is a sexual attraction to members of one's own sex, though people who engage exclusively in same-sex sexual practices may not identify themselves as gay or lesbian.

America has always been known for its many freedoms: religion, speech, press, to bear arms, and the right to a fair and speedy trial. Thomas Jefferson said in the Declaration of Independence I July 4, 1776: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights that among these are life, liberty and pursuit of happiness" (13). America is world renowned for this philosophy and yet there are still groups of people who feel discriminated against. In today's society, the greatest dilemma they face is with sexual orientation. In the US, the history of homosexual culture and politics is even shorter than it is in Europe. The largest and best known communities are in New York, Los Angels, and San Francisco, and there are reasons for that. First, because of economic dislocations and farm crises in the first half of the 20th century, people migrated to large cities to find work. Once there, they were often forced to live outside traditional family structures, many in same sex settings such as military and industrial barracks, for prolonged periods. Those with homosexual inclinations found one another at the same time that they found the freedom to express themselves

without ever-present familial and religious disapproval. For women in particular this was a new experience. Richard Howe writes about homosexuality in America:

After Second world War, thousand of gay and lesbian people were dishonorably discharged from the armed services, and many were simply dumped I port cities. At times, several hundred ex-service people were deposited in San Francisco per day. They could not go home in disgrace, so they stayed. The first known homosexual political organization in the US was the Mattachine Society, founded in November of 1950 in Los Angles. This underground emancipation movement was the brainchild of Harry Hay, a young musicologist who had honed his organizing skills in the ranks of one of the most underground political movements in America. (30)

The main issue and the crux of many related and interrelated problems in the drama *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* is the crisis faced by homosexuals of the 1950's . It seems that the dramatist wanted to explore the theme of homosexuality and make frank statements about its merits; but he seems to have ended up only suggesting how difficult it then was for even an artist to speak frankly about it. The drama can be seen as an attempt explore, expose and express ideas for the untraditional sexual orientation of homosexuality. Until the late 1970's, homosexuals to live in society during those decades. In drama, Williams has dramatized not the solution but the problem of homosexual's life in society. Brick the main male character, is living a life dipping him in the intoxication of alcohol, oblivion, illusion and evasion. He avoids encountering people who talk about his homosexuality because it is unbearable even to him. But the problem is that he can't give it up, adopt the normal mode of life and live with his living wife. He goes to the extent of rejecting his father's offer of his

immense wealth. He is only daunted by Maggie's act of hiding the wines. He may, only under the pressure of having to face the reality in sober consciousness, yield to Maggie's coaxing for sex and having to a child.

The universal applicability of modern western concepts of sexual orientation has been questioned by the scholars in the twentieth century. The debate is an instance of a broader conversation in social theory between social constructions and essentialists. Essentialists maintain that sexual identities reflect deeply rooted sexual desires which can be neatly classified as heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual. Social constructionists argue that the concept of homosexuality did not exist prior to the mid-nineteenth century. The men's spaces are very strong in the sense that it guards against the process of heterosexualization which has the effect of isolating and removing male sexuality from the spaces into a separate ghetto and provides men a lot of relief from the pressure of social manhood.

II. Battle of Sexes in Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*

In *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, the most important sexual struggle is the one Margaret is attempting to reestablish between Brick and herself. Margaret is a sexually alienated woman who struggles to get the baby and the property of Big Daddy. All the time, she feels like a cat on a hot tin roof. William argues:

MARGARET. Oh, Brick ! How long does it have t' go on. This punishment?

Haven't I done time enough, haven't I served my term, can't I apply for a – pardon ?

BRICK. Maggie, You're spoiling my liquor. Lately your voice always sounds like you'd been running upstairs to warm somebody that the house was on fire!

MARGRET. Well, no wonder, no wonder. Y' know what I feel like, Brick? *I feel all the time a cat on a hot tin roof!* (Act I)

The relationship between Margaret and Brick is important for a number of reasons. Gooper and Mae are going to be dissatisfied in their attempts to disinherit Brick and Margaret. On the other hand, it must be restored to present Big Daddy with a third generation heir. Then the relation must be restored to bring Brick out of the self-imposed exile and moral paralysis in which he finds himself.

Maggie's married life is compared to a cat's life on a hot tin roof which is the main theme of the drama. Thus the relationship between Maggie and Brick is essentially problematic. It is mainly due to the simple fact that Brick is a failed homosexual who also hates to be a heterosexual. Besides most of his frustration comes from Maggie's act of destroying his one time homosexual friend Skipper. Brick hates Maggie, he only manages to ignore and tolerate her sight. She is talkative

but Brick only pretends to listen to her. Some of the conversations between them drag on for some time but Brick is nonchalant all the time. He wipes her kiss off from his cheeks and he wants to remain drunk and indifferent towards her very presence. Brick shows no interest in either Maggie, or what she has to say. He almost seems fed up and indifferent to anything she mentions:

MARGARET. (*intensely, fearfully*) The way y' were looking at me just now, befo' I caught your eye in the mirror and you started t' whistle! I don't know how t' describe it but it force my blood! I've caught you looking at me like that so often lately. What are you thinking of when you look at me like that?

BRICK. I wasn't conscious f likin at you, Maggie

MARGARET Well, I was conscious of it! What were you thinkin' ?

BRICK. I don't remember thinking of anything Maggie.

MARGARET. Don't you think I know that? Don't you ? Think I know that? (*Act I*)

Brick marries Maggie to prove he was a normal heterosexual man, and he proved to be a strong sexual partner. She believes that Brick will come back to normal life and sexual relation. She says that the victory of the cat on a hot tin roof is to stay on, with belief that she can overcome and change the situation. Brick is entirely apathetic, he does not respond to any feeling, suffering and any social need. He neglects his dying father as much as he neglects the demand of his wife. He ignores the need of dignity before his greedy elder brother, as much as he hates the idea of having a child with his wife. His responses are few but almost always void of feelings. Sexual motivation determines much of the action of the play. There are many sexual relationships in the play and all of them impose upon each other. Most of them are troubled. Big Daddy

admits that sexuality with his wife has been essentially joyless for him. His dialogue reveals his history as well as his character. Big Daddy shows contrastive nature of human beings when he has fear of death from cancer, he becomes numb. He sees darkness all around him. Quite contrarily, when false report from the clinic declares that he has no cancer, but only spastic colon, he is changed; his emotion and physical passion become alive. He frankly reveals the truth that, though he had slept with Big Mama until he was sixty, he really did not like her. He has still desire of sleeping with young beautiful women. Truth upsets him and he bursts into anger for all the lies and liars of his surroundings:

BIG DADDY. Ha ha!- Pleasure ! – Pleasure with women!

Brick's smile fades a little but lingers

Yes, boy. I'll tell you something that you might not guess. I still have desire for women and this is my sixty fifth birthday.

BRICK. I think that's mighty remarkable Big Daddy. *(Act II)*

Big Mama seems sincere, earnest and occasionally grotesque to her husband. She is sympathetic as an object of pity, affection and indulgence. She favors Brick, investing him with all her hopes for the future of the family. She implores that Brick must carry on the family line, he must provide Big Daddy with a grandson as similar as to Daddy himself. Big Mama lives in the shadow of her husband, wanting only to please him and keep the family happy. She endures his harshness and insults because of her love for him, though his verbal cruelty and emotional indifference hurt her deeply. Though essentially a meek person, Big Mama summons the strength of will to resist Gooper and Mae's attempts to take control of the plantation, choosing instead to place her trust in Brick. She shouts in her anger.

BIG MAMA. Now you listen to me, all of you, you listen here! They's not goin' to be any more catty talk in my house! And Gooper, you put that away before I grab it out of your hand and tear it right up! I don't know what the hell's in it, and I don't want to know what the hell's in it. I'm talkin' in Big Daddy's language now, I'm his wife not his widow, I'm still his wife! And I'm talkin' to you in his language an' – (*Act III*)

Gooper and Mae appear to have the most fulfilling sexual relationship, but it is filled with irony. This sexual union which has produced five children seems to lack all the elements of compassion, tenderness and deep feeling which mark the less successful relationship in the play. Having given birth to five children and now pregnant with the sixth, Mae had devoted most of her married life to producing grand children for Big Daddy in an effort to try to enter his favor in order to gain an advantage and to help Gooper acquire control of the estate. She realizes that Brick and Maggie have not been sleeping together. But when Maggie claims to be pregnant she becomes furious. She is annoyed by what Maggie expresses in these lines:

MARGARET. Big Daddy's got on his Chinese slippers that I gave him, Brick. Big Daddy, I haven't given you my big present yet, but now I will, now's the time for me to present it to you! I have an announcement to make !

MAE. What? What kind of announcement?

GOOPER. A Sport announcement , Maggie?

MARGARET. Announcement of life beginning! a child is coming, sired by Brick, and out of Maggie the cat! I have Brick's child in my body, an' that's my birthday present to Big Daddy on this birthday.

(*Act III*)

The drama's complication and climax reaches in Act II. The dramatist manages to reveal much of the partial truths and secrets about the main character Brick with the help of his father who tries his best to force the truth out. Big Daddy expresses his lack of enthusiasm for the celebration in single word "Crap!" overweight Big Mama, who good-naturally tolerates, jokes at her expense. Their relationship is like a piece of broken mirror which a lady tries to put together and see her image properly as long as she carefully holds the pieces together. Charles E. May says:

However, in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, because Brick makes no clues as to the nature of Brick's problem via an objectification of a possible solution or even, as in Hemingway's stories, a possible palliative. The click in his head that Brick drinks to achieve seems merely an intensification of his already withdrawn state. And, as noted, Brick's disgust seems to exceed its ostensible cause as objectified by the relationship with Skipper. (8)

It shows that sexual motivation determines much of the action of the play. Many sexual relationships impose upon each other. As critics have noticed, sex seems to be regulated in the face of death to obtain money. But it must be noted that sex is also regulated in the face of death to create life and this is perhaps more important role that sex plays in this drama. John M. Clum argues:

Brick's homophobia is part of his sexual or emotional malaise. He is painfully aware that his nonsexual nominal marriage to Maggie is a far cry from the total relationship the bed signifies. Brick occupies a middle state; he does not love his wife, with whom he claims never to have gotten any closer" than two people just get in bed which is not much closer than two cats on a – Fence humping" an echo of Big

Daddy's loveless sex with Big Mama and an expression of Brick's inability to combine sex and friendship or love. Yet he is horrified at the thought of a sexual dimension of his friendship with Skipper. (38)

We can see that once the secrets between Big Daddy and Brick are opened up, the story is essentially over. After that confrontation the play meanders around and around in a contest between Gooper, Mae, and Maggie regarding the estate. All the conflict is in a sense made to sound secondary. In the play frustration is caused by "mendacity" and "evasion". Brick is frustrated, or in his world disgusted with mendacity. He feels that the lies that Maggie spoke to Skipper killed him. He is frustrated as he has lost his friend. He is psychologically disturbed and morally paralyzed. He has lost his fame. He has lost most important parts of his life.

Therefore, he declines to drinking. Big Daddy is a rich man. By his skill and labor, he has become master of large property. Yet he is frustrated in his life. He is disgusted as former examination speculates his cancer. Temporarily, he becomes happy when he is told that he does not have cancer, but only a spatic colon. After a shocking disclosure of his cancer by Brick unconsciously, Big Daddy becomes frustrated not only with his life but also with his world where he finds all lies and liars. Like Brick, he can't face the truth and bursts into anger. Sincere, faithful and devoted woman, Big Mama, is also frustrated because she is also kept in illusion by her son Gooper and daughter-in-law Mae. She is disgusted because and Mae and Gooper bring irrelatively documents and persuade her to effect the will of Big Daddy in their favor. She is not yet widow but they make her feel that forcefully. That causes her to burst into anger and says, "I'm his wife not his widow, I'm still his wife!"

Maggie is no less frustrated than others. Her married life is failure because first Brick, her husband, does not sleep with her and she is still childless, and secondly

she is likely to be avoided from her rightful inheritance. She is, in fact, the most frustrated character in the play. Finally, we do have a little sympathy towards Mae and Gooper since they can't succeed in their plan. They are frustrated for their villainy is disillusioned and it is very possible that they can't inherit all the lands and property of Big Daddy that they had assumed for success.

William deliberate elision of homosexual and heterosexual concerns also helps to demonstrate the oppressive state of American Patriarchy. Williams plays are by no means restricted to characters echoing his past, nor are they merely autobiographical even with respect to characters who are based on his personal experience, William has always shaped his characters and plots to reflect and explore the enduring problems of loneliness and illusion in human experience. His plays reveal a world of human frustration in which sex and violence underlie an atmosphere of romantic gentility. Some of his dramas earmark of his biographical themes of ambivalence in sexual orientation, disaffection and difficulty in maintaining intimate relationships. His plays reflect the post-war American society of the twentieth century. In homosexual culture, sexuality involves two individuals of the same sex. It is also possible for a person who's sexual is heterosexual to get involved in sexual acts with people of the same sex. Homosexual people who pretend to lead a life of heterosexuality are often referred to as living 'closeted' lives, that is, they hide their sexuality in "the closet". 'Closet case' is a derogatory term used to refer to another homosexual that hid his or her homosexuality. Homosexuality is a sexual attraction to members of one's own sex, though people who engage exclusively in same-sex sexual practices may not identify themselves as gay or lesbian. The social pressure up on homosexuality usually turned into psychological pressure and they became psychological as well as social victims. Their only escape was alcoholism, drug addiction, or some other kind of

illusion. Their problems branched out into schizophrenia or some other type of psychosis. The crisis of homosexuality in the contemporary American society, since the problem was a stigma to it in front of the world community was a problem at least in those times.

Historically, virtually all societies have condemned incest, adultery, and homosexuality because such practices, in distinctive ways, threaten the family. We face epidemics in sexually transmitted diseases, teenage pregnancies, abortions, illegitimacy, rape and sexual abuse. Marriage rates are on the decline, and divorce is on the increase, especially among younger couples. The American family may not yet be an endangered species, but it is far from thriving. So, it is clear that *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* explores the issue of homosexuality where 1950's is the transitional period in American culture for homosexuality, whether it should be accepted or not.

Homosexuality is the inadmissible thing that hovers in the background of the play. Big Daddy has a tolerance for homosexuality. He speaks affectionately of Ochello, who gave him his opportunities in life. But his tolerance is not shared by Brick, who is horrified when he gets the idea that his father thinks he may be homosexual. Brick is heavily influenced by how society regards homosexuality. As a handsome pro-football player, Brick has lived for years on the approval and high regard of society. He can't bear the scorn that would result from being branded a homosexual. He refers to homosexual as "Fairies", "dirty old men and queers" insisting that his friendship with Skipper was "deep friendship", nothing to do with sex at all. Brick gets angry when Maggie spoils his relationship with Skipper.

BRICK. One man has one great good true thing in his life. One great good thing which is true! – I had friendship with skipper. – you are naming it dirty !

MARGARET. I'm naming it dirty! I am naming it clean

BRICK. Not love with you, Maggie, but friendship with Skipper was that one great true thing and you are naming it dirty! (*Act I*)

The truth about Brick's sexuality is hard to determine. No one in the play regards him as a homosexual, but it is possible that he represses his own desire. On the face of it Skipper appears to have been the homosexual one, but again, even that is not an established fact. Maggie thought that because Skipper and Brick had an exceptionally close friendship, Skipper must be a homosexual. It was Maggie who convinced Skipper of it. Williams leaves the issue fraught with ambiguity.

When we relate the thematic structure of heterosexuality and homosexuality, we come to regard the former without any surprise. The latter one becomes a disgusting subject. Even at the age of sixty-five, Big Daddy has still desires for women. Maggie has passionate desire of intercourse with her husband. For this purpose, she separated Brick from Skipper, pure and sacred loving friends, who had exceptional, real and deep friendship. Big Mama is curious to know whether Maggie makes Brick happy in bed but Maggie is disgusted. She speaks truth that it works both ways. She asks to find out whether Brick makes her happy in bed or not. Mae spies and reports their relation to Big Mama and Big Mama, in turn, to Big Daddy that Brick sleeps on sofa, not on bed with Maggie. All these instances prove how conscious these people are towards heterosexuality. The central idea of the play, which the playwright focuses, is homosexuality. This conversation shows whether Brick is a homosexual partner or not.

BIG MAMA. Don't laugh about it ! Some single men stop drinkin' when they get married and others start! Brick never touched liquor before he- !

MARGARET. (*Crying out*) THAT'S NOT FAIR!

BIG MAMA. Air or not fair want to ask you a question, one question:

D' you make Brick happy n bed?

MARGARET. Why don't you ask if he makes me happy in bed?

BIG MAMA. Because I know that-

MARGARET. *It works both ways!*

BIGMAMA. Something's not right! You're childless and my son drinks! (*Act I*)

The play's central conflict revolves around the fact that Brick does not want to go to bed with his wife. Brick himself thinks Maggie had always felt something wrong in friendship of Brick and Skipper because they never get any closer than two people just get in bed, which is not much closer than two cats on a fence humping. Certainly, Maggie plays the role of the antagonist here in the exceptional, real and deep friendship of two men. The play moves around with the theme of homosexuality in the depth though surface theme concerns with heritage. The conflict between social necessity and Brick's platonic idea of friendship is the major dramatic and thematic tension of the play *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Brick represents the theme of the platonic ideal of homosexual friendship and his brother Gooper and his wife Mae represent the other side of fertility and social necessity. In fact, it is not Brick but the two old pair of homosexuals who are the embodiment of perfect homosexual relationship though they are absent in the play. With regard to this theme of conflict between homosexuality and heterosexuality, we can draw a line of continuum between the two extreme types of characters and place all of them in the same scale in term of relative proximity. Big Daddy says he was like Brick and loves and understands Brick's homosexual tendency, but he declares that one should live life with a wife,

have children, and tolerate all the mendacity of the society and family one lives in. Maggie also thinks that even after the dream of life is over, life has to go on. She must have children and climb the ladder of prosperity and material gain. She urges Brick to have a child, much like Big Mama and Big Daddy. Poor Big Mama is a simple representative of the ordinary heterosexual and fertile woman, and she hates infertility.

The dramatist comments that the fact about Brick's relation with Skipper is inadmissible. It was the tragic consciousness about social attitude that killed Skipper. Brick is struggling to fight the reality with the help of alcohol. He hates people speaking about it, and claims that it was clean'. But in that case, he could just forget and live normally as he had decided when he married Maggie. The complexity of the theme can be related to the other issues. Maggie's troubled married and sexual life is complex, she can neither jump off the hot tin roof nor she is likely to succeed in cooling it down. Similarly, Brick's alcoholism and frustration are also complex and vague problems. The relationship between Mae and Gooper is also a puzzling problem. The tension between fertility and the so called platonic idea of ideal friendship between man and man is also equally problematic. It seems that the author is suggesting that homosexual relation is better than the life full of greed and quarrels related to traditional heterosexual relation and family life. The best thing we can say about this play is that it is about homosexual culture in transition and crisis in the mid-twentieth century. The theme of the play is more complicate by its many illusions to myths. Brick is identified to Narcissus, the mythical youth who died of self-love. Here George W. Crandell comments. The narcissistic personality as to take advantages of others and suffers from a lack of empathy. Exhibiting both of these characteristics,

Brick takes a advantage of Maggie's feelings by refusing to sleep with her and shows a lack of empathy for Big Daddy by revealing the truth about his fatal condition. (130)

The issue of homosexuality in the play is related to many references to Greek myths as well as belief and philosophy of those ancient times. Athenians of the fifth and fourth century B.C. believed that homosexual love alone is capable of satisfying a man's highest and noble aspirations because it is based on truly spiritual love and they believed that heterosexual love is inferior because it is driven by a mere desire to satisfy inferior physical passion and to procreate. Brick clearly regards his relation with skipper as 'clean' and vastly superior to the earthly love offered to him by Maggie calls Brick 'superior' and 'godlike' being when she talks about his homosexuality. Whenever anyone mentions his relationship with skipper, Brick becomes defensive against possible vulgarization of it, and forcefully denies any demonstration of physical passion between them, maintaining that their relationship transcended gross physical desire, remaining pure, true and clean.

William's *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* demonstrates the human experience in the society which tries to dictate to people how they should live, and at a time where lack of human communication leads to the unavoidable loneliness of man. In the overcharged circumstances of a family crisis many truths are reveled about human feelings, desperate fear of death, love of life, hidden guilt, inability to face the truth and many more. Maggie, Brick's married wife, does not get her marital satisfaction from the husband. Maggie is complaining about the children but Brick is completely indifferent towards her. She tries to appeal to him sexually and emotionally but always fails. Maggie feels like a cat on a hot tin roof but cannot jump off from there. She can't live separately without having intercourse with Brick. Christopher Brian Weimer writes in his criticism about Maggie's protest: "Like Yerma, Maggie must

struggle for survival in a hostile socioeconomic environment. Moreover, the three masculine avatars that represent obstacles to Yerma confront Maggie in virtually identical ways. “(Weimer 72). This conversation between Maggie and Brick shows Maggie can’t live alone.

MARGARET. Living with someone you love can be lonelier-then living entirely alone! – if the one that y’ love doesn’t love you..

There is a pause: Brick hobbles downstage and asks, without looking at her.

BRICK. Would you like to live alone, Maggie?

Another pause: Then – after she has caught a quick hurt breath.

MARGARET. No! – God! – I wouldn’t! (*Act I*)

In every way, the play moves round the catness of the females – Maggie and Mae. The catness of Mae is Merely confided to the heritage, large property of Big Daddy, who is going to die of cancer. Catness of Maggie is effective more than that. She is disturbed both mentally and physically. After marriage with Brick she hopes to get into riches, but alienation from Brick is painful part of her life. On one side, Mae and Gooper are working with all their efforts to make Big Daddy sigh his will in their favors because Maggie is childless. On the other hand, her husband Brick has been taking drinks all the time and never goes to sleep with her. He sleeps rather on sofa. Naturally all her feminine desires have been crushed down by Brick and his drinks. She is really consumed with envy since Mae has already five children and sixth is coming but she has none. She is also eaten up with longing because no desires of her are fulfilled yet.

MARGARET. You see? - They gloat over us being childless, even in front of their five little no-neck monsters! Pause voices approach on

the stairs. Brick? I've been to a doctor in Memphis, a – a gynecologist....I've been completely examined, and there is no reason why we can't have a child whenever we want one. And this is my time by the calendar to conceive. Are you listening to me? Are you LISTENING TO ME! (*Act I*)

Brick is a total failure. As a husband and a son, he is capable of being redeemed. The irony of his dilemma is that he refuses to view himself as a husband to Maggie or son to Big Daddy. While Maggie is determined to waken her husband sexually, the old man's concern for his son is more encompassing. The clash between them in the second act is due to Big Daddy's attempt to tell Brick that life may be rotten but it must be lived.

Big Daddy has a new lease on life and he wants to have a frank talk with his beloved son. Big Daddy's confessions of sexual appetite and ease with a world of dishonesty only disgust Brick who tries to end the conversation. Maggie always desires sexual relation with her husband but Brick fails to satisfy her desires as she wishes like many other women in their marital life. Her wishes remain unfulfilled and Brick turns toward alcoholism after his partner skipper died.

Sexuality as the theme of the play became very better to be observed by his audience. Williams changed homosexuality into heterosexuality. Most critical theme of homosexuality is related with the relation between Brick and Skipper. Being wife of Brick, Margaret has her desires of love sex and inheritance. Brick's alienation causes all her disgust and suffering. At the critical moment of family decision about inheritance, she tells a lie-that she is going to give a soft present to Big Daddy a baby. She has to make this lie very true by which she could have her desires fulfilled. It is a coincidence that she has mentioned earlier. It is her time by the calendar to conceive

and this prescribed statement is going to be given a practical shape by sleeping together on the bed. Moreover, it is the time that Brick regains his masculinity and engages in intercourse with his wife. Maggie uses all her feminine means to drag the man, who is in love with his liquor, to her bed. This truth could have been funny in his eye, but after all, this was the truth. The conversation shows Maggie's sexual passion with her husband.

MARGARET. Brick, I used think that you were stronger than me and I didn't want to be overpowered by you. But now, since you've taken to liquor-you know what? I guess its bed, but now I'm stronger than you and I can love you more truly! Don't move that pillow. I'll move it right back if you do !-Brick?

She turns out all the lamps but a single rose silk shaded one by the bed.

I really have been to a doctor and I know what to do and –Brick? – this is my time by the calendar to conceive ?

BRICK. Yes, I understand, Maggie, but how are you going to conceive a child by a man in love with his liquor?

MARGARET. By locking his liquor up and making him satisfy my desire before I unlock it! (*Act III*)

Maggie gets angry with the children of Gooper and Mae. She calls them “no-neck monster” because all five of them are so fat that they don't have necks and number six is coming. Maggie adds that Mae made a display of them to please Big Daddy. According to Big Daddy, Gooper's wife is a good breeder that she can produce easily. Big Daddy speaks in his anger.

BIG DADDY you bet your life I'm going to sit tight on it & let those sons of bitches scratch their eyes out, hahaha...

But Gooper's wife's a good breeder; you got to admit she's fertile. Hill, at supper tonight she had them all the table and they had to put a couple of extra leafs in the table to make room for them, she's got five head of them, now, another one's comin'.

BRICK. Yep, number six is comin' (*Act II*)

The central conflict of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* is Brick's struggle with homosexuality. His reluctance either to admit his own homosexual or to understand those of his friend, Skipper. Many critics saw counterbalance Brick's ambivalence and win him back to his natural homosexual nature. Mae and Gooper and Big Mama and Big Daddy are the representatives of heterosexual partners. So, sexuality is the central aspect of drama in the context of American society after 1950.

The theme of appearance and reality is a major one in the play *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Much of Brick's trouble is due to his constant refusal to come to terms with reality. When the play opens, Brick is hiding in alcoholism from the world too harsh for his sensibilities. But Brick's self-inflicted exile from the world began long before his alcoholism. It began with his idealized conception of his friendship with Skipper. The ideal relationship between Brick and Skipper was an illusion on Brick's part. It never did and never could exist on the mysterious plane Brick conceived for it. When the relationship collapsed and Skipper died, Brick, instead of facing reality, continued to hide behind the illusion. He claimed that the friendship was spotless and the world was at fault of destroying it, because the world was jealous of something true and pure. After the death of his partner, Brick has got depression in every side of his life.

Brick is trying to escape from the harsh and inflexible truths of reality. It is an illusion which Margaret attempts to strip away, and which Big daddy finally succeeds in removing. If Brick is to be saved from the suicidal drift in which he is caught, his

illusions must be shattered and he must be made to face the truth about his relationship with Skipper and reasons for his hatred. In *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, illusion is seen as harmful to life, as a form of escapism which can eventually become destructive. Because of his unwillingness to give up his illusions, Brick is moving further and further from the world of the living. Brick married Maggie in order to prove that he was not a homosexual. But his condition becomes worse and turns into alcoholism.

The main relationship shown in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* is of Brick and Maggie. They are a married couple that seems to only be shown in the title. Their relationship is based on lies and filled with mendacity, which tears them apart. Brick is withholding his personal feelings for Skipper, pretending they were only good friends, when in reality they were homosexual with a façade of heterosexuality. Brick is not only the mendacious one in the relationship; however, Maggie has done her fair share of lying as well. While married to Brick, she tried to have an affair with Skipper, Skipper and Maggie did not have an affair but she allowed Brick to believe that it was true. Because of the mendacity in Brick and Maggie's relationship, the marriage was corrupted. They do not have healthy habits one another. Maggie continues to lust for him, while Brick is filled with disgust for her. This corruption leads to more mendacity.

BRICK. What makes you think that Big Daddy has a lech for you, Maggie?

MARGARET, Way he always drops his eyes down my body when I'm talki' to him, drops his eyes to my boobs an' licks his old chops! Ha ha!

BRICK. That kind of talk is disgusting.

MARGARET. Did anyone ever tell you that you're an ass-aching puritan, Brick? (*Act I*)

The mendacity lies in the relationship of Big Daddy and Big Mama. They are married and sought to appear as a happy couple when they were in fact not. The mendacity that stems from the relationship comes from mainly Big Daddy. He never loved Big Mama, wishing he would buy another woman and choked her with diamonds. He was content with the relation of making Big Mama happy by spending his money. They never really had a loving relationship, but instead it was one filled with mendacity because Big Daddy never told her how he truly felt. Brick is not only one in the play who is the victim of illusions. Big Daddy and Big Mama are being deceived by their family as to the true nature of Big Daddy's illness.

Big Daddy speaks:

Oh, Yes, I do, Oh, Yes, I do, I mean it! I put up with a whole lot of crap around here because I thought I was dying. And you thought I was dying and you started taking over because I'm not gonna die, you can just stop now this business of taking over because you're not taking over because I'm not dying. I went through the laboratory and the goddam exploratory operation and there's nothing wrong with me but a spastic colon. And I'm not dying f cancer which you thought I was dying of Ain't that so? Didn't you think that I was dying of cancer, Ida? (*Act II*)

The play revolves, thematically, around the problem of truth, though without saying anything very substantial on the subject. Brick has been lying to himself, the family has been lying to Big Daddy about his cancer. Big Daddy has a speech in which he retails the lies and hypocrisy he has had to live with all his life. Brick bitterly sums it

all up with the remark mendacity is the system we live in. The resolution of the play is also sexual, though the apparent subject is still truth. Maggie brings to birth a desperate truth by telling Big Daddy that she is pregnant with Brick's child.

In the preface to *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Williams views the human beings inability to communicate meaningfully with other individuals as one of the tragic situations in modern life. In the play, this theme becomes a dominant one. The drama is full of individual who are unable to make communication to each other. They are lacking to comprehend each other's problems all the time. The three major characters in the drama-Margaret; Brick and Big Daddy- are aware of this lack of communication, and are attempting to break through the veil of incomprehension to be a better, more meaningful aware of each other.

Communication is an important aspect in any type of relationship. Among various themes of the play, isolation and lack of communication is a major one. The entire Pollitt family manifests the theme of isolation and lack of communication. Brick, throughout the play, isolates himself not only from Margaret but from others as well. But Margaret is most noticeable. This is caused by his drinking problem Margaret tries so hard to get close to him but lack of respect causes lack of communication between the two.

BRICK. I don't have to do anything I don't want to do you keep forgetting the conditions on which I agreed to stay on living with you.

MARGARET. (*Out before she knows it*) I'm not living with you. We occupy the same cage.

BRICK. You've got to remember the conditions agreed on. (*Act I*)
This is said by Brick to Margaret after she asked him to sign the gift she bought for Big Daddy's Birthday.

Brick no longer wants to understand Margaret or be understood by her. This has caused problems for the two and their marriage and Margaret is scared that they will lose the plantation from Big Daddy. Margaret does not want to let Brick go as she loves him. She says: Oh Brick! How long does it haven't go on? She is fed up of pouring her love out to Brick and him not doing anything back. Brick is isolating himself from Margaret which underestimates the communication needed by both partners. Margaret seems to tell something to Brick but he does not like to listen to her.

The truth about Brick's sexuality is hard to determine. No one in the play regards him as a homosexual, but it is possible that he represses his desires and becomes the reincarnation of an unseen character Skipper. Skipper failed sexual liaison with Maggie proceeds Brick's own sexual break from his wife. After all Brick turns towards the imaginary alcoholic world rather than to communicate with family members. Lack of communication has broken up a son and father in this play. The relationship between Gooper and Big Daddy is non-existent. Gooper puts this in the following dialogue:

GOOPER. You just won't let me do this in a nice way, will yah? Aw right-I don't give a goddam if Big Daddy likes me or don't like or did or never did or will or never will! I'm just appealing to a sense of common decency and fair play. I'll tell you the truth. I've resented Big Daddy's partiality to Brick ever since Brick was born, and the way I've been treated like I was just barely good enough to spit on and sometimes not even good enough for that. Big Daddy is dying of cancer, and its spread all through him and it's attacked all his vital organs including the kidneys and right now he is sinking into uremia,

and you all know what uremia is, it's poisoning of the whole system due to the failure of the body to eliminate its poisons. (*Act III*)

Since Gooper is the oldest son in the family he has got the least attention when he was younger, now wants only to get property from Big Daddy's large estate before he dies. But Big Daddy is smarter that does not like Gooper. Gooper is jealous of Brick so he tries many times in the play to suck up and kiss, but that just makes his situation worse. As a result, Big Daddy's relationship with Gooper, even though he is his son, is disappointing.

Brick and Big Daddy love each other yet they hurt each other deeply. It is shown when they have a long talk together in Act II. Big Daddy is trying to find out why Brick is wasting his life away drinking and when they talk, they get very deep into the core of their problems. In the conclusion of the second act, they have told each other everything and at a great expense. One of which is that of Big Daddy finds out that he is dying of cancer and Brick knows that he must give up drinking to solve his problems. Brick and Big Daddy talk secretly. Big Daddy won't let anyone get in the way of them especially when they were talking in the room and people tried to come in Big Daddy would not let them. He also shows his love to Brick by trying to protect him by talking to him about his problems and trying to protect him by talking to him about his problems and trying to help him get rid of them. As a result, Big Daddy and Brick love each other very much throughout the play finally open up and tell their problems to one another. The entire Pollitt family demonstrates the theme isolation and lack of communication through conflicts of characters such as Brick and Margret. The inability to communicate is manifested in the relationship between a couple that they have many problems. It finally brings a change between them when they find out the truth about everything such as Big Daddy's cancer. Thus, it is

evident that the entire family of Big Daddy lives in isolation and lack of communication.

William's plays are unique in terms of dramatic technique. In his dramas, he used the extensive unconventional commentary. The author's commentary on the setting, characters and meaning, as well as the actions and dialogue is a unique dramatic technique in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. It is not conventional for traditional dramatist to describe a character as Williams does in the beginning of the play to describe Maggie; "A pretty young woman, with anxious lines in her face, enters the bedroom and crosses to the bathroom door" (292). But even more unusual when Williams gives directions like; "the following scene should be played with great concentration, with most of power leashed but palpable in what is left unspoken". How could actors do this? The reader will be confused while reading his plays whether they are reading italicized commentary or the dialogue of the characters. So we can say that Williams used long commentary in almost all of his dramas created a character that exist outside and inside the play's action at the same time. When we see Tom standing on the fire escape adjoining the wingfield apartment, he is the narrator, outside the action he is seasoned merchant sailor who's travelled on both land and sea. Maggie in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* represents the women of the twentieth century who are suffered from loneliness and alienation sexually and Maggie suffers, though she is married. This shows that the characters of his plays are representatives of the conditions of the people of the American society after the 1950.

Gender criticism focusing on the construction of gender and sexuality. They says that power is not just top down or patriarchal- a man dominating women but power never just in one direction. According to gender theory gender is socially constructed ideology which reflected in our culture, social, economical, political and

in the language we use. So gender is based on biological nature but constructed through culture. Like feminism, gender is caught between the notions of essentialism- the belief that women are naturally and fundamentally different than man based on their biological sex. Brick is a Delta planter. He married Maggie and they were perfect couple, with all advantages of youth, beauty, riches, intelligence, health etc. After two years of their marriage, Brick started taking liquor. Brick was disgusted with his life whereas his wife Maggie kept her patience. It shows that she has the power of tolerance. She remain faithful to him. She gained his masculinity. Meanwhile, Brick lost his interest in her. He lived alienated from her. For his alcoholism, Brick came under treatment of a young doctor. The doctor had a young wife. He was himself suffering from brain tumor. He took charge of the widow, her daughter and her property. He appeared to have recovered his masculinity. He again took his drinking. He was arrested and imprisoned for his wild parties of drunkard. He lost his masculinity again. Maggie possessed more and more masculine power and controlled her husband. Maggie already occupies Brick's property. In this play, she struggles for property. In many ways Brick appears feminine and Maggie Masculine.

III. Gender as socially constructed belief in the play *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*

William's *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* is a modern play which have several interrelated issues of the American society in the 1950's. The major one of which is that of the crisis in the development of homosexual culture in modern America. This play reveals several aspects of human life and experience of a family of Southern America. It is about a dysfunctional family that is forced to deal with hidden deception and hypocrisy. The issues that this play revolves around transcend time and region; Williams uses his craft to entertain, enlighten and bare men's soul.

This play attempts to expose and express the ideas of untraditional sexual orientation of homosexuality. It was not crossed out from the list of psychological diseases. So, it was a trauma for the homosexual partners to live. Williams has dramatized not the solution but the problem of homosexual's life in society. Brick, the main character of the drama, is living a life in the intoxication of alcohol, oblivion, illusion and evasion. He avoids encountering people who talk about his homosexuality because it is unbearable even to him. But the problem is that he cannot give up the normal mode of life and live with his loving wife. He goes to the extent of rejecting his father's offer of his immense wealth.

The social pressure upon homosexuals usually turns into psychological pressure and they become psychological as well as social victims. Brick turns into alcoholism after the death of his homosexual partner Skipper. The crisis of homosexuality is the problem for the contemporary society of whole Americans. Many critics see Williams neither condemns nor explicitly approves of either homosexuality or heterosexuality. Williams even denies that homosexuality is the central issue of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Some critics argue that the play is not at all about Brick's sexuality but about his idealism and tragic disillusionment.

Williams has been trying to tell the truth about human beings and the way they live, but he has never wanted to do so as a realist. Realism lies at the core of his talent for creating characters. Brick is disgusted with all the mendacity in life, he gives expression to the play's major theme- the tension between the lies that people tell themselves and others and the truth which may be hard to stomach but must come out in the end. Brick is hiding something in his emotional life that he can't bear to look at closely until he is forced by Big Daddy. He is disgusted with the fact that society will misinterpret the purity of his friendship with Skipper and turn into something else. Gooper and Mae pretend to be dutiful, attentive son and daughter-in-law when in truth they are driven solely by the desire for material gain where American people were heading towards material prosperity after the 1950's.

Big Mama hides behind the illusion that her husband does not really mean all the cruel things he says to her. Big Daddy tells Brick he is disgusted all the lies he had to tell over the years such as pretending that he cares for his wife and for Gooper, Mae and his grandchildren, when the truth is that he can't stand any of them. Even Maggie, who of all the characters, tends to see things clearly, is willing to lie to get what she wants. This is seen when she tells the family in the final moments of the play that she is pregnant.

Sometimes the distinction between truth and falsehood is obscured by the fact that each character sees the others through the lens of his or her ego. Big Daddy thinks that his wife is merely scheming to take over the plantation; because he does not love her, he projects that lack of love onto her. The major deception in the play is practiced by the entire family.

The cat refers to a particular fantasy and feminine desire. The play's primary cat is Maggie, a typically hysterical, dissatisfied William's heroine who prostrates

herself before Brick. Maggie's loneliness has made her a "cat" hard, anxious and bitter. The exhilaration of William's lies in the force of the audience's identification with his heroine, a woman desperate in her sense of lack. Certainly her childlessness calls her status as "normal" wife and woman into question. Without a child, moreover, their place in Big Daddy's household is not assured. The cat makes great off-stage sound, making the presence of spies in the household. The telephone recurs a number of times. Initially Mama and Maggie's conversations rehearse the lie that keeps Big Daddy and Mama ignorant of the machinations afoot, the lie that Daddy will live. The telephone returns at Brick and Big Daddy's showdown to provoke the revelation of what has remained inadmissible until then. Upon Brick's revelation of Daddy's cancer, the telephone communicates Daddy's unspoken protest.

When we relate the thematic structure of heterosexuality and homosexuality here, we come to regard the former without any surprise. The latter one becomes very disgusting subject. Big Daddy, at the age of sixty-five, has still desires of women. Though he didn't like his wife, he slept with her until he was sixty. Maggie has passionate desire of intercourse with her husband. For this purpose she separated Brick from Skipper, pure and sacred loving friends, who had exceptional, real and deep friendship. As Brick is passionately in love with his liquor, Big mama is curious to know whether Maggie makes Brick happy in bed but Maggie is disgusted. Mae spies and reports their relation to Big Mama and Big Mama in turn to Big Daddy that Brick sleeps on sofa, not on bed with Maggie. All these instances prove how conscious these people are towards heterosexuality. Central idea of the play which the playwright intentionally focuses is the homosexuality. There are two pairs of men who are shown as notorious figures of homosexuality: first pair- Jack Straw and Peter Ochello, and second pair Brick and Skipper. Maggie, Mae, Gooper and Big Daddy all

suggest that there was something not right exactly normal in friendship of Brick and Skipper.

The play central conflict and its central mystery is the fact that Brick does not want to go to bed with his wife. Brick himself thinks that Maggie had always felt something wrong in friendship of Brick and skipper because she and he both never got any closer together than two people just get in bed, which is not much closer than two cats on a fence humping. Certainly, Maggie plays the role of antagonist here in exceptional, real and deep friendship of two men. So the play moves with the theme of homosexuality in depth though surface theme concern with the heritage. Dialogue that makes the play so lively comprises of idioms, rhythms, imagery, repetition, alliteration, and feminine, masculine or sexual terms. One of the most obvious moral conflicts in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* is visible in the campaign by Gooper and Mae to gain the favor of Big Daddy, while at the same time discrediting Brick and Margaret. Thus, this play explores the theme of battle of sexes because most of the characters involve in the battle either to get Big Daddy's property or to establish existence in the family.

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