

Tribhuvan University

Representation of Female Bonding in *The Country of the Pointed Firs* by

Sarah Orne Jewett

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By

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## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the issue of female bonding in *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896) of Sarah Orne Jewett. Jewett's narration is significant for American minor group who has lost their identities in the society. In this novel, Jewett combines the female relationship to share the pain and suffering and at the meantime, the unnamed protagonist in the novel combines to Mrs. Todd. In this concern, Jewett brings the American females and autonomy and their supremacy. The novel does not have direct sense of active bonding to negate patriarchal subjugation. Mrs. Todd keeps sympathy and empathy to her mother. Mrs. Blackett and Mrs. Todd have a mother-daughter relation to resist the patriarchal notion in the Southern Society of America in the late nineteenth century. It is argued that the novel embodies subject of female trouble and female friendship including the loss of identity.

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## I. Sarah Orne Jewett, Female bonding and Her Works

This thesis examines the female bonding in Sarah Orne Jewett's *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896). In this concern, Jewett has implied different relationship of friendship between Mrs. Todd and her mother, Mrs. Blackett. Through them, the nameless narrator of *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, a visitor to Dunnet Landing, discovers important truths about herself as well as humanity in general. This research is concerned with how the female characters like Mrs. Todd and her mother Mrs. Blackett face frequent challenges from the traditional society in one way or other. Mrs. Todd and other female characters do not challenge the patriarchy directly; rather they share the resemblance in facing the patriarchy. They provide the sympathy and empathy to each other, drawing on the tool of self admiring, self stimulating, self congratulatory in common feeling in writing and sharing to each other.

Jewett's novel is one of the most significant American novels, to put forward the issue of American feminism. It advocates for equality among human beings without discrimination in terms of sex. The narrator deals with some American women who are risky and experimental. The narrator is more risky, she breaks down the deep rooted patriarchal social values and norms imposed by the culture of the south community. In spite of the fact that she is marginalized in the two folds, she goes to college, sleeps with the husbands of her female neighbors, does not get married and rejects to be a mother.

*The Country of the Pointed Firs* is told from the perspective of an unnamed female narrator who visits the small rural village of Dunnet Landing, Maine. The story leads Mrs. Todd, a sixty six year old widow whose way of life becomes the

focus of the narrative. Through the narrator we become acquainted with other citizens of same place such as widower Tilley and the dreaming, melancholy Captain Littlepage as well as those whom the narration touches on from outside of Dunnet Landing such as Mrs. Todd's mother, Mrs. Blackett, lifelong friend Mrs. Fosdick and the regionally respected Bowden family. The everyday lives, past and present, of the women in the village are explored by the narrator, an outsider, who comes to this place of refuge to concentrate on her writing.

These characters are linked by their association to Mrs. Todd, who is instrumental in each of their lives in one way or another, and by their seaside community. In the first chapter the narrator narrates her returning, the simple fact of acquaintance with that neighborhood which made it so attaching, and gave such interest to the rocky shore and dark woods. Moreover, in the second chapter the narration reflects a site for aborting a pregnancy that is embedded within the text and examines its implications. Jewett employs generic site by seeing the tradition of the Victorian novel. In this way the text projects the different relationship among many characters. With the regard of *The Country of the Pointed Firs* Sarah has divided into xxi parts to reveal the female bonding. The narrator narrates the pain and relationship of woman very artistically too.

In this novel, Jewett has mentioned the early life where she has spent. In this regard, Dunnet Landing, Maine is the special town of her. She reflects on her father and her early ambitions for a medical career. She gains graduation in literature in English. In this novel, Sarah Orne Jewett has presented the flashback technique to write down the novel. In this novel, she has explained the condition of minor group female of 1990's to give special attention to the realistic picture of American low middle class woman. Jewett's novel, *The Country of the Pointed Firs* reveals what lies



beneath the surface of slavery in early America. It is both the story of mother and daughter and the story of two female friends.

In 1896, Jewett wrote her novel *The Country of the Pointed Firs* where she presents issue of female bonding. Class and identity and isolation have played forcefully in this novel. Jewett looks at other periods in American history in nineteenth century. Jewett writes about the sufferings and realistic social scenario of the low middle class woman. Jewett was different from other novelists because she had managed to invent her own way of literary writing. She is often called 'an essayist'. Her themes are always common, but because of her strong power and diversity in her subject matters, her literary works appears complicated. Her matured life period has gone through different social changes. She has seen significant changes in economic or class upliftment.

Jewett's work carefully rewrites hidden movements in history, discovering facts and dates, lifestyle and clothes. The narrator combines the natural and the worldly in meaning situation. Jewett is a recorder of widow's lives and times, and the narrator bent on recreating the feelings hopes, dreams, fears, beliefs of the times and the people. To project these, she uses metaphors of herbs. In the novel, there is a case of powerful woman. She is said a traveler. Clearly, this is absence of means of transportation but has explained life of wanderer.

In Jewett's literary works, there is the description of personal public events which are basically related to low middle class woman. Jewett explores the relationship of power between 'haves' and 'haves not'. In her novel, Jewett uses educated and non-educated. Jewett interprets the past and focuses it on young adult experience.

All experiences are vital to sort out the past and to correct it to the present. Jewett starts with an idea, and then finds characters, who can manifest aspects of the idea of adult men and women. Olga Achtenhagen further writes in "The Elementary School Journal".

There is such a thing as being too conscientious, of being a slave to deadening routine, which is in itself a health hazard as well as a hazard to one's love of life. In one of those delightful stories which Sarah Orne Jewett has given us, she has a Mrs. Todd of New England say, "Some folks washes Monday and irons Tuesday the whole year 'round even if the circus is going by!" A bit of variety, of doing things on the spur of the moment, will help ever so much to establish our relations with the pupils and, consequently, our general well-being and state of mind. I remember a class in literature in which we had been nature poetry one May day, Mrs. Blackett deals out her womanish to next, she bears all suffering in the lap of nature closely. (29)

This notion of folk washes the slavery of masculinity but the same time makes a bond with female to female to establish a relation like people and teacher. In this city of New England in one hand relates the narrator to Mrs. Todd and on the other hand in the relationship of mother and daughter to Mrs. Todd and Mrs. Blackett to fulfill the common suffering and needs of their.

Sarah is Pulitzer Prize winner. She was born in September 3, 1849 in South Berwick, Maine of United States. She was the first daughter of her parents. Jewett was brought up under male domination. She got married and collected experiences about life and gender. She represents the low middle's women's voice in her works. 1896 is the most important date for her in the sense of writing the excellent literary

pieces. She declares herself to be a story writer concerned with focusing on misrepresented lives of American people. As an American writer, Jewett provides particular focus women's roles and the triple burden of American women offering critiques of stereotypes and opportunities for women to develop self identity. Female characters suffer more than male characters. Jewett has better knowledge of the torture of low middle women on the one hand, they become the victim of male society and on the other hand they have to tolerate the domination of money.

There is no plot in linear form. The narrator returns after a brief visit of few summers prior, to the small coastal town of Dunnet, Maine, in order to finish writing her book. Upon arriving she settles in with Mrs. Almira Todd, a widow and herbalist. The narrator occasionally assists Mrs. Todd with her frequent collars. The narrator in the fiction has come to village for the solitude. Mrs. Todd's rural ways contrast sharply with those of the urban narrator. Although these women characters have little in common, they have specific friendship to share the pleasure in the open place. Jewett describes, with exceptional sensitivity, how a touching relationship between the two develops. They come to understand and appreciate each other.

Her novels are crowded with female characters. She depicts southern experiences through her characters. In her view, south is the ancestral home of Jewett. As being a woman of the Southern ancestry, she brings the attention of the world to the Dunnet Landing.

Renting a vacant school house with broad view of Dunnet Landing, the narrator can apparently concentrate on her writing. Captain Littlepage, an eighty six year old retired sailor comes to the school house to visit the narrator because he knows Mrs. Todd. He tells a story about his time on the sea. She is noticeably bored so he begins to leave.

The annoyance is that the narrator counts on having her mornings alone to write while Mrs. Todd is gathering herbs in the surrounding countryside. In desperation, she rents a small room. The narrator attends to their needs. In the schoolhouse she transfers her morning activities. There she begins to feel isolated. She realizes as she watches a funeral in which much of the community participates, that her urban identity separates her from the town people.

Gradually, Mrs. Todd reveals to the narrator her demonstrator feelings, confessing that she had a lover who married someone else and then died. She did not really love her husband, who also died, causing her to experience an intermixture of guilt and relief. The bonds between these women are cemented when the narrator treats Mrs. Todd as old friend. Mrs. Todd takes the narrator to Green Island to meet her mother, Mrs. Blackett, a remarkable woman.

During the writing the narrator also draws the picture of love. Similarly, in the course of summer, and with help from Mrs. Almira, the writer gradually comes to know treasure the people of Dunnet Landing. The writer also appreciates the richness of lives and characters that at first seemed isolated and reticent in the novel.

The narrator proves adept at persuading Captain Littlepage to converse comfortably, even though he is skeptical of his story and a little impatient at the interruption. Mrs. Almira Todd is presented as a widow. She is a gardener too. The narrator reflects her as very smart herbal specialist. The herbals like sweet-brier, balm, mint, they are etc. is used to cure the diseases. The writer mostly uses the language of flowers to symbolize the physical structure.

This novel illustrates a new fact that a work of art can be produced from very tenuous material. The subject matter of Jewett's practically exists abnormal. Certainly, it is a negligible quantity when compared to the skill which is exercised upon it. To

make so good a book so slight a theme is in reality to create it, and the creation is comely thing. Different critics have commented on the Poor Joanna's status of woman tragedy. According to Alice Brown,

*The Country of the Pointed Firs* is the flower of a sweet, sane knowledge of life, and an art so elusive that it smiles up at you while you pull aside the peals, vainly probing its heart. The title is exacting, prophetic; a little bit of genius of which the book has to be worthy or come very "tardy off." And the book is worthy. Here is the idyllic atmosphere of country life, unbroken by one jarring note; even the attendant sadness and pathos of being are resolved into that larger harmony destined to elude our fustian words. It is a book made to defy the praise ordinarily given to details; it must be regarded as large. (33)

The commentary of Brown anticipates the virtual sentiment in the characters of the novel. The harmony brings the faithful, praiseworthy relationship among characters to make the country life easier comfortable in the proper manner. This notion of bonding can be shaped by sharing the weal and woe in the life.

Many professional feminist orient organizations deal with the female issue through cultural history. Among them, Jay Martin, a professional feminist critic asserts in his review:

It takes hold of the very centre of things. The pointed firs have their roots in the ground of national being; they are index fingers to the stars. A new region unrolls before you like a living map, where of The Bowden Reunion and Captain Littlepage are twin mountain heights, warm in sunshine and swept by favoring airs. The Reunion indeed bears a larger significance than its name. It stirs in us the

dormant clean-spirit; we understand ancestor-worship, the continuity of being. (98)

The sex which can be turn to be out in the gendered has been neglected by homosexuality in the novel. In the same time a new reason where the Bowden reunions and Captain Littlepage makes new bonds with other characters. In this novel the bonding among characters flourishes very simply but very short temporal. In this concern the characters loses their patriarchal notion and adopts their own construction. Martin puts his ideas to break down the patriarchal notion in term of hegemonizing womanish action in the society continues the geographically to bond among women and men. In this way, in the beginning, different male binds with female characters.

Naturalists, who think mother as Earth, suggest the ideas of tolerance in a real woman in cultural perspective. So Paul Bronswi in his review writes:

All the delicate humor, the broidery of the day, "like fringe upon a petticoat" the pictorial pies, the alien guest with her pseudo-likeness to "Cousin Pa'lina Bowden about taught that great grief and finer feeling are the concomitants of revolt; but it is the larger mind which links them to sweetness, serenity, and obedience. Here is quiet revelation of human tragedy, but none of that fierce rebellion through which individual suffering eats its own heart and the heart of the on looking chorus. Even the self exiled Joanna, pursued by the phantom of the unpardonable sin, cannot afflict us irremediably; for still was she surrounded, as with a sea, by faulty human love, and still, as we read, the tranquil company of the firs bids us be patient till her affliction shall be over past. (73)

In this excerpt Bowden feels the very catharsis position but cannot reveal the positionality among the characters of Dunnet Landing. In this regard the obedience, human tragedy occurs in different way but the female bonding presents very differently by Jewett. Mrs. Todd puts her relation with narrator as a friend and with William as an elder sister to balance her position in the domestic and herbal works. In this place Bowden makes a bond to make the life easy by earning money from the jungle to bring up the matriarchal house. The critic adds the relation within self to learn something.

Similarly, other critic has explained the occupation of Mrs. Todd very sympathetically in the comment. Terry Heller comments on “The Daily Routine” of Mrs. Todd that:

The little volume will be found dignified, gracious and restful. If it is not able bodied, it is at least strong in spirit. The author tells the story of a seaside summer on the coast of Maine. She lives with a fine old country woman, who is a gatherer and dispenser of herbs; she talks to an old sea-captain of infirm but interesting mind; she sails out to the island where her landlady's mother lives, accompanies her good friends to a family reunion, listens to another old captain as he talks of his dead wife, and leaves the quiet village with regret when autumn comes. These are the homely events of the book. (105)

The season in the Dunnet Landing paves the friendship of Blackett and Mrs. Todd in the village to get the position of women. In this concern the spirit of woman shows strong and courageous ironically. The woman can do the beautiful task in the society. Mrs. Todd talks to her mother to transfer everything. In reunion of family Mrs. Todd

asks her mother through interesting mind. She gets inspiration from 'nature' to raise family to bind.

Ron Welburn suggests that Mrs. Almira Todd's love for the man she could not marry resulted in a pregnancy that she aborted the use of pennyroyal. He questions:

Why else would the penny royal mean so much to her memory of her lover while she planned her future with Nathan ? Her maiden name Blackett would confirm her being projected according to conventional mores of the late nineteenth century with her silent and absolute, archaic grief about the loss of her lover and the self administration of a secret substance to in her pregnancy and their by losing her child (43).

Mrs. Todd makes her relationship with her lover but it falls down. So she makes a new friendship with Nathan. In this time she makes an abortion through she has a new relationship with new man. She breaks and challenges the traditional norms. In contrast of patriarchal notion, Mrs. Todd get a risk she makes a friendship with new norms.

Elizabeth Ammons suggests that the structure of the novel is like a spider's web. The center of the novel is "Mrs. Todd's house as Dunnet Landing, place of shared habitation and point of repeated return and embarkation" (85). From this central location, the narrator and Mrs. Todd travel back and forth into the community. Ammons gives an advice, "The narrative continually turns back to where it has been, enriched by its journey out, but not needing to alter or improve upon the nucleus: the relationship between the narrator and Mrs. Todd. All that happens, in this book is that circle expands" (86).



The narrator writes down her experience after visiting the hilly place with Mrs. Todd. After making friendship in the Mrs. Todd's room the unnamed narrator expresses her every spontaneous knowledge and the feeling to Mrs. Todd in the jungle. In the same time Mrs. Todd reacts her past events to the narrator very sympathetically. A great deal of feminist theory and literature has nevertheless assumed that there is a 'doer' behind a 'deed'. Without and hence no potential to initiate a transformation of relations of domination within society.

Monique Wittig's radical feminist theory occupies an ambiguous position within the continuum of theories on the question of subject. Wittig refers to "sex" as a mark that is somehow applied by an institutionalized heterosexuality, a mark that can be erased or obfuscated through practices that effectively contest that institution. Her view, of course, differs radically from Irigaray's. The latter would understand the "mark" of gender to be part of the hegemonic signifying economy of the masculine that operates through the self-elaborating mechanisms of specularization that have virtually determined the field of ontology within the Western philosophical tradition. For Wittig, language is an instrument or tool that is in no way misogynist in its structures, but only in its applications. For Irigaray, the possibility of another language or signifying economy is the only chance at escaping the "mark" of gender which, for the feminine, is nothing but the phallogocentric erasure of the female sex. Whereas Irigaray seeks to expose the ostensible "binary" relation between the sexes as a masculinist ruse that excludes the feminine altogether, Wittig argues that positions like Irigaray's reconsolidate the binary between masculine and feminine and re-circulate a mythic notion of the feminine.

Clearly drawing on Beauvoir's critique of the myth of the feminine in *The Second Sex*, Wittig asserts, "there is no feminine writing". In this concern, there is

different definition about feminism encyclopedia Britannica VIII defines feminism as social movement seeks equal rights for women. Widespread concern for women's right dates from Enlightenment its first important expression was Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), "[. . .] called for full legal equality with men, including full educational opportunity and equal compensation; there after the women suffrage movement began together momentum. From Africa the movement spread to Europe" (226). American women gained the right to vote by constitutional amendment in 1970, but their participation in the work place remained limited, and Mrs. Todd notions tended to confine women to the home.

Gender inequality as determined ultimately by the capitalist mode of production gender oppression, class oppression and women's subordination is seen as a form of class oppression which is the traditionally feudalism. It represents patriarchy exercise. The capitalism to create false consciousness to establish their empire they try to hide all kinds of discrimination and injustice. In this novel, the narrator is of high class to dominate Mrs. Todd in regard to show the status in terms of the identity and the urban and rural parts. The widow, Mrs. Todd is working for rural area and serving her mother and brother but the narrator herself identifies as very clever and of higher dignified and educated to travel and connect the outing.

Her novels are said to be personal story. Events are real. That succession of narration is personal public arguments in this novel. As the Alice Walker in his "The Literary World" has commented in the 1897 as follow:

Mrs. Jewett's last book is as good as the rest cure. After living with her among the old fashioned, easy-going fisher-folk of a little Maine village through two hundred pages, one is ready to go back to the bustle of the city thankful for even so short a vacation. There is no

attempt at a story in the work. The tale runs along in a rambling sort of a way, halting from time to time to make the acquaintance of a new friend or digressing to take a short excursion among the sunny islands that line the coast. There are bits of gossip, amusing and pathetic; life histories told in a sentence, glimpses of lovemaking and funerals, rid peeps in upon family skeletons. The book is enjoyable from cover to cover, and will find a place for itself in many hearts. (109)

This above comment projects the internalization of the personal public experience of Jewett. The novelist projects her experience through novel by standing as narrator in the novel. The narrator flashes every temporal experience to the new friends and collect the glimpses of love to be a good woman. In this novel the narrator binds a relationship with protagonist to share the every momentary empiricism of life. This research has been divided into three chapters the first chapter entitled with Sarah Orne Jewett, Female bonding and Her Works. The second chapter talks about Female Friendship in the novel *The Country of the Pointed Firs*. Similarly, the third chapter shows the female bonding as strength to fight against traditional society.

## II. Female Friendship in *The Country of the Pointed Firs*

The present research is an example of how the females have shared feelings and actions to cope up with the traditional norms, values and patriarchal domination. The issue of the bonding among the female characters in the novel proves the relevance of implementation of the tool of female bonding. Mrs. Todd, Mrs. Blackett and other female characters cooperate in one way or other. Sharing of their feelings and sentiments, they became unified together to counter the traditional norms imposed by patriarchy.

Woman to woman relation is essential in strengthening the possibility of progress of feminist movement. Monique Wittig appears to dispute the metaphysics of substance, but she retains the human subject, the individual, as the nictaphysil locus of agency. While Wittig's humanism clearly presupposes that there is a doer behind the deed, her theory nevertheless delineates the performative construction of gender within the material practices of culture, disputing the temporality of those explanations that would confuse "cause" with "result." In a phrase that suggests the space that links Wittig with Foucault (and reveals the traces of the Marxist notion of reification in both of their theories), she writes:

A materialist feminist approach shows that what we take for the cause or origin of oppression is in fact only the mark imposed by the oppressor; the "myth of woman," plus its material effects and infestations in the appropriated consciousness and bodies of women. Thus, this mark does not pre-exist oppression ... sex is taken as an "immediate given," a "sensible given," "physical features," belonging to a natural order. But what we believe to be a physical and direct

perception is only a sophisticated and mythic construction, an  
 "imaginary formation." (86)

Because this production of "nature" operates in accord with the dictates of compulsory heterosexuality, the emergence of homosexual, desire, in her view, transcends the categories of sex: "If desire could liberate itself, it would have nothing to do with the preliminary marking by sexes."

A "deeper intimacy" develops between the narrator and Mrs. Todd as Mrs. Todd "would feel that she must talk to somebody" and the narrator "was only too glad to listen" (Jewett 8). Mrs. Todd has witnessed death firsthand, and she realizes the importance of developing lasting friendships and making the most of every moment before death overtakes her. It is importance for Mrs. Todd not to shut her life or her home off to the outside world. Sarah writes down: "Mrs. Blackett's laughed heartily, "I'm going to remember to tell William of that" she said "There Almiry, the only thing that's troubled me all have enjoyed it."There wasn't many old folks there, somehow", Said Mrs. Blackett's, with a touch of sadness in her voice." (70)

The quoted line echoes the notion of the sexual friendship among characters to deal their problems. They are sharing each other very sympathetically in mass. They bond to create a notion of mutuality in the open world.

Elaine Showalter in the second wave of feminism focuses on the writing ourselves. So as she writes:

It was in this preoccupation that the typical woman novelist of proper sphere: in using the novel to demonstrate woman's proper sphere. A double standard of literary criticism had also develop, feminine novelists were portrayed as vain, publicity-seeking, self assertive. At

the same time that Victorian reviewer assumed that women readers and women writers were dictating the content of fiction. (293)

Mrs. Todd reveals to the narrator a second reason for her sorrow the point in the novel. Mrs. Todd intimates that she is thankful for her husband, Nathan, died before he learned “what he’d had to know” if they had lived together. That is, before her husband discovered that Mrs. Todd’s heart was gone out of her keeping before Mrs. Todd ever saw Nathan (40).

As the above lines narrates herself and listens as Showalter puts her idea in the article “*A Literature of their Own*”. So as we can anticipate from the above narration from the novel. Throughout *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, Mrs. Todd is described with such phrases that to bring mind the figure of an ancient goddess. Among other things, she is compared to a sibyl and to a witch; there is the suggestion that Mrs. Todd is connected to a very ancient past surrounded by a secrets and mystery. She recalls primal femininity with her rotund figure and her vast amount of knowledge. As stated by Helen Luke, “the daughter is the extension of her (the mother’s) very self, carrying her back into the past and her own youth and forward to the promise of her own rebirth into a new personality, into the awareness of the self”. The loss of the daughter is a loss of the young and untroubled part of self. It brings forth change as one shifts focus in the inner self and to the work of the second half of life.

The bond between mother and daughter not only from psychoanalytical point but also from the same sex and the perspectives of common feelings, common difference from masculinity of Helen Cixous attracts the novel’s story.

Knowing the close relationship Mrs. Todd has with her mother, the younger woman had to have felt that she would be missing out of the special relationship

between a mother and her child, perhaps even continuing the cycle with a daughter of her own. It is Mrs. Blackett's love that transforms her daughter and helps her to rise up from where she has fallen. Mrs. Todd herself relates to the narrator that "you never get over being a child long as you have a mother to go to" (Jewett 30).

From the perspective of Cixous, the unnamed narrator narrates the relationship among different characters to depict common understanding, belonging, and feeling though Mrs. Todd's brother is gay type of but closes to mother and sister. As Cixous writes so as it echoes.

What the female finds cannot be found from male. The close difference and the bond between m Mrs. Todd binds with her mother mostly to share sexual relationship and to operate the family. But Mrs. Todd also befriends to the narrator to get the extraordinary knowledge from the same sexual group. As Cixous stresses on the common or collective:

One will recall from the introduction that Captain Tolland's wife was a not accepted in the intimate female community of same place. After some other began to harass Mrs. Todd, Captain Tolland and the other the Dunnet Landing men took her with them. Instead of giving her " money to pay her passage home to France, or wherever she wanted to go " as Mrs. Todd felt they would have ,the man drew lots and Captain Tolland took her back Dunnet Landing as a wife. (30)

Mrs. Todd rejects to lag behind her husband with the help of her mother. She gets power in collectivity in the woman community to develop her skills. Likewise she resists masculinity in the same place. Mrs. Todd relates that Tolland's wife "touched me caught me a sight of things about herbs I never knew before nor since; she was well acquainted with the virtues of plants". Mrs. Todd immense knowledge and use of

herbs is not something that has been passed down from her mother as much useful knowledge is passed down through generation; it has been learnt from a foreign woman from foreign land. This is not a knowledge that was already present in Dunnet Landing but rather comes to Mrs. Todd from an outside or other world.

The myth of womanish, plus its material effect and infestations in the appropriate consciousness and bodies of womanish is focused:

The narrator gets to see some part of Captain Littlepage at his best when she notices that “the dulled look in his eyes had gone, and their watch instead a clear intentness that made them seem dark and piercing” as he begins to relate to her the special knowledge of the weighting place that he has gained during his Arctic voyage. (19)

In this analysis of textual narration, the material process of the characters also can be seen in the narration but each and every character is influenced by money. They are closer to material lives and process to bind each other. In the same way Captain Littlepage makes bonds to the other.

By presenting the complete character Jewett proves the powerful women in the society. She argues:

I was not incompetent at herb-gathering, and after a while, when I had sat long enough waking myself to new thoughts, and reading page of remembrance with new pleasure, I gathered some bunches, as I was bound to do, and at last we met again higher up the shore, in the plain every-day would we had left behind when we went down to the penny-royal plot. As we walked together along the high edge of the field we saw a hundred sails about the bay and farther seaward; it was mid-afternoon or after, and the day was coming to an end. (31)



The bond between the narrator and Mrs. Todd takes towards the relation very deeply to share the problems and inner feelings of nature in the period of outing to express in front of the readers by Jewett in the writings form as Cixous claims in her article.

The narrator has expressed the suffering of the Mrs. Todd economically. The writer in the first person point of view has explained the bonding respectively. The odd behavior of William in the chapter of "William" can be viewed. Secondly, the following the narrator echoes the suffering of the woman that is:

I suffered much from apprehension. I had been living in the quaint little house with as much comfort and unconsciousness as if it were a larger body, or a double shell, in whose simple convulsions Mrs. Todd and I had secreted ourselves, until some wondering hermit crab of a visitor marked the little spare room for her own. (34)

The feeling of loneliness by her mother is thrown out in period of sitting with her daughter. But Mrs. Todd absence projects the gloomy in her mother's life so that the relationship or friendship is optional but there is compulsory in this novel to sit together.

Jewett's works concentrate on the all family members to construct symbolical argument. She argues:

Mrs. Blackett's old face, for the first time, wore a look of trouble, and I found if necessary to counteract the teasing spirit of Almira. It was too pleasant to stay indoors altogether, even in such rewarding companionship; besides, I might meet William; and, straying out presently, I found the hoe by the well house and an old splint basket at the woodshed door, and also found my way down to the field where

there was a great square patch of rough, weedy potato tops and tall ragweed. (27)

Though the patriarchal society rules but they resist to the traditional norms to get themselves well. Mrs. Almira Todd and William also bind to get compressed identity in the community as well as they focus on mutual friendship to strengthen their power in the community. They get their autonomous identity to product new style of living.

Heterosexual means attraction to the people of the opposite sex. The concept of anti-heterosexual denies the sound sexual relationship with opposite sex. In the novel, all the male and female characters are against the traditional heterosexuality.

The narrator is the critique of the institutions of heterosexuality and reproduction. Heterosexuality in the novel is directly associated with loss and absence. William never lives with Mrs. Todd. Ultimately, he abandons her and marries a woman. After that Mrs. Todd mysteriously loses her leg in her attempt to rebuild her life and to protect her mother. The marriage between William and Mrs. Bowden can't work for a long time. William is left with her empty and dead thighs. In the beginning, the homosexual relationship between the narrator and Mrs. Blackett seems pleasing but later when the narrator tries to possess him "he dragged her under him and made love to her with the steadiness and the intensity of a man about to leave for Dayton" (34). William leaves the narrator with nothing but "his stunning absence" (34). In the novel, the union between William and the narrator constitutes the strongest challenge to American Aesthetics.

Helen Cixous focuses on the female difference experience through writing rather than patriarchal explanation, interpretation through 'towards female body' in her article.

The novel as prescribed by American aesthetics is to depict American male relationship as a complementary union. Through the traditional metaphor of the feminine, the narrator describes herself as an empty space which is supposed to be filled by man; man and woman are the two halves of each other's equations. In the narrator's case, William fills the space and becomes her equation. William is "The closest thing to both and other and a self" (19).

The William-the narrator union boldly displaces the heterosexual formula of a man and woman constituting a perfect person, and it has the effect of forming autonomy of women. These two girls are united perfectly because the narrator is active, male-like, and William is passive who imagines herself lying on flowered bed and waits for some fiery prince. On the other hand, the narrator, in her romantic fantasy, pictures herself as a prince galloping on the horse. They complete heterosexual union which consists of active and passive: the masculine and feminine principles. Unlike traditional description of union, in the narrator-William union, it is female, who fills the masculine space.

All the female characters are leading their lives without the support or help of the husband. Fosdick is leading with perverted sexual affair after her husband's death. Mrs. Todd does not know her father since she is the daughter of Mrs. Blackett. William never cares for Mrs. Todd and his mother.

The traditional concept of motherhood or the very institution of reproduction is criticized. When the narrator hears Mrs. Todd's mother saying "I just don't like her" (57), she runs off with William. It is the crucial moment that she is rejected by Mrs. Todd's mother. At that time, both the narrator and William are their budding sexuality. Now the narrator can't maintain the pre oedipal link with Mrs. Todd's mother. While the narrator and William involve in the symbolic act of heterosexual

play with sticks and ground, William finds a thick twig and peels away its bark until it is stripped to "a smooth, creamy innocence". Metaphorically, the phallus is rendered weak and powerless. Later on, Captain Littlepage comes up to them. The narrator swings him around and around until he slips from her hands into the river. The hardly death of Captain Littlepage suggests the narrator's unconscious rebellion against motherhood and refusal of heterosexuality. Both the narrator and William do not try to save Captain Littlepage when he quietly slips from the narrator's hand. Here, these women deny the concept of motherhood. The narrator and William watches when Captain Littlepage disappear in the water without trying to save him.

Cixous focuses on the homogeneity and the common feeling of women in "The Laugh of Medusa" she asserts that:

There is at this time no general woman no typical woman. What they have in common I will say. But what strikes me is the infinite richness of their individual constitutions: you can't talk about a female sexuality, uniform, homogeneous, classifiable into codes-any more than you can talk about one unconscious resembling another. Women's imaginary is inexhaustible, like music, painting, writing: their stream of phantasms is incredible. (341)

The narrator is a young adult unmarried woman. Her decision of not getting child brings about unexpected shocking. When Mrs. Todd suggests her to marry and become a mother, the narrator bravely replies "I don't want to make somebody else. I want to make myself '(92). Her strong denial of institution of reproduction is her protest against patriarchal society as well as against the institution of heterosexual relationship. She does not accept her traditional role.

Not only through the unnamed narrators's character but also through the characterization of several American women who live by their community's valuation of reproduction, the narrator is the critique of reproductive ideology. Mrs. Blackett tries to raise her daughter following the rules laid by her society. Blackett never lets William show any sign of enthusiasm: "Any enthusiasm that little William showed were calmed by the mother..." (81). Mrs. Blackett always orders her to pull her nose. She often commands, "Don't just sit there, honey you could be pulling your nose [ . . .]" (28). William has to meet the physical beauty in accordance with white/ male standard. Thus, Blackett's becomes a perfect woman always feeding and caring her children. When Bowden abandons William, her preoccupation with her children, twists her maternal love. In earlier part of the novel, Mrs. Todd Peace is stereotypical, a strong American woman who always engages in the concern for her children's survival. After her brother William hardly dies of constipation and she is forced to extract the rock like waste from his anus in a bitter cold, dark, she resolves to take the action. She leaves her children with a neighbor and goes away to find a better life for her. She prefers to reject the role of the nurture and sets out to seek her own better life. Even when she comes back after months, she maintains a careful distance from her children and later on feeds her son because he still expects her to nurture him. Her refusal to play the role of the mother in her life is the consequence of the American community's prescription that American women center their lives on representation.

Showalter stresses on the development of the women as she focuses on her theoretical insight in her article like as follow:

For women, however, work meant labor for others. Work, in the sense of self development, was in direct conflict with the sub ordination and repression inherent in the feminine ideal. The self centeredness implicit

in the act of writing made this career as specially threatening one; it required an engagement with feeling and a cultivation of the ego rather than its negation. (239)

Jewett has created such American characters who possess the concept of anti heterosexuality. William leaves Mrs. Todd and marries another woman. Bowden put sexual relationship with another woman and breaks relation with his wife. Mrs. Fosdick sleeps with different men to fulfill her sexual desire. The narrator sleeps not only with many American men but also with many white women. Her refusal of marriage and children are a strong opposition of traditional heterosexuality. Such activities are not acceptable in the Dunnet community as well as American culture. There is not a single character who has sound conjugal life. Showing intimate relationship between two characters, the narrator and Mrs. Todd, Jewett challenges pre-existed heterosexual system. In this way, by elaborating various American male and female characters' traits, Jewett has successfully depicted anti heterosexuality in the novel.

### **Autonomy of Female Identities in the Novel**

The word 'autonomy' refers the right of a group of people to govern itself and to organize its own activities. There is not any domination of rules and systems imposed by others. In such state, people are guided by themselves. Female autonomy means female are superior and they are guided by themselves. They can do whatever they want.

At the age of twelve, William and the narrator find themselves nearer to each other. They are drawn together not by their sharing the same physical desires. They are not yet matured enough to participate in sensual, sexual mysteries. The opening line of chapter sixteen "too cool for ice cream"-implies that they are not sexually hot

enough to receive ice cream (penis) as warm and eager tongue is supposed to do. What brings the two girls together is the `phallus' "the law of the father". The phallus is distinguished from the physical actuality or penis. It is not material object but psychological concept or a signifier of the father's law. The presence of phallus leads them to discover "years before that they were neither white nor male and that all freedom and triumph was forbidden to them. . ." (52). Each of them finds in each other some sustaining forces which "let them use each other to grow on" (52). The phallus is the signifier that institutes male dominant cultural discourse and creates favorable space only for male child.

The bonding between Mrs. Todd and the narrator is also heightened by their rejection to mother-daughter relationships. It is obvious that they are not the member of traditional family. Both of them are "daughters of distant fathers (The narrator's because he was dead, William's because he was not)" (52). The narrator can't maintain pre oedipal bonding with mother since Mrs. Fosdick's pronouncement "sent her flying up the stairs" (57), on the one hand, and because, on the other hand, Fosdick pressed by her need for "some touching", admits to not liking her daughter: "I just don't like her (the narrator)" (78). William, as a result of her mother's treatment, becomes the diminished product who grows up in a confined, ordered world in which "any enthusiasm that little William showed were calmed by the mother until she drove her daughter's imagination underground" (18). Thus, William is incapable of finding a maternal sense for her affection. What are the social norms that compel Mrs. Blackett to calm down the instinct of William and why does Mrs. Blackett order William to pull her nose? For Mrs. Blackett, William must be shaped as society prescribes. Because of these two girls' lack of pre oedipal bonding, they come to stand to each other as more mother than their actual mothers. They find in each other what they

seek for. In this way, from the very beginning of their adulthood, they deviate from beaten paths.

Showalter, simply highlights the sexual ethic of Bloomsbury and so as she brings her idea she writes down as:

The more female this literature became in the formal and theoretical sense, the father is moved from exploring the physical experience of women. Sexuality hovers on the fringes of the aestheticist is disguised, veiled and denied. The sexual ethic of Bloomsbury and an important concept of the period, from the confrontation with the body. (138)

The narrator is a critique of traditional heterosexual arrangement. Neither William nor Bowden is presented positively as father and husband nor Captain Littlpage, Mrs. Todd and Mrs. Fosdick as mother and wife. Marriage does not work in the novel as the manner of traditional heterosexuality. The relationship between William and the narrator minimizes the institution of heterosexuality. They remain loving each other with the uncritical acceptance and shared curiosity of adolescent adoration. No matter how are different in their attitudes towards existence.

They remain emotionally depend upon one another for a long time. "They found in each other's eyes the intimacy they were looking for" (52). Jewett has created Todd, a warm conventional woman. The question arises, how can we connect her life with her ancestors, or her questionable roots? It is a very obvious fact that her grandfather is unknown. William's grandfather rejected the conventional things and values. At that time, American women, if they did not want to follow the conventional track, could choose not to get married and to give to illegitimate children. William's grandmother leads just that kind of life from which William came. William is the descendent of a whore, On the other hand, William's mother, Blackett, is conventional



and the follower of every rule and norm of her community. Mrs. Todd is always busy, reacting her own mother goes to far extreme of having this rather tidy. William, because of wild blood inherited from her grandmother, is creative and enthusiastic. This is the reason of the friendship between the narrator and William in the first place. Mrs. Blackett adopted the middle class values and imposes control over her daughter's life. William's desire for free life, leads her identifying herself as separate, and different from her maternal heritage. She looks into the mirror and discovers a new life: "I'm me. I'm not their daughter. I'm not William. Me. [ . . . ] I want [ . . . ] I want to be [ . . . ] Wonderful. Oh, Jesus, make me wonderful" (28-29). The trip of south is significant for Mrs. Todd. It is more important because it is an opportunity for her to see her own mother reduced to custard by a white conductor.

It is obvious that the relationships between girls and women are essential in Jewett's fictions. In the novel, Jewett emphasizes on American women's autonomy and their impact upon each other's lives. The narrator and William find each other when each desires some obviously female with whom to share her feelings: "They were solitary little girls whose Willingness was so profound it intoxicated them and sent them stumbling into techni-colored visions that always included a presence, someone who quite like the dreamer, shared the delight of the dream" (51).

They are dreamers of the same sensuous fairy tale. Elijah imagines a fiery prince who never comes while the narrator dreams galloping her like a prince on a gory and white horse. The narrator and William must struggle with the construction of racism upon their lives besides sexism. The explanation of their realization is that "They were neither white nor male" (52). Their realization of the father's law brings them together. Their mutual attraction is the result of their longing for mother's body.

They seek to return to the pre oedipal state that is; to the chaotic state where there is no interference of phallus.

Without any plan, they meet every day. They play and grow together. When the narrator overhears her mother saying that she does not like the narrator, she goes to the open grass field where William and the narrator involve in hollowing holes. The two separate holes become the one as they have grown bigger. The narrator's twig with which she has been digging the hole snaps, they collect everything around them and put in the womb-like hole, womb refers dark continent-where they wish to go back, and the broken twigs and burial of them suggest the absence of father's law in the Dark Continent.

Despite the long separation and their opposing paths, they have still something which brings them closer. William is eager to meet the narrator when she later comes back, William feels new cleverer with the narrator: "It was like getting the use of an eye back having a cataract removed. Her old friend had come home. The narrator, who made her laugh, who made her see old things with new eyes, in whose presence she felt clever, gentle and a little raunchy" (95). Each lacks what other has and one supplies what other lacks. William gets refreshed and revitalized when the narrator comes to William home. She "felt new, soft and new. It had been the longest time since she had had a rib scraping laugh" (98). While talking about their past with the narrator, finds herself relaxed. In her constraint conjugal life, she has forgotten the deep pleasure of spontaneous laugh which is very different from the "miscellaneous giggles and smiles she had learned to be content with" (98).

Though there is bitterness in relationship between William and the narrator when the narrator sleeps with William's mother, the narrator still thinks William is the first person who has been real to her. The narrator thinks that "William was the one

person who had wanted nothing from her, who had accepted all aspects of her" (19). After losing William, the narrator realizes how unsatisfactory her relationships with the men have been. No friend can be as equal as William is. She is looking for a friend and discovers that "a lover was not a comrade and could never be for a woman" (21). For the narrator, is a version of herself which she always wants to touch with an ungloved hand. As a result of her idle imagination, she craves for the other half, the real version of herself such as William. A woman can only be satisfied with another woman.

The narrator's relationship with Mrs. Blackett's can't reduce her bond with William. Why does the narrator want to have sexual relationship with Mrs. Blackett's? But their brief affair is not like that of Bowden and Todd. Mrs. Blackett's is actually a loving woman. Showalter, "erotically charged and drenched with sexual symbolism, female aestheticism is nevertheless oddly sexless in its content. '*A room of one's own*' with its insistence on artistic autonomy and its implied disengagement from social and sexual involvement, was favorite image" (127).

The narrator loves and respects the Mrs. Todd because she provides her the intellectual companionship. They are "whole" and at the same time separated individuals, one does not lose his or her identity for the sake of other. They are both perfect and free. It is the social norm, father's law, which teaches the narrator unconsciously to nail Mrs. Blackett's. Then William abandons the narrator while she is intending to possess him.

The heterosexuality is not perceived as a deep communion and communication. For the narrator, her male partner is no longer needed after sexual intercourse. She uses him as an instrument to feel her own self and existence. After sexual intercourse "she waits impatiently for him to turn away leaving her to the post

coital privateness in which she met herself, welcomed herself and joined herself in matchless harmony" (23). Jewett has shown the deepest communication and communion between two women who love each other. The narrator regards her bond with Mrs. Todd as priceless. Their final painful meeting does not bring reconciliation but the narrator, in her deathbed, admits to that once they "were two throats and one eye and we had no price" (47).

The bond between Mrs. Todd and the narrator is re-emphasized in Mrs. Todd epiphany recognition that it is her friend the narrator that she has missed all these years but not her husband. Her final assertion, "we was girls together ... O lord, the narrator [. . .] girl" (74) leads her to the perfect sisterhood. It is a moment of self recognition, her return to pre oedipal stage, uncontaminated by father's law. In the moment of pre-separations (female past) no self is identified. The subjectivity-male in origin, is denied in the free-floating sea of the womb. The last remark of the novel is the expression of woman identified female which is non representational, "It was a fine cry loud and long but it had no bottom and it had no top, just circles and circles of sorrow" (74).

At last in the novel, all the American female characters are autonomous and independent. They are presented as dominant women opposing the values and norms of American Aesthetics. They are sexually, psychologically and culturally free from their patriarchal social hierarchy. Jewett has shown that each and every American female character is guided by them.

### **Female Supremacy in the Novel**

In the novel, the American female characters are on the topmost position. Apparently, the narrator traces the history of three generations of women, especially from female perspective. All the female characters' origins go back to their maternal

ancestors rejecting the presence of fathers. The history of Blackett's origin does not include the role of father. She is the daughter of unknown father and it her absence of family background and "took Blackett away from the soft lights and flowered carpets of the Sundown House and raised her under flower of garden eyes of a multicolored Virgin Mary" (17). The grandfather is an unknown figure. Mrs. Todd is never seen talking and playing with Nathan. He does not exist in the novel at all. Throughout the novel, there is not a single scene in which William and Captain Littlepage, William and Plum are talking. William neither comes to attend funeral nor comes home when Pulm dies. The American male characters neither have dominant role nor have conversation among them. Previously, the American women did not want to follow the traditional patterns of life, they could choose not to get married and to give birth to the illegitimate children. William's grandmother does the same thing. She goes against the rules and becomes a whore who "struck a match, blew it out and darkened her eye brows with burnt head" (26).

Both the narrator and Mrs. Todd are fatherless girls. Though Mrs. Todd has father but he does not have his impact on her. The narrator and William meet every day without any proper plan. One day, they join in grass play, William finds a thick twig and peels away its barks until it is stripped to a "smooth creamy innocence" (58) like a phallus. The narrator involves clearing ground and draws complicated pattern in it with a twig. Her response is like that of an artist. Later on, both of them hollow out holes in earth and make two holes with the twig, and gradually their holes go wider and deeper as they are digging up. Finally, the two separate holes join and becomes one. When William's twig breaks, they put everything they find around them: twigs, paper, bottle, cup etc. into the hole they have made. They replace the soil and cover the hole with uprooted grass. The weak, broken symbolical phallus has been

metaphorically exposed. The earth, the perfect womb, is capable enough to diminish the power of "the smooth creamy innocence". The woman is superior.

The relationship between Mrs. Blackett's and the narrator is often read not as a condemnation of heterosexuality, but the perspective and Jewett's on the poetical and sensual writing suggests that woman is on the top. The narrator suggests that, in the sense of the sexual intercourse, between the narrator and Mrs. Blackett's, the male pilot only takes delight in the sexual pleasure rather than achieving gratification from aggressively asserting power of phallus. "He swallowed her mouth just as her thighs had swallowed his genitals, and the house was very, very quiet" (31).

The union of the narrator and William rewrites the ritual of 'earth and twig'. The swallowing of the actual penis, rather than the burial of the phallus minimizes the power of the so called aggressive phallus. William's genital is patient, which is easily affected or it is a doll object without energy. The narrator's thighs on the other hand, are capable enough to emasculate the phallus by swallowing. The role of the phallus is denied claiming the position of women supremacy.

The narrator, opposite of passive female stature burdened with layers and layers of suppression, is on the top of domestic layer. It is the narrator who supplies water to make Mrs. Blackett's moist and rich. Mrs. Blackett's, the narrator's lover, on the other hand is not considered to be a romantic and autonomous male. She is properly understood, in a very cogent sense, not as his own man but as the offspring of his mother's magic. Women's attraction to Mrs. Blackett's is not "due to a ritual of seduction [. . .]. But rather to the habit he acquired thoughtfulness and generosity in all her sons" (26).

The only one strong male character in the novel is William but he often sits by his mother enchanted listening to her words. She is an evil conjure woman and knows

about the weather, omens, the living, the dead, dreams, and lives a modest life with her skill. She, an ancestor, is also a source of knowledge and inspiration for them.

Mrs. Blackett hears all the stories about the narrator and compares her with her mother who, like the narrator, is indifferent to establish habits of behavior. Mrs. Blackett is a victorious figure, and a symbol of matriarchal power, naming people. She plays God. In her house, she has adopted three boys. Each of them is markedly different from the other. One is deeply American with golden eyes, another is light skinned with red hair, the third one is half southern with chocolate skin and American bangs. They are called with the same name, dewey by Mrs. Todd. "What you need to tell them apart for? They's all deweys" (38). The most important is that the name is not capitalized, "the deweys". Their individuality, maleness or male ego can't be created in Mrs. Todd's home. And of course, the deweys would have been somewhat more individuated, perhaps even normal in stature, if Mrs. Todd had not reduced and trivialized them.

The mother's body is the ultimate place in which the women are free from every kind of laws of social institution. The womb represents the female power. Womb is the source of energy or fertility. The narrator supplies water to Mrs. Blackett's soil, "keep it rich and moist" (31). The womb can create and destroy. It is the Earth mother which is the bed for both seed and tombstone.

The hardly death of Captain Littlepage by Water suggests the connection between vagina and grave. Both water and womb make one suffocate and die: "all wrapped up inside his mamma no more, he suffocates" (72). The American people of Dunnet cherish the false hope of building the new River Road. The same hope keeps them alive, keeps them working in the dirt, "kept them convinced that some magic "government" was going to lift them up, out and away from that dirt..." (60). The

construction of the River Road opens, postpones, and reopens. At last, the thin armed Virginia boys, the Greeks and the knife faced men are employed instead. The decision makes the Americans mad with anger, and they march toward the site to destroy the forbidden to build.

Jewett has created dominant role of American female characters and makes them superior in the novel. All the female characters are successful to establish their supremacy by protesting the pre-existed patriarchal social and cultural values and norms, maintaining their own autonomous identity.



### **III. Female Bonding as Strength**

This research focuses in the finding that female bonding is one of the qualities of females to establish their identity. Mrs. Todd is a certain type of adventurer who faces more challenges to be recognized as a new world woman. In order to get access the power and autonomy, she breaks down rules, crosses boundaries.

The meaning of American feminism is absolute liberation of American women in terms of sex and gender as well as consuming rights on a par with the male. The American women are doubly oppressed and the white feminist writers never applied to them in the first place and have deprived from the definition of feminism. So, American feminism is the opposition of pre-existed white and male hegemonic social and political scenario.

In general feminism, the phenomena of American women is not included. In political and literary field the white feminism is dominant. The exclusive American female experiences are absent, silenced or misrepresented in literary and non- literary texts or context by American men as well as white men and women.

There was no political movement to support those who want to explore the experience of American women. It is important to remember that feminist movement gave power for the development of feminist literature and criticism. It is obvious that there is no developed body of American literary theory whose assumption could be used in the examination of American writings. The works of American women writers must be examined with the realization that the politics of sex as well as the politics of class are crucially interlocking factors in the works of American women writers.

The setting of the novel is in the south community which is not fertile. The novelist has created valiant and dauntless women characters to deal about the feminist

issues. Mrs. Todd, the protagonist of the novel, breaks the patriarchal social values and norms and presents as the most powerful woman in the community.

She appears as fully responsible woman in her family. She dares her son Plum is dies because of his drug addiction and attention seeking behavior. Mrs. Fosdick sleeps with many men after her husband's death. For her sexual freedom, she undergoes many difficulties. Because of the narrator's courageous deeds like cutting finger, sleeping with many men, denying marriage, gaining knowledge from college, she has set up her new identity in the society although she is nominated as a bitch. She thinks that she is the society.

In this novel, Jewett has presented inactive male characters to give emphasis to the feminist approaches. William and Captain Littlepage are passive and adopted boys the deweys are dehumanized in their name. They are inactive in their activities and have least role for the development of novel. The deweys are always passive, irresponsible and immature. So, the American male characters are presented against the principle of American Aesthetics. Shadrack, Plum, Mrs. Blackett's don't have significant role in the novel. All the American male characters in the novel are emasculated and presented as inferior, less powerful and least responsible.

In the novel, the male-female relationship is not sound and successful. The separation of William and Mrs. Todd, William and Bowden show the concept of anti heterosexuality. On the other hand, William-the narrator relationship is beyond friendship. William fills the masculine space of the narrator. The strong denial of marriage is the narrator's great challenge against the institution of heterosexual relationship, reproduction and motherhood in the patriarchal social scenario.

The American female characters are successful to establish their autonomy by avoiding father's law in the contemporary society. The protagonist, Mrs. Todd, is

against patriarchal hegemony and she sets up her as an autonomous woman in the - American society. By presenting American male characters' immature and passive role, the novelist has set up female autonomy. Because of the failure of conjugal life of Mrs. Todd, William and Mrs. Fosdick, Jewett is completely successful to put forward the issue of anti -heterosexual institution in novel. By bearing hardships, sorrows, pains and severe tortures, the American female characters are capable to set up their own autonomous and independent womanhood.

The psychological experiences and feelings are emphasized in the novel showing the relationship between mother and daughters. William-the narrator relationship is also vital aspect of woman-centered psychological approach. At the end of the novel, William is physically alone and he recognizes the loss. The woman-centered psychology, not only elaborates the theoretical moral perspectives for women's experience, but also takes a particular urgency in a society operating largely on obstruction, separation and detachment.

Female characters are superior in the novel. The role of father is denied and women are themselves capable to lead their living without support of men. The American women are successful to set up their supremacy in terms of sex and gender. Mrs. Todd- the narrator relationship strengthens their supreme position in patriarchal society dominating male-female relationship. The novel emphasizes on the failure of male-female relationship. Mrs. Blackett's thinks herself as God in the sense of giving birth and taking away the life of her children. The womb represents the female power which is the source of energy and fertility. The woman has creative and destructive power. Throughout the novel, the American female characters are successful to maintain female supremacy avoiding phallogocentric approach.

The protagonist of the novel, Mrs. Todd, has successfully established her new identity. She has suffered many difficulties, pains and tortures for her own self recognition in the American society.

This research has found out that Jewett creates such valiant female characters like the unnamed narrator, Mrs. Todd to raise the issues of American women and she wants to create the world led by the American women with full self recognition. She gets the narrator to possess the revolutionary traits to revolutionize the pre-occupied traditional beliefs of American society. Through the main character Mrs. Todd, she wants to present marriage as a main social obstacle in the liberation of the American women. The narrator does not want to make somebody else and denies the subordinate role in the family. On the other hand, Mrs. Fosdick is a good instance of freedom fighter in sexuality. Producing such character, she portrays the dominant feelings against patriarchal pre-existed social norms and values of the Dunnet community.

It is obvious that Jewett's novel is the most significant American feminist novel in the American literature where she has dealt with American feminist issues. By portraying revolutionary visions of her main character, she has entirely succeeded to explore the American women's liberation. Through her protagonist, she advocates for the liberation of American women, and explores the minds of women who seek to stay outside the constraining sexual, economical and cultural condition of the patriarchal society. Eventually, she wants to show her American female characters living with full autonomy. It is a revolutionary novel in American literature. Because of the narrator's revolutionary traits and visions, this novel has proved as the most powerful American feminist novel in American literature.

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