

I. General Introduction

A Critical Overview of the Play

This research paper analyzes the play, *Sweet Bird of Youth* (1959) by Tennessee Williams, from the gender perspective to figure out the reversal of gender roles that are assigned to the principal male and female characters. Gender roles can be challenged and subverted in any time and space since it is just a “cultural programming as masculine and feminine” that are the categories created by society rather than by nature (Tyson 84). After the close examination and critical reading of the play, it is hypothesized that by dramatizing the male protagonist, Chance Wayne as performing the feminine roles in a patriarchal society and presenting female character Princess Kosmonopolis who is portrayed as having masculine attributes, Williams reverses the conventional gender roles.

In contrast to traditional gender roles, Williams casts protagonist Chance Wayne as having feminine attributes. For instance, Chance Wayne serves to the female character Princess who provides him financial support. Chance Wayne does not merely depend on Princess for economic gain but he even depends on her for his successful life. Moreover, he thinks that by regaining Heavenly Finely, his dream girl, he will recapture his masculinity but ultimately he fails to do so. His failure signifies the loss of his manhood in that society. Hence, Chance is supposed to be the female version of male who never succeeds to come out of oppressive feminine gender roles.

Unlike Chance Wayne, female character, Princess is portrayed as playing the masculine roles, for she acts as a powerful male who always controls, exploits and

suppresses to his counterpart. Princess is in financial control and she hires Chance Wayne for sexual satisfaction and other physical services. In fact Princess doesn't love Chance Wayne but she sees him as a sexual object. It is this commodification that unmans Chance Wayne. Moreover, Princess also seeks sexual and emotional relationship with Heavenly. In order to sustain her relationships with Heavenly, Princess uses Chance Wayne as a currency to transgress heterosexuality. In other words, Heavenly and Princess are depicted as sexual partners. Thus, Chance Wayne swings like a pendulum towards Heavenly and Princess who, in fact are marginalizing Chance Wayne.

Although Princess is punished for her violation of patriarchal gender roles, she finally gets liberation from the oppressive gender roles. Princess suffers from depression and grand neurosis as she is punished. But Princess overcomes her depression by the use of drug and hashish. By using drugs Princess promotes her masculine qualities. Ultimately, Princess gets success in her life.

The male protagonist Chance Wayne dreams, though finally fails, of a great success including the achievement of Heavenly. For that he depends on another female character Princess Kosmonopolis who acts out the roles that used to be attributed to the male. Patriarchal gender roles are destructive for men as well as women. For instance, men are not permitted to fail at anything they try because failure in any domain implies the failure in one's manhood. Here, the male protagonist Chance Wayne has become the victim of oppressive gender roles. Chance Wayne fails to be real man in the society as he basically lives as a woman. He is a guy who basically makes a living off of his looks. Thus, Chance Wayne

remains a tragic character because he is a kind of character that is usually female. Moreover, Chance Wayne sells his body for money and he has latched on to Princess with the hopes that she can help him along in his career. But his ambition, his dying hope that he will have a meaningful life, and that he will be famous, override his powerful emotions.

In nutshell, the protagonist Chance Wayne, though he is a male specially functions as a female by playing feminine gender roles that unmans him. And, unlike in a patriarchy, female character Princess Kosmonopolis dominates, exploits, and marginalizes Chance Wayne because of her masculine attributes.

For the explication and analysis of the play on the basis of Tennessee Williams's construction of gender system, a theoretical modality has been developed depending on the books, essays, articles, criticisms and feminist literary theories written on feminism by the writers, critics, and literary theorists. There is discussion on liberal feminism, radical feminism, lesbian feminism, gender and sexuality. Here, liberal feminists severely attack the traditional gender stereotypes of women as weak, emotional, submissive and they argue that women are individuals "possessed with reason"(Bryson 159). Thus, they see women as rational feminists that have been obviously depicted in the play by presenting female characters more powerful and rational than the male protagonist Chance Wayne. Thus, Williams treatment of the gender roles fits to be analyzed on the basis of feminist theories.

In contrast to the liberal feminists, radical feminists view patriarchy as major institution that exploits, suppresses, and marginalizes women. Radical feminists

argued that the basic differences between men and women regarding behavior and attribute “are biologically determined”, and “women deserve superior qualities” (Bryson 3). Furthermore, to liberate women from the destructive patriarchal values, radical feminists try to challenge the conventional gender roles by a through revision of the feminine stereotypes. But Lois Tyson has of the opinion that the “patriarchal gender roles are destructive” either they are feminine or masculine gender roles (86). These patriarchal gender roles badly affect both men and women equally. For instance, these roles dictate men to be independent, rational, and strong; and women are hoped to be emotional, dependent and weak. If male or female violates their prescribed roles either he/ she is “punished or pressured to follow it” (86).

Moreover, “males are not permitted to fail at any aspect of life” that implies the failure in one’s manhood (86). In the same way, male should be economically independent because male is considered as provider. The patriarchal gender roles in the same way, expect women t be more emotional, loving, sentimental, and submissive. If women play these roles honestly then they are considered as “good girl” and if they violate them, they are “regarded as monsters” (88). Thus, these aforementioned destructive gender roles in patriarchy are to be applied in studying and analyzing the play, *Sweet Bird of Youth*.

In order to exploit women, traditional gender roles dictate them [women] to be emotional, tender compassionate and beautiful. Thus "emotionality" is considered “the feminine quality” (86). Moreover, women who lack emotionality are considered abnormal. In contrast to this, Tyson views that it is considered

“unmanly of man to show fear of pain” (86). Hence, the issues of rationality and emotionality are examined on the basis of above views on the gender roles.

Since gender is considered as “social production and reproduction” based on the dichotomy created between feminity and masculinity, it can be challenged and subverted in a certain time and space (Sedgwick 273). In other words, gender roles change over time since gender is not a natural category. Sheila Ruth views many feminists women “challenging the old images” of women to form the new ones (151). For instance, patriarchal stereotypes have been questioned by the “feminist libber” who is completely “unfeminine” (151).

Patriarchy always privileges and promotes heterosexuality for they are inextricably linked to each other. Heterosexuality promotes the values and norms of patriarchy. Thus patriarchal society always suppresses other types of sexual orientations. Lois Tyson comments that “men have to hold feminine qualities in contempt” to be a real men in a patriarchal culture (87). Homosexuality is considered as the feminine stereotype and thus homosexual man is considered as “effete” or “feminine” in appearance and behavior (Chafetz 208).

Besides patriarchy, even mainstream feminists privileged heterosexuality. Thus feminism “came under attack for homophobia” in 1970s when sexuality first became an issue within feminist movement (Tolan 331). Specially, feminism was attacked by the lesbian feminists who were excluded from the mainstream feminism regarding the sexuality and identity. In this way, lesbian feminists showed their dissatisfaction with mainstream feminism by arguing that they can undermine patriarchy by refusing heterosexuality. Moreover, many radical lesbian

feminists of the early 1970s, viewed lesbianism as "anti-patriarchal choice (Tyson 220).

In a nutshell, the theoretical modality has been developed to penetrate the play's subtle issues of gender construction, sexuality identity, and patriarchy as well.

Critical Perspectives on the Play, *Sweet Bird of Youth*

Sweet Bird of Youth, a successful play by Tennessee Williams, has generated a huge amount of criticisms from numerous critics since its publication in 1959. The play is set against the socio-cultural background of 1950s of South America, in which drugs, alcohol and promiscuous sex are portrayed as the outcome of hypocritical society. And the play is simply the dramatization of the violation of patriarchal gender roles by the principal characters. The play has been viewed from the different perspectives. For Denise Maher, the play *Sweet Bird of Youth* deals with the "ruminations about lost youth, the corruption of innocence and characters obsessed with the passage of time" (8). Maher discovers that the powerful time can corrupt the innocence of human beings.

Unlike Maher, John M. Clum explores the religious hypocrisy that is prevalent in the play *Sweet Bird of Youth*. Clum writes: "Anyway, religion is depicted in the play as hypocrisy, the tool of megalomaniacs like Boss Finley" (143). He sees hypocrisy in the character of Boss Finley for whom religious hypocrisy is an instrument to assert his false power. Moreover, he analyzes the relationship between main characters Chance Wayne and Princess from Marxist perspective wherein he finds Chance Wayne corrupted because of his imprisonment in materialistic system. Clum views that,

[t]he princess is doing what Williams's strong women do—claim their right to sexual satisfaction—but she places it within a material economy. [. . .] Chance is the male vision of whore with the heart of gold; a loving romantic at heart . . . [and] [h]is [Chance's] corruption is caused by his entrapment within a materialistic system. (142)

Through the deep study of the significance of the male protagonist, Chance Wayne, R. Barton Palmer views that "Chance Wayne in *Sweet Bird of Youth* [. . .] contributes centrally to a radical transformation of what American has previously valued as ideal, male qualities" (220). Palmer talks about the importance of the play that has helped to deconstruct the concept of ideal male attributes.

For Peter B. High, the play *Sweet Bird of Youth*, "contains strong themes of brutality and immortality" (228). High has of the opinion that the play is the real portrayal of the brutality, violence, and immortality of American society. Reviewing Tennessee Williams's *Sweet Bird of Youth* directed by Kiri Serebrennikov at the Sovremennik Theatre in Moscow USSR, Christopher Baker comments: "Serebrennikov mines the darkest and most violent aspect of the play, transforming Williams's parable into ritualistic tragedy" (97). Baker claims that the success of the production to expose the darkest and the violent aspects of the play lay in the ritualistic tragedy.

Likewise, commenting on the play, Ralph F. Voss says, " Williams's play is [. . .] fully developed, much more complex, and much darker in its vision [. . .]. [And] Williams risks putting controversy on the stage, not only in Chance Wayne's castration but also in Princess's drug abuse" (62). Here, Voss opines that the play *Sweet Bird of Youth* is complete and complex that has darker vision and brutality like castration of Chance Wayne and drug abuse of Princess that brought controversy about the stage.

Moreover, by analyzing the interpersonal relationships of the principal characters in *Sweet Bird of Youth*, Jordern Y. Miller avers that the play is about the escape from decaying and dead world into the illusory world wherein protagonist, Chance Wayne and princess Kosmonopolis ruin themselves. As miller writes:

Both, Chance and Princess are escapees from the stained and equally decaying world outside, inhabited by the dishonored and mutilated Heavenly Finley and her powerful father as corrupt in his "boss" mentality [. . .]. If the Princess escapes through her return to the never-never-land of what is probably an illusion of a Hollywood comeback, Chance remains to absolve his sins to receive his own mutilation and possible death at the hands of Finley's thugs. (94)

Ronald Hayman, studies and analyzes the play as Tennessee Williams' biographical account Hayman comments:

[. . .] *Sweet Bird of Youth* [. . .] contains two hostile self-portraits—one male, one female. [. . .] [T]he Princess Kosmonopolis has lost her beauty and uses her money to buy sexual pleasure with younger partners. Chance Wayne, though deteriorating physically, still looks good enough to earn as a gigolo. Both, he and Princess take drugs, using alcohol as a chaser for the pills. (161)

Thus, Hayman discovers Tennessee Williams as expressing dissatisfaction and guilt through the two Principal characters Chance Wayne and Princess Kosmonopolis who are hostile to each other.

In contrast to the other reviewers and critics, Gilbert Debusscher analyzes the play by showing the significance of a motto that Williams selected from *White Buildings*, and the poem "Legend" by Hart Crane. The motto is: "Relentless caper for all those who step / The legend of their youth into the noon" (qtd. in Debusscher 174). Here, Debusscher co-relates the importance and meaning of the motto with

moral and thematic aspect of the play, *Sweet Bird of Youth*. Furthermore, Debusscher has of the opinion that Hart Crane's motto "establishes the play's hidden agenda—Its unexpected ambition to be a modern morality play (174). Thus, Debusscher views the play as modern morality play that instructs his [Williams's] listeners as to how to receive his message about the danger of trying to maintain the fiction of Juvenile Love – "the Legend of their youth" – into the middle age – "the noon" (qtd. in Debusscher 174).

Matthew C. Roudane acknowledges the implication of Williams's use of imagination in plays like *Sweet Bird of Youth* and *The Glass Menagerie* wherein he finds imagination as a great source of weakness in the former, and imagination seems major source of strength in the latter one. As Roudane writes:

In Williams's cosmology, of course, the imagination is the source of both great strength and weakness. Strength because the imagination creates, for Amanda Wingfield in *Glass Menagerie* [. . .] [And] weakness because [. . .], Chance Wayne in *Sweet Bird of Youth*, the human imagination finds itself consumed [by castration] by those whose sensibilities annihilate the heroic, the romantic, the creative.

(1)

Thus, Roudane discovers the imagination as the real source of creation of the beautiful world as well as an agent that bring destruction in the life of human beings.

Finally, Richard Brooks views that Williams in his play *Sweet Bird of Youth* "explores the darker, dysfunctional side of patriarchy" for Boss Finley, Heavenly's

father “obstructs the emergence of any successor”, keeping his son in a state of “perpetual subordination” and “preventing his daughter from marrying Chance” and thus making possible a new generation (18). Hence, Richard Brooks finds patriarchy as dying because of Boss Finley who functions against patriarchy. In other words, Brooks views that Boss Finley has been depicted as anti-patriarchal agent who obstruct the continuation of patriarchy by forbidding his daughter to marry with Chance Wayne.

Thus, it is found that the play *Sweet Bird of Youth* has been observed and analyzed from several angles by different critics and reviewers in terms of sexual violence, brutality and frustration, style and structure, theme and meanings, religion and hypocrisy, escapism, and in terms of Williams biographical document as well. However, they failed to address adequately the important and researchable issue that is reversal of gender roles. Hence, the issue remains a virgin territory for this research paper.

Finally, the whole research paper has been divided into four separate chapters that are: Introduction, Methodology, Textual Analysis, and Conclusion. The first chapter, Introduction as the title implies, introduces the major objectives of studying the play *Sweet Bird of Youth* by Tennessee Williams. And most importantly, this chapter clarifies and elaborates both statement of problem and hypothesis on the basis of textual reading. Furthermore, the first chapter also briefly talks about the theoretical modality and its applicability with the play *Sweet Birds of Youth*. The chapter even introduces the reviews of literature for the justification

and originality of the issue thereby ensures the newness and virginity of the proposed topic of the thesis.

The second chapter, Methodology has been further divided into four sub-topics that are: Feminism and Gender, Feminism and lesbianism, and Sexuality. First sub-topic, Feminism provides a brief discussion on feminism and its historical background. Gender, the second sub-title, which is very important, basically provides meaning of gender and it further introduces the conventional feminine and masculine gender roles. In the same way, the sub-topic, Lesbian Feminism throws light on lesbian feminists and their views on gender and sexuality. Under the second chapter, the last sub topic Sexuality, there is discussion of different forms of sexualities like homosexuality and heterosexuality and their relationship with gender and identity.

Textual Analysis, the third chapter of the thesis, heavily relies on the textual reading. This chapter examines, analyzes and studies the play on the basis of gender relationships between principal characters. Moreover, it will support the main issue of the thesis by providing textual evidences. Finally, this chapter draws the conclusion by showing Application between the text and the theoretical tool that has been developed in the second chapter.

Lastly, the fourth chapter, Conclusion, sums up the whole thesis on the basis of previous chapters. In other words, the last chapter is the synopsis of the key ideas on which the research paper is developed.

II. Feminist Study in Reversal of Gender Roles

Introduction: Feminism

Feminism, a social movement having its origin in the eighteenth century England, seeks equal rights for women, giving them equal status with men, and freedom to decide their own careers and the life patterns. Moreover, as a social movement, feminism tries to achieve "equality between the sexes" by extension of rights for women (Marshall 228). In order to enhance women's rights and to secure women's emancipation, feminism distinguishes between the word 'sex', which refers to our biological constitution" as a female or male, and the word 'gender', which refers to our cultural programming" as feminine or masculine, which are categories created by society rather than by nature (Tyson 84). Given the issue of gender, right from the beginning, feminism has focused on it because a thorough revision of gender roles seemed the most effective and an appropriate way of changing the power relations between men and women.

Gender has nothing to do with the reality of the females, but with the way that a given culture or subcultures sees them how they are culturally constructed. In every patriarchal society, females are given certain stereotypes whereby they are controlled and dominated physically, sexually, economically, culturally, and socially. In order to purge the culture of such a gendered stereotyping, feminists have politicized gender-by showing its constructed nature and put it firmly on the agenda of the later twentieth century. Moreover, after its initial focus on the "gendered representation of women" in Western culture, it has very effectively widened the issue and shown how often seemingly "neutral references" and "definitions" are in fact gendered, and always according to the some pattern (Bertens 99).

Feminism can no longer be accurately and exactly described as a theory implying a single and coherent trajectory of thought. Instead, feminism should be understood as a "discourse: a discussion of multiple related ideas" (Tolan 319). Since feminism borrows ideas from other theories and adapts them to its own rapidly evolving needs, it emerges as a complex category having multiple sub-categories within it. In fact, some feminists call their field "feminisms" in order to "underscore the multiplicity of points of view of its adherents" and offer a way of thinking that oppose the traditional tendency to believe that there is a single point of view (Tyson 81). Various feminisms like liberal feminism, radical feminism, and lesbian feminism however, share certain assumptions, and concepts that underline the diverse ways that individual critics explore the factor of sexual difference and privilege in the production, the form and content, the reception, and critical analysis and evaluation of works of literature.

At present, the broad category, feminism is no longer presumed to have a single set of assumptions and it is definitely no longer merely 'ism' of white educated bourgeois, heterosexual Anglo-American women as it once used to be. As Ross C. Murfin comments that the "evolution of feminism into feminisms has fostered a more inclusive, global perspective (301-2). Gradually, feminism has reached to a new era in which the goal is to reconstruct and recover entire cultures of women. Arriving to the phase of recovery and reconstruction, feminism had to face numerous difficulties throughout its history.

The spirit of feminism emerges out of an old tradition of thought and action that was already possessed by the classic books which has diagnosed the problems of women's inequality in society, and proposed solutions. These books encompass Mary

Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Right's of Women* (1792), Virginia Woolf's *A Room of one's Own* (1929), and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949). All these works talk about the women's subordination, suppression, repression, and repression in male dominated society. The term, feminism referred to the women and men who campaigned for votes for women and women's access to education and the professions in 1890s. After the achievement of vote in 1920 in the United States and 1928 in Britain, an enduring tension within feminism has become more evident, between the objective of equal rights with men in public sphere and the recognition of women's difference from men with the objective of enhancing their position in the private sphere of the family. Thus, " the history of feminism is divided into two waves, with a first wave, dating from 1830 to 1920 "and best recalled for the suffragette movement, and the second "dating from 1960 to the present day" (Waugh 319).

The first wave feminists raised voice for women's access to education and other professions, while the second wave feminists advocate for equality in every aspect of human life. They struggle and fight for social, economic, academic, and sexual rights. As a result, the miserable condition of women didn't remain same. Feminists became quite aware of the fact that they were made weaker dependent, subordinate, and powerless by men. Given this condition, Wollstonecraft first raised her voice to liberate women through her seminal work *A Vindication of Rights of Women*. This famous work provided momentum to feminism.

Gradually, by the time of industrial revolution, there emerged a wave of self-awareness among women. As a result, they began to claim for political freedom, equality and liberty. Since women heard the injustices of men meted out to women, there merged a number of women writers such as Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Bronte sisters who

were pioneers of their time. They made great contribution for the women's emancipation. Education brought awareness among women in the nineteenth century which helped women to fight against injustices of the society. Because of education many women got access to a number of trades and jobs. At the beginning of twentieth century feminists also attacked the male made notion of discrimination between sexes. In the twentieth century, historians employed the term 'feminism' to describe women thinkers. All these aforementioned historical development gave birth to the women's movement of 1960s.

At present, feminists "value women in and of themselves, as ends in themselves, and for themselves" (Ruth 4). Furthermore, feminists have put forward some of the basic principles under which they are moving forward by asserting their autonomous identity. Among their fundamental principles, at first being feminist, they "value the fact of being human" (4). They do not accept the cultural images of women as incompetent, petty, irresponsible, or weak. Instead, they "affirm their capacities to be strong, capable, intelligent successful, ethical human being" (4). Secondly, they value autonomy, for themselves as individuals and for women as a group. In the same way feminists reject attitudes regarding the "traditionally masculine characteristics of aggression, power, and competition as good and desirable" and the traditionally or conventionally "feminine characteristics of compassion, tenderness, and compromise as weak and ridiculous" (4). Moreover, feminists also deny the majority of beliefs and attitudes regarding women and they argued that the concept of women is based on myth, ignorance, and fear finally, they are optimistic about the possibilities of change besides their past knowledge of oppression and marginalization. Basically, there is great contribution of both liberal and radical feminism in bringing change in the society. Liberal feminism and radical feminism both speak in favor of the women's liberation independence, and emancipation; however there are some basic differences regarding their feminist issues and theory.

Liberal and Radical Feminism

Liberal feminism fundamentally claims that they are entitled to the same legal and political rights because women are rational beings like men. That's why "liberal feminists argued and campaigned over the last three hundred years for women's right to education, employment, political participation and full legal equality" (Bryson 2). Moreover, liberal feminism concentrates on rights in "public sphere" and does not "analyze power relationships" that may exist within the home or private life, it assumes that the justice of its cause will ensure its success and that men will have no reason to oppose it (2-3).

Although liberal feminism has failed to be expressed in its pure ideas, yet it has a clear central core of ideas based upon the belief that "women are individuals possessed of reason", that's why they are entitled to equal human rights, and so they should be "free to choose" their role in life and explore their full potential "in equal competition with men" (159). On the basis of these principles, earlier liberal feminism demanded the right to education, employment, and property. Their goal was full legal and political equality with men, and they viewed that this would benefit not only women but also men and society as a whole. During the inter-war years in 1940s and 1950s, liberal feminism lost its separate identity and mingled with "mainstream" feminism that concentrated on supporting women in their traditional roles instead of challenging their prevailed legal inequalities.

However, in 1960, American liberal feminists raised voice for independence, self-expression, and equality. The clearest and most famous expression of American liberal feminism is to be found in Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). In this seminal work Friedan argued that "since the Second World War American women had been manipulated and persuaded into the belief that their only fulfillment lay in domesticity"

and that earlier "feminists' dreams of education and independence" have been displaced by an all- pervasive "feminine mystique" (160). Liberal feminists see the state as a "neutral institution" from which women have been unfairly excluded in the past. But they think that the state can be used to their advantage, equal legal and political right is therefore key demands. Moreover, the "legislation and state provision of services" are seen as a means of improving women's situation, and women have "organized themselves as pressure group" (194).

Unlike liberal feminism, radical feminism that was first fully articulated in the late 1960s sees "the nature and ubiquity" of "male power" and it argues that men's patriarchal power over women is the primary "power relationship" in human society (3). Furthermore, it argues that this power is not confined to the public world of "economic and political" activity, but that it characterizes all the "relationships between the sexes" (3). Radical feminists analyze very personal activity assuming it as a political one wherein they try to redefine power relationships between male and female in a patriarchal society. As Valerie Bryson comments: "This insistence that 'the personal is political' involves a re-definition of power and politics and hence a challenge to the assumptions of political theory, which is itself seen as an instrument of male power and its bases in 'private' life" (3).

Some radical feminists even argue that differences in behaviors and attributes between men and women are biologically determined, not socially acquired, and women deserve superior qualities. In this way, these types of radical feminists take men as their enemy. And "lesbian separatism" becomes only viable feminist option (3). Radical feminism is essentially "a theory of, by and for women" that sees the "oppression of

women" as the basic and universal form of domination which is fostered by the institution 'patriarchy' (181). And this theory believes that women should struggle together to achieve their own liberation by transcending the narrow walls of class and race. Moreover, unlike other traditional political theories, radical feminism does not see state power as the central political issue. However, they see it [state] inextricably connected to areas of life such as "the family and sexuality" that have usually been seen as private and apolitical but which are now seen as basic to "all power relationship" in society (194). Unlike liberal feminists, radical feminists see exclusion of women from power on behalf of women themselves, for the structures and institutions of the state have been made by men that embody their interests rather than those of women. Furthermore, radical feminists are of the opinion that the basis of women's oppression and marginalization lies not in "social organizations" and "physical domination" but in a "male controlled culture, religion, language and knowledge that limit the way of thinking and causes" patriarchal assumption to be internalized by women" as well as men equally (222). In order to liberate [specially] women and male from the patriarchal values and norms to be internalized, feminists including radical ones, at present, try to challenge the conventional gender roles by 'a through revision' of the feminine stereotype and sexuality.

Gender Roles and Sexuality

The category 'gender' is one of the key terms that have been used by the feminists. They view this category as the strongest instrument of patriarchy through which women have been controlled, exploited and discriminated. Masculine and feminine are not natural categories rather they are socially and culturally constructed. One of the famous feminist critics, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick is of the opinion that the gender is a kind of detailed discourse having dichotomy between male and female identities and attitudes. As Sedgwick comments:

Gender: [. . .] is the far more elaborated, more fully and rigidly dichotomized social production and reproduction of male and female identities and behaviors- of female and male persons- in a cultural system for which "male- female" functions as a primary and perhaps model binarism affecting the structure and meaning of many other binarisms whose apparent connection to chromosomal sex may often be exiguous or non-existent. (273)

Sedgwick basically views gender as a kind of "social production" that has been produced on the basis of the dichotomy created between masculine and feminine gender roles in a particular society (273). Traditional gender roles cast men as rational, strong, protective, creative, dominating adventurous, and women are identified as emotional, irrational, nurturing, submissive, passive, timid and conventional. Just like Sedgwick, Myra Jehlen also says that "gender is a matter of nurture and not nature" (264). Here, Jehlen is of the opinion that the gender is not biological rather it is socio-cultural phenomena. In every society, men and women are assigned with the particular gender

roles that are socially and culturally constructed so they are subject to change in a certain time and space.

In a particular society, most females expose, to a greater or a lesser degree," a set of behavioral, temperamental, emotional, intellectual and attitudinal characteristics identified in a given culture, at a given time, as feminine"(Chafetz 3).

In the same way, most males display, to a greater or lesser extent "a set of different characteristics defined as masculine" (3). These learned characteristics can be conceptualized together under the general rubric of "gender roles" (3).

Sociologists give a specific meaning to the term 'role'. The most introductory text define it in terms of "a cluster of socially and culturally defined expectations that individuals in a given situation are expected to fulfill" (3). At any given time for any individual born into a culture, the roles are a given in the sense that they exist outside of that individual. The "individual is pressured, rewarded and punished to accept and internalize" (3) certain roles and not others during the process of socialization. Gender roles are not single roles, rather the use of the concept "gender roles" implies that a number of 'specific roles' tend to cluster together depending on whether the individual is male or female.

Moreover, patriarchal gender roles are destructive for men as well as women, for these roles dictate men to be independent, strong and women to be emotional and dependent. If men and women fail to play their respective roles then, they are either punished or pressured to follow it. In addition, "men are not permitted to fail at anything they try because failure in any domain implies failure in one's manhood" (Tyson 86). In the same way, the failure to provide adequate economic support for one's family is

considered the most humiliating a man can experience, for it means that he has failed at what is considered his biological role as provider. Regarding the destructive nature of gender roles, in America Lois Tyson writes:

The imperative for men to succeed economically has become and extremely pressurized situation in contemporary America because the degree of success men are expected to achieve keeps increasing [...] If men can't achieve the unrealistic economic goals [...] then they must increase the signs of manhood [...] [being] the most sexually active [...] [being] able to hold the most liquor or display the most anger. (86)

Thus, the manhood is directly linked to the economic success a person achieves in a society. If one fails to get economic success, either one has to sustain one's manhood being sexually active and being aggressive, which are really destructive, or one is unmanned in a patriarchal society. Moreover, men are supposed to be in a financial control and women should be economically dependent in a patriarchal society. In this way, women's exclusion from economy and other sectors of society is 'sexist' which means it promotes the belief that "women are internally inferior to men" that is called "biological essentialism" (Tyson 84). Furthermore, sexism is not fully realized only in women's personal lives. As a major part of the consciousness of our culture, it is equally expressed through all public institutions, formalized in law and custom. Women's degrading and subordinated image is reflected in the woman's position in the major public sectors of society. Women are poor because of their marginal importance and participation in the economy.

Compared with men, in every category women are by and large disadvantaged and they have lower salaries. In this way, for radical feminists, "women are economically exploited as women" rather than as "gender-neutral" member of the proletariat (Bryson 196-7). Basically, the exploitation of their labor both in the paid workforce and in the home is but one dimension of their oppression by men. Moreover, lower salary and marginalization of women in advanced capitalist economics is seen as a means of maintaining women's dependence upon men "that is inherent in the patriarchal mind set" (Ruth 318). This dependency cannot be ended by equal pay or opportunities legislation or by economic struggle alone, because it is inextricably linked with other aspects of patriarchal domination.

Women fail to achieve economic independence until and unless they are also expected to run the home and this domestic work is unwaged. And even when they escape from the worst effects of sexual harassment at work, women will not be taken seriously as workers in a culture that sees them primarily as "sex objects" (Bryson 197). Thus, economics cannot be separated as an autonomous arena of struggle or as fundamental cause of women's oppression. In this way, specially radical feminists are of the opinion that women's suppression and economic marginalization are not merely caused by the capitalist class rather the economy is seen as an important tool to dominate and control women. As Valerie Bryson says:

Women's oppression cannot be seen as a simple product of capitalist class society it must however also be understood that an understanding of economy class relations cannot simply be reduced to the needs of men.

The economy may be an important structure of patriarchy in and through which men dominate women. (198)

At present, many feminists are questioning the patriarchal institution, 'family' which is of course "a central part of society's power structure" and whereby the "women" are exploited" (198). The first powerful blow on patriarchal structure came from the famous work, *A Room of One's Own* (1928) by Virginia Woolf. She understood that women had always faced social and economic obstacles to their literary ambitions. Her basic focus lies on the fact of women's financial dependency that hinders them from being creative, educated and intellectual like men. In the same way, Kate Millit's *Sexual Politics* (1969) emphasizes that women should be given equality and power to develop their economic status. One of the main obstacles for women to achieve economic independence is the domestic duty that is given to them in a biased patriarchal society. Different feminist writers have different point of views regarding the female's domestic labor and its appropriate solution. For some feminists the solution is "to refuse to continue to perform domestic services for men" and is understood as separatist notion of "women only households" (Bryson 198). Many others have believed that men could be forced to accept domestic responsibilities wherein women have to "consciously and continuously struggle" (199). At the same time, abolition of family and rejection of traditional values has been seen as a solution of the domestic labor. Finally, the most formal radical analysis of women's domestic work as main source of oppression has been provided by the French radical feminist Christine Delphy, who argues that because they perform unpaid housework all women share a common economic status. Christine Delphy is of the opinion that "marriage is a labor contract" through which men exploit

women's labor and become their economic masters (199). From infancy onward, women's lives are suffused with the affective that is, feeling, experiential, non-cognitive, aspects of living. Consideration of beauty, tenderness, warmth, compassion, and love has been prescribed to be the special province of women. Thus, patriarchy continually exerts forces that undermine women's self-confidence and assertiveness, then points to the absence of male qualities as proof that women are naturally self-effacing and submissive. In every patriarchal society women are considered more emotional and less intelligent. Emotionality is the feminine quality that should be there in every woman. Traditional gender roles dictate that men are supposed to be strong and rational, "they are not supposed to cry", for crying is considered a sign of weakness, a sign that one has been overpowered by one's emotions (Tyson 86). For similar reason, women who lack emotion are considered as abnormal ones. Likewise, it is considered unmanly for man to show fear or pain or to "express sympathy for other men is especially a taboo" because patriarchy assumes that "only the most mute and stoic forms of male bonding are free of homosexual overtones" (86).

Regarding mind sets of men and women, patriarchal society has created the dichotomy where men are displayed as unemotional, stoic and rational; whereas women are shown as emotional and fearful. In this regard, to merge or subvert this dichotomy, deconstruction is useful to feminists in helping to see the ways in which "patriarchal ideology" is often based on the "false opposition of categories (94). For example, in refuting the sexist belief that the men are naturally rational while women are naturally emotional, a feminist might do more than argue that women have been programmed to be emotional or both categories apply equally to both genders. In the same way, liberal

feminists have also challenged the belief that women are emotional, and they argued that "women are individuals possessed of reason" (Bryson 159)

Moreover, women's association with the passive body, and men's affiliation with the active mind is believed to be the outcome of the conventional gender roles. Thus, male and female have to play the assigned roles appropriately. As far as question concerns to the feminine roles, patriarchal ideology views that there are only two identities a women can have. If she follows the conventional gender roles like to be more emotional, loving, sentimental, she is a "good girl", if she doesn't, she is considered as a "bad girl" (Tyson 88). Ultimately, if woman does not accept feminine roles, the "only role left for her is that of monster" (88). In other words, every person in a particular society has to follow certain assigned roles; if they are violated then one has to pay a price for it.

The patriarchal stereotypes of women, whether sexual or non sexual, working class or middle class, black or white, have a common denominator. It is considered that the women as human beings are "substandard: less intelligent; less moral; less competent; less able physically, psychologically and spiritually" (Ruth 96). These stereotypes have been severely criticized and questioned by many feminists. Among them, in her seminal work, *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir argues that there are no such things as "feminine nature" (Tolan 319). Moreover, there is "no physical or psychological reason why women should be inferior to men", yet women have always been considered as second class citizens (319).

Since, gender stereotypes are mere construction of society; they can be challenged and changed in any time and space. At present, some of the feminist women are

challenging the old images of women and building new ones. Women are not only fighting for equality rather they have been seeking independence, self-affirmation, self-respect and pride in womanhood. For this, it requires women's dedication and devotion. Basically, the patriarchal gender roles have been challenged by the feminist "libber" that is completely "feminine"(151). The term 'unfeminine' implies not only a lack of charm and expertise in certain "womanly" behaviors, it suggests as well a particular appearance-hard, often dirty, unkempt, badly dressed, not pretty-and clear advantage in whatever it takes to attract men. The 'libber' is understood as in some way having trouble with sex and as having real problems relating to men. The libbers want to become like men and reject their true femininity.

Sexuality has gained prominence as an important principle of social and cultural institution since 1980s. A number of influential theorists see the "exclusion and marginalization" that we see with regard to sexuality as equally pertinent to the way western culture is constituted as other structural exclusion (Bertens 218). In his famous book, *History of Sexuality: An introduction*, Foucault relates sexuality with discourse, knowledge, and power. He describes sexuality as relations that are continuously and locally produced and productive at every level of modern culture through "the task of padding everything having to do with sex through the endless will of speech" (qtd. in Sedgwick 279).

Sexuality first became an issue within the feminist movement. In the course of 1970s, various groups within feminist movement began to express their dissatisfaction with a collective feminism that they in increasingly saw "as shaped by the interests of the dominant group within the movement (Bertens 218). These groups were basically

comprised of white, middle class, college educated, and heterosexual women. Feminism came under attack for homophobia or at least for heterosexism—the presumptions of heterosexual values and norms. As Showalter was creating "her [heterosexual] tradition", lesbian feminists were asking "if there was a lesbian tradition" and this involved some important identity issues (Tolan 331). Taking its cue from some of the terms Black and Third World; lesbian feminists began questioning the politics of defining oneself as a lesbian. Furthermore, as Fiona Tolan views, increasing second wave feminists turned to an understanding of "sexuality as a cultural construction" and a "political choice" "rather than a "biologically determined position" (331). Tolan further says that the radical lesbian theorists such as Daly argued that by refusing heterosexuality, women could fatally undermine patriarchy. Likewise, for a good many lesbian feminists the subversiveness of mainstream feminism didn't extend to sexuality. Although the mainstream feminists questioned traditional views of gender, they failed to question the traditional views of same-sex relations. As a result, lesbian feminism turned away from mainstream feminism to pursue its own separate path.

Lesbian feminism has originated from the mainstream feminism itself, and it best understood by seeing it initially in the context of its own origins from within feminism, for lesbian studies emerged in the 1980s as a kind of annex of feminist criticism before acquiring disciplinary independence. Indeed, one reading of the academic situation in 1990s would be that feminism has become so successful and so institutionalized that lesbian studies now occupies the radical ground vacated by feminism. Furthermore, lesbian feminism addresses the issues related to both sexism and heterosexism. In other words, lesbian feminists must deal with "the psychological, social, economic, and

political oppression fostered not only by patriarchal male privilege, but by heterosexual privilege"(Tyson 323). In short, lesbian feminists speak for the identity and rights of lesbians.

Generally, a woman whose sexual desire is oriented toward women is known as a lesbian. Moreover, Hans Bertens views a lesbian as "a woman who has felt a strong and lifelong attraction to other women" (219). The phrase 'lifelong attraction' boldly signifies that the women's erotic orientation towards the women was already firmly in place at birth, even though it might only have begun to manifest itself during or after puberty. Lesbianism or homosexuality is from this point of view simply programmed into us just as heterosexual orientation is programmed into the rest. But, for the many radical lesbians of the early 1970s, "lesbianism was a matter of choice- a political, anti-patriarchal choice" (220). For some theorists, to underplay the sexual dimension of lesbian experience is to underplay the most unique and liberating lesbian life. "In bonding with one another sexually and denying men access to their bodies, lesbians deny patriarchy one of its most powerful tools; heterosexuality," says Lois Tyson (326).

John M. Clum, by analyzing Gale Rubin's famous essay "The Traffic in Women: Note Toward an Anthropology of Sex", defines the way in which gender is determined and the ways in which women's roles are determined by "negotiations between men" (129). Clum views that the women are married "to allow men to form tribal or national alliances" (129). This system makes the woman the currency of masculine transactions. Furthermore, the system of heterosexual marriage also ensures the policing of compulsory heterosexuality by means of official homophobia, which never succeeds to the impossible task of eliminating homosexual desires or behaviour. Again, commenting

on the works of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and comparing her ideas regarding same sex bonds, Clum writes, "Sedgwick goes a step further than Rubin to show that the homosocial bonds between men [. . .] contains elements of homophobia to 'protect' them from [. . .] homosexual desire often denied but inherent in such bands" (129). In contrast to male bonding John M. Clum views that "women [also] forge potentially subversive bonds within this system and the ways in which those bonds are subverted by marriage" (129). Finally, analyzing Tennessee Williams works, Clum comments:

In Williams works, there is from the outset a different formulation, Instead of the women being the apex of a triangle, with a band between two men at its other poles, a man is at the apex, with a tentative band or conflict between two women negotiated by them in order to establish a bond with a men. (129)

Thus John M. Clum sees subversive female bonding wherein man remains just the currency of feminine transactions. And man acts as an agent who protest female bending from the dangers of homophobia of patriarchy.

Patriarchy always privileges heterosexuality because patriarchy and heterosexuality are inextricable linked together to enhance the patriarchal values and norms. Thus, patriarchal society always suppresses other types of sexual orientations including homosexuality and others. One has to "hold feminine qualities in contempt" to be a "real man" in a patriarchal culture (Tyson 87). Homosexuality is included on the list of 'feminine' behaviors; especially the American stereotypes of homosexual male are extremely 'Feminine one'. In America, popular understanding depicts the male homosexuals as "effete" or "feminine" in appearance and behavior; homosexuality is

even confused with people impersonation (Chafetz 208). Similarly, popular imagination pictures lesbians as "bull dykes" who are very masculine in behaviour and appearance. The next type of sexuality that is "heterosexual prostitution" is a very different kind of Phenomenon in America (Chafetz 212). The male prostitute or a gigolo is, in the most fundamental sense, betraying the masculine stereotypes. According to Janet Salzman Chafetz, "he is doing so in two ways: by functioning as an economic dependent a female and by acting as the sexual object and recipient of a female's initiative" (212).

Moreover, sexuality has also been entangled with women's depression and alcoholism. In the essay, "Clinical Aspects of Sex-Role Stereotyping", Gloria K. Litman, names alcoholic woman as "fallen angel" for she "has violated popular stereotypic conceptions of what is considered suitable and appropriate feminine behaviour (116). Moreover, women who are addicted to alcohol and other addiction are considered to be the great threat to the patriarchy. Since the roles of women have been equated with the establishing function of wife and mother, the drunken woman seems to present a special threat to the patriarchy. Litman further comments: "a woman who has deserted her feminine role to the extent that she has become an alcoholic is considered to have deserted respectability in every area of her life" (118).

Finally, Tennessee Williams's play, *Sweet Bird of youth* (1959) can be thoroughly analyzed and interpreted on the basis of aforementioned theoretical modality that emphasizes on the issues of reversal of gender roles on the ground of broad category 'feminism'. The theoretical tool is not only developed on the basis of mainstream feminism rather it also equally focuses on the issues like gender, sexuality, lesbianism that are inextricably linked with feminism.

Since homosexual men are considered as having feminine qualities, the protagonist Chance Wayne has also those feminine traits, for he is portrayed as a homosexual man in the play, *Sweet Bird of Youth*. In the same way, Chance Wayne, the protagonist as a heterosexual sex worker betrays the masculine gender roles and performs the feminine stereotypes unlike a male in a patriarchal society. Moreover, the crucial dimension of the play is that the protagonist, Chance Wayne is dramatized as financially dependent on female character Princess. Unlike a female in a traditional patriarchal society, Princess act and behaves like male for she is economically independent whereas Chance Wayne seems to be male version of female for he betrays male ideals being economically dependent and passive. In patriarchy, economically dependent man is regarded as having feminine qualities.

The next equally important aspect of the play regarding the reversal of gender roles is that Chance Wayne is exploited and used as a sexual object by the females. His sexual exploitation can be seen from two perspectives. Firstly, Chance Wayne is hired for sex by the female character Princess. And secondly, he is used as a currency of feminine transactions wherein two women are sexual and emotional possibilities. Moreover, the decaying of patriarchy is seen through Chance Wayne who becomes threat to marriage; as a result he couldn't get Heavenly. The decaying and dying of patriarchy implies that the conventional gender roles are also changing. Likewise, Princess, a female character, is addicted with smoking hashish and pills. Specially, is following all the masculine stereotypes for drinking smoking and addiction are considered as male qualities.

In a nutshell, Chance Wayne, being physically passive, psychologically more emotional, sexually male sex worker, and financially dependent, and socially castrated,

violates all the patriarchal proscribed masculine roles by the patriarchy, and he has internalized all the feminine stereotypes. And he has internalized all the feminine stereotypes. And female character, Princess unlike a female, is seen independent, active, practical, strong and decisive. Thus, the play is viewed as one of the best plays of Tennessee Williams that has the strong theme of reversal of gender roles.

III. Textual Analysis

Gender Roles and Economy in *Sweet Bird of Youth*

Tennessee William's *Sweet Bird of Youth* focuses upon the interpersonal relationship between the male protagonist Chance Wayne and the female character Princess Kosmonopolis. Chance Wayne never quite made it in the theatre. And instead has drifted into the life of gigolo, who searches, though he finally fails, for the success and authenticity in the world of exploitative woman, misleading father figure and fierce competition for success. His failure emerges out of the violation of patriarchal gender roles that is his inability to act as a male in a traditional patriarchal society. Furthermore, Chance Wayne has been portrayed as economically dependent, sexually passive, and intellectually impractical and scatterbrained. That's why he couldn't take his place in the patriarchal succession, while the female character, Princess is seen powerful who takes attention away from the frustrated desire of the nominal protagonist, a desperate Chance Wayne for whom the Princess is at first no more than a means to an end. In other words, Chance Wayne takes Princess and Heavenly as milestone for his success but in vain. Thus, by dramatizing the male protagonist Chance Wayne as financially dependent, sexually marginalized, socially castrated, intellectually emotional and presenting another female character Princess who has adopted masculinity, Williams reverses the conventional gender roles.

The male protagonist, Chance Wayne depends economically on the female character Princess who hires him for sex and companionship. Here, the economic dependency of the former and the latter's financial independence are linked with feminine and masculine traits respectively. Chance Wayne is seen totally absorbed into the world

of buyer and bought, for he is a gigolo – a man who lives off the money of women. Thus, the protagonist sells his body to Princess like a commodity and Princess considers him as a mere object that she uses according to her desire and needs. Princess views Chance Wayne as a means of entertainment and distraction whereby she forgets the things that she doesn't want to remember and especially through sexual pleasure. Because of economic dependency, Chance Wayne has to perform sexually whatever time Princess orders him; if he denies her sexual desire then she can "deduct" him as her "caretaker" (46). Thus, Princess forces Chance Wayne to have sexual intercourse as she says "When I say now, the answer must not be later, I have only one way to forget these things I don't want to remember and that's through the act of love-making", And she further adds, "[t]hat's the only dependable distraction so when I say now, because I need that distraction, it has to be now, no later" (47). Thus Princess exploits Chance Wayne sexually and physically. He has to act in accordance with the will of princess. As she says:

Chance, I need that distraction. It's time for me to fix out if you're able to give it to me. You mustn't hang onto your silly little idea what you can increase your value by turning away and looking out a window when somebody wants you. . . . I want you. . . . I say now and I mean now, then not until then will I call downstairs and tell the hotel cashier that I am sending young man down with some traveler's checks to cash for me. (47)

Thus Princess objectifies Chance Wayne treating him as a mere sexual commodity. Here, Princess seems too much cautious about her needs and to accomplish them. That's why she compels Chance Wayne for sexual satisfaction by saying 'now' and not 'later'.

The female character, Princess is in financial control and pays the financially dependent man, Chance Wayne, for providing her physical and emotional service. Princess behaves with Chance Wayne as a slave. As she recovers from the depression, she could not recognize Chance Wayne. Princess dominates and becomes angry with Chance Wayne when he fails in his duty. As Princess feels short-winded, she orders Chance to search oxygen case but Chance couldn't find it in appropriate case. And because of her economic independency, Princess acts as a master in her dealings with Chance Wayne by becoming too much furious to him which becomes more obvious from their conversation:

PRINCESS: Why in the hell did you lock it up in that case.

CHANCE [. . .]: you said to put all your valuable in that case.

PRINCESS: I meant my jewellery, and you know it, you bastard.

PRINCESS: I didn't think you'd have these attacks anymore. I thought that having me with you to protect you would stop these attacks of panic. (25)

Here, Princess is seen dominating and exploiting Chance because of her financial power. She relates every physical and emotional service with economy. Princess has 'jewellery' and Chance has to take care of it. Moreover, she merely sees Chance as 'bastard' who completely depends upon her.

Likewise, Princess has bought Chance Wayne that's why she thinks that Chance Wayne has to work for her despite of his dream of success in his life. Princess is seen like a male in a patriarchal society who merely thinks about herself and his success. Unlike a male in a traditional patriarchy, Chance Wayne expects to be a famous Hollywood star

through Princess but she instead never lets happen so. Instead of being a stepping stone of Chance Wayne, she takes maximum gain from Chance treating him as a mere male nurse. As Princess and Chance talk to each other regarding their duty and responsibility, it becomes clear that the latter is really doing just opposite of what a traditional patriarchy expects.

CHANCE: Can you control your memory like that?

PRINCESS: Yes, I have had to learn to; what is this place, a hospital? And you, what are you. A male nurse?

CHANCE: I take care of you but I'm not your nurse.

PRINCESS: But you're employed by me, aren't you? For some purpose or other purpose.

CHANCE: I'm not on salary with you.

PRINCESS: What are you on? Just in expenses? (28)

Chance Wayne has been 'employed' by Princess whether he works on 'salary' or 'expenses'. He takes care of Princess as a 'male nurse' who acts as servitude because of his feminine gender roles.

Moreover, Chance Wayne never becomes aware of his feminine role in the patriarchal society. He wants to get respect, reputation and success through others especially through Princess. He wants to use Princess's property, name, and fame for his better career. His economic dependency becomes starker as he begs Princess's car.

CHANCE: And I want to borrow your Cadillac for a while.

PRINCESS: What for, Chance?

CHANCE: [. . .] I'm pretension I want to be seen in your car on the streets of St. Cloud drive all around town in it, blowing those Long silver trumpets and dresses in the fine clothes you have bought me.....
Can I?

PRINCESS: Chance you're a lost little boy that I really would like to help find himself. (57)

Here, Chance Wayne wants to be 'seen' in the car of Princess in order to be recognized in the society. Moreover, he wears 'the fine clothes' that are provided by Princess helps Chance Wayne only when he accepts her provider and breadwinner. As Princess sees Chance Wayne 'lost' in the world of economy and when he wants to be identified as a mere slave of Princes, she promises to help him.

Princess is doing what Williams's strong women declaim their right to sexual satisfaction but she places it within a material economy. It is this comodification that unmans Chance Wayne. Thus, Princess views him as a sexual object that lacks the individuality and identity. Princess uses him in exchange of her money. Chance Wayne is a male version whore with the heart of gold, a loving romantic at heart, who is redeemed by voicing patriarchal judgments on his relinquishment of masculine power. So that Chance Wayne's corruption is caused basically by his entrapment within a materialistic system. For instance, he gets dehumanized because of his co modification in the materialistic system. He works as a gigolo and thus his looks and sexual powers happen to be his most important assets. Unlike him, Princess is seen too much powerful in the materialistic system and Chance Wayne has been exploited and marginalized.

The Princess desired only an impersonal sexual release, something she can purchase from a subordinate male. Princess doesn't relate sex with feelings and emotions rather she understands it as a commodity that can be bought in the time of need from a subordinate and submissive male. Thus, Chance Wayne is deprived of his manhood in a patriarchal society. Chance Wayne, the male protagonist seems quite unaware about his masculine gender roles in the society and wears finest clothes that are bought for him by Princess.

Gendered Sexuality of Chance and Princess

Chance Wayne has been sexually marginalized in the play. He is portrayed as homosexual person that's why he is an outcast from the patriarchal society. Most of the characters in the play recognize him as a "criminal degenerate" a phrase usually applied to homosexuals (23). The term criminal degenerate links him to a sexual other, impotent and castration and seems to be the way of the world. When Chance Wayne insists Scudder to talk about his girl in St. Cloud, Scudder views Chance Wayne as a sexually vulnerable, impotence, and scapegoat of his own weakness. It becomes clearer as Scudder says to Chance that

[t]here's lot more to this which we feel ought to be talked about to anyone, least of all to you. Since you have turned into a criminal degenerate the only right term for you, but Chance, I think ought to be reminding that once long ago the father of this girl wrote at a prescription for you, a sort of medical, prescription which is castration. You'd better about that, which would deprive you of all you have got to get by on. (23)

Thus Scudder indirectly hints at the point that Chance Wayne was ordered castrations after he turned into a criminal degenerate that is homosexual man and infected Heavenly with a venereal disease. Hence Scudder as a patriarchal male suggests Chance Wayne to leave his hometown St. Cloud as soon as possible.

Chance Wayne gets victimized because of his homosexuality. He is controlled, pressurized, and ultimately forced to face his castration. Furthermore, he is compelled by Boss Finley who is presented as the patriarchal man, to leave the St. Cloud. And Boss especially orders his men to remove Chance Wayne because he threatens his political

power by infecting his daughter, Heavenly with venereal disease. Another female character, Aunt Nonnie who superficially sympathizes with Chance Wayne suggests him "get [ting] out of St. Cloud" (81). Chance Wayne who is quite ignorant about his crime to Heavenly, suspects to himself and questions Aunt Nonnie regarding the ill-treatment to him by the society. He asks: "Why everybody does treats me like a low criminal in the town I was born in?" (81) But Aunt Nonnie counters, "[A]sk yourself that question; ask your conscience that question" (81). Here, Chance seems very innocent about his practical life and his misdeeds whereby he has become a low criminal. Moreover, the antagonistic force of the play, Boss Finley orders his son and other thugs to remove Chance in no time. As he commands: "I want him gone by tomorrow–tomorrow commences at midnight" (62). Eventually, Chance does not follow Princess though she requested and tried to save him from the impending castration. Princess requested Chance as saying, "Come on, Chance, we're going to change trains at this station So, come on, we have got to go on. . . . Chance please" (124). But Chance chooses to face castration instead of going with Princess.

To the powerful men in St. Cloud Chance is just a criminal. Since sexuality is a discourse that determines the identity of a person, homosexual men like Chance Wayne are considered as insane in the traditional patriarchy whereas heterosexuality is privileged and promoted. The men in power decide and control sexuality. Thus Boss Finley who is very powerful politician considers Chance Wayne as an insane and criminal. It becomes more explicit as we analyze the dialogue of Boss Finely with his man Scudder:

SCUDDER: Is a criminal degenerate same or insane is a question that lots of low courts haven't been able to settle.

BOSS: Take it to the Supreme Court, they will hand you down a decision on that question. They will tell you a handsome young criminal degenerate like Chance Wayne is the mental and moral equal of any white man in the country. (64)

In this way Chance Wayne is considered abnormal because of his homosexual behaviour. In the play, Chance Wayne becomes 'other' for the patriarchal society. He is just seen as having feminine attributes.

Chance Wayne seems to have feminine traits as he is portrayed sexually impotent and vulnerable whereby Chance Wayne experiences his psychological castration as he fails to perform sexually in the bed with Princess. When in the first scene Alexandra Del Lago or Princess scoffs at his attempts to blackmail her and order him to perform in the bed Chance Wayne turns puritan and says to Princess, "Aren't you ashamed a little? (47). And Princess replies: "Of course I am. Aren't you? (47). Finally, Chance Wayne experiences his psychological castration when he finds himself impotent. In contrast, Princess gets success, despite her dependence on drugs, and Chance's attempt to objectify her to change her into a stepping stone for his career. In the end, she forces Chance Wayne to deliver on his promise of sexual service in the teeth of his blackmail attempts.

The most important aspect of William's vision is that his male character Chance Wayne is less bearer of sexual desire that is the traditional male role in American theatre and film, and more of its sexual object is conventionally assumed as a female position. Such a feminization is homoerotic to some degree, but it creates an appeal from which female viewers are by no means immune, especially because the plays themselves offer strong women characters like Princess who plays the traditional male role of desiring

subject. In fact, Chance Wayne functions as a passive recipient and Princess is depicted as desiring subject. Princess seems too much desiring for she orders Chance for sexual pleasure.

PRINCESS: What happened last night?

CHANCE: You knocked yourself out.

PRINCESS: Did we sleep here together?

CHANCE: Yes, but I didn't molest you.

PRINCESS: Should I thank you for that or accuse you of cheating. (27)

Here Chance Wayne is seen too much passive sexually for he lacks desiring subject as he says, "I didn't molest you" (27). Unlike Chance Wayne Princess act as a 'desiring subject' who uses Chance Wayne sexually. As Princess orders him: "come here, kiss me, I love you [. . .] did I say that? Did I mean it? [. . .] What a child you are . . . come here" (57). Thus Princess is seen as having masculinity and Chance Wayne acts a female.

Moreover, Chance Wayne has been marginalized sexually in the play *Sweet Bird of Youth*. In this play Chance Wayne indirectly sells his pure heart to Heavenly hoping to get her; and he sells his physical body to Princess whom he is getting financial support. Ultimately Chance neither achieves Heavenly nor does his relationship sustain with Princess. This play, *Sweet Bird of Youth*, like its companion pieces is comprised of intersecting triangles: Chance, Heavenly and Heavenly's father, Boss Finely; but far more important, Chance, Heavenly, and Princess. In this triangle of Chance, Heavenly, and Princess, two women never meet but offer the two sexual and emotional possibilities Chance experiences in the play:

CHANCE: what are you doing now, Princess?

PRINCESS: The tactile approach.

CHANCE: you do that like you were feeling a piece of goods to see if it
was genuine silk or phoney. . . .

PRINCESS: It feels like silk Genuine. This much I do remember that I like
bodies to be hairless, silky smooth gold!

CHANCE: do I meet those requirements but I still have a feeling that
something is not satisfied in the relation between us.

PRINCESS: you seem to meet those requirements but I still have a feeling
that something is not satisfied in the relation between us. (30-31)

In the play, Princess forms bond with Heavenly as she says that she likes 'bodies to be hairless, silky- smooth gold'. Such requirements are basically fulfilled by the Heavenly, not by Chance who has body full of rough hairs for he is a male. That's why Princess says that "something is not satisfied" in her relation with Chance (31). Eventually, Chance feels isolated and abandoned by both Heavenly and Princess. Moreover, Princess's sexual orientation towards Heavenly becomes more obvious as she asks Chance: "Is she pretty?" (53). Thus, in *Sweet Bird of Youth*, two women from a triangle with a man [Chance] who is martyred, yet no relationship between Chance Wayne and the women can be sustained, While the martyred man represents some violation of the socially acceptable principle of masculinity – that is, they are threats to marriage and patriarchy. It is the women who define the meaning of the martyrdom and who really offer the potential for Chance in the gender system.

Gender Roles and Patriarchy in the Play

In the play Chance Wayne was emasculated by Boss Finley, an antagonistic force in the play. Boss Finley, father of Heavenly, punishes Chance by ordering castration of Chance. Boss Finley talks with his men regarding Heavenly and her concern with Chance Wayne who has threaten Boss Finley's political power. Boss Finley says to Scudder that Chance Wayne had his daughter when she was fifteen. Furthermore, Boss accuses Chance of taking "some flash light photos [that] were made of her, naked, on Diamond key" (60). Boss Finley further adds that "some studio in Pass Christian that made more copies of them than Chance Wayne ordered and these were circulated" (60). In this way Chance Wayne challenged the power of Boss Finley. Not only this, Boss Finley even says that his "daughter had a whore's operation after the last time he [Chance] had her" (62).

In this way Chance Wayne has not only infected Heavenly with venereal disease but he also threatened Boss Finley's position in society. Eventually, Boss Finley punishes Chance Wayne being a gigolo and who transfers venereal disease to his lovely daughter that results into hysterectomy. On the one hand, Boss Finley orders castration of Chance, on the other, Heavenly is impossibility for her father never lets Chance Wayne take her away. Ultimately, Heavenly becomes nothing but a dream of youth and rendered sterile by the venereal disease Chance gave her. In short, there grew tension between Chance and Boss Finley for they stand as opposite forces in the play. Here, Chance strives to get Heavenly to prove his manhood or masculinity through different tricks. But Boss Finley never lets Chance Wayne a single chance to meet Heavenly. Even Boss orders his men to

remove Chance Wayne from his homeland St. Cloud. Thus, Boss Finley stands as a patriarchal force that eventually punishes Chance Wayne severely.

Chance Wayne's castration is the ultimate emasculation that has been ordered by Boss Finley. Boss Finley is also campaigning for castration of black who commits miscegenation and Chance is to polluting his beloved daughter.

Chance Wayne escapes from the moral responsibility in the traditional patriarchal society. Unlike a male in a traditional patriarchy, Chance Wayne seems to have feminine attributes for Heavenly. He is seen less concerned with his ill-mother who has recently died alone at home, but he worries more about Heavenly.

SCUDDER: Why have you come back to St. Cloud?

CHANCE: I've still a mother and a girl in St. Cloud. "How's Heavenly,
George?

CHANCE: I have heard my mother was sick.

SCUDDER: But you have said "How's Heavenly" not "How's my mother"

Chance [. . .] your mother died a couple weeks ago.

Here, Chance fails to perform his duty in a patriarchal society as a male that's why he is not welcomed in his own home-town St. Cloud. In the play, the patriarchy has been exposed as decaying and dying that signifies the end of the patriarchal values and norms wherein male qualities are privileged and promoted. For instance, in the play, Chance Wayne is denied to achieve Heavenly; instead she is going to marry Scudder. But there is no Chance of procreation because Heavenly's womb was surgically removed. In the same way Boss Finley has no wife and he keeps his son under the strict discipline and order. And Princess has also not got any children.

Implication of Gender Roles in *Sweet Bird of Youth*

Sweet Bird of Youth dramatizes Chance Wayne's feminine qualities in different levels. Moreover, the play also portrays another female character, Princess as attributed with masculinity. Thus, this dramatization of male protagonist Chance Wayne as having feminine traits and the female character Princess attributed with masculinity is examined and analyzed on the basis of physical, functional, sexual, emotional, intellectual interpersonal, and intrapersonal characteristics that a male and female are expected to perform or have to perform in a traditional patriarchy.

The male protagonist Chance Wayne brings out his femininity as he perpetually worries about his appearance and aging. Moreover, Chance Wayne has become too much passive because of his lost youth. Throughout the play Chance Wayne tries to recapture his youth but it was in vain. As Chance Wayne talks to Princess about her miserable condition of previous day, she sees Chance Wayne very inexperienced. Here, Chance Wayne seems a person who basically gives priority to his physical beauty.

CHANCE: I like you are a nice monster.

PRINCESS: Your voice sounds young. Are you young?

CHANCE: My age is twenty-Nine Years.

PRINCESS: That's young for anyone but an Arab. Are you very good looking?

CHANCE: I used to be the finest looking boy in this town.

PRINCESS: How large is the town?

CHANCE: Fair Sized. (30)

Thus, Chance who is twenty-nine years seems to have too much worry about his age. Chance says he used to be finest looking boy in his hometown St. Cloud. At present too Chance Wayne is hunted by the beauty that he had in the past. In this way Chance is basically a female in a traditional patriarchy.

Furthermore, Chance Wayne is seen too much worried about his fading youth and beauty. The principal cause for his worry about his appearance and youth is that they are his basic assets through which he earns his livelihood. Here Chance Wayne is a male prostitute thus he gives more importance to his physical beauty rather than rationality as a real male in a patriarchal society.

In the same way, Chance Wayne's femininity becomes more obvious as we analyze his interpersonal relationship with other characters. Basically female characters view Chance as dainty. Miss Lucy says to her friend Scotty that "Chance Wayne used to be so attractive. I couldn't stand it" (89). Miss Lucy further says "every Sunday in summer I used to drive out to the municipal beach and watch him dive off the high tower" through binoculars (89). Likewise, one of the Chance Wayne's sympathizers Aunt Nonnie also admires Chance Wayne's physical charm. As Aunt Nonnie talks to Boss Finley, she says "Chance was the finest, nicest, sweetest boy in St. Cloud (66). In this way Chance Wayne has been as a mere dainty and attractive among female characters. In traditional patriarchal society these traits are attributed to the female. Here, by casting these stereotypes to male protagonist, Williams directly reverses the gender roles.

In contrast, Princess appears in the play as a strong, brave and less worried about her 'appearance' and age. Princess seems 'strong' in a sense that she has even controlled the fleeting youth for which Chance Wayne craves too much. Princess captures her youth

through the art. Moreover, Princess discusses with Chance Wayne about the youth and art that are inextricably linked together. Princess comments on the right opinion of the people as she says "for years all told me that it was ridiculous of me to feel that I couldn't go back to the screen or the stage as a middle-aged woman" (36). Furthermore, Princess Comments: "They told me I was an artist, not just a star whose career depends on youth" (36). But Princess finds herself very strong and knowledgeable as she knew in her heart that legend of Alexandra Del Lago couldn't be separated from an appearance of youth and she "couldn't get old with that tiger" that is still raging in her (37). Here Princess finds that the 'tiger' that is art, helps her to keep her youth forever.

Thus, the play celebrates the endurance of Princess, capable of honesty with herself and others and capable of shining moments of compassion, even love. Yet Princess also knows that one is always essentially alone in beanstalk country. Princess prevails because she is like her Creator, an artist and star. As she says: "out of my passion and torment of my existence I have created a thing that I can unveil, a sculpture almost heroic, that I can unveil, which is true" (120). Alexandra's [Princess's] acting, recorded on film, can fight time. Princess's last words to Chance Wayne offer the philosophy of adaptability and endurance that are positive counter to the mutilation of martyrs like Chance: "So come on, we have got to go on" (124). Here Princess seems stronger than Chance Wayne for she has strength to face an uncertain, potentially bleak future. But Chance, the passive stud frozen in time, incapable of compromise, can only submit to the completion of his emasculation.

Furthermore, Chance Wayne is depicted as emotional, sentimental, romantic, insecure and fearful that is the traits usually assigned to the females in the conventional

patriarchy. From the beginning of the play, Chance Wayne's mind gets preoccupied with emotion and romantic feelings. For instance, Chance gives more importance to the glorious moment of beauty in the bed with Heavenly on a speeding train and lives to recreate that moment. Chance Wayne is less concerned with his status as a male in the society. There is purity in his dream, but Chance's link with reality is more tentative. Being emotional Chance goes to step back from reality and he divides the people in two groups as he says to Princess that "the great difference between people in this world is not between rich and poor or the good and evil" (54), he further adds "the biggest of all differences in this world is between the ones that had or have pleasure in love and those that haven't and hadn't any pleasure in love" (54).

Here, Chance doesn't give emphasis on materiality rather he strives for the romantic love with Heavenly. Thus, he becomes unsuccessful in the material world which Chance Wayne realizes very late. Moreover, Chance unveils his romantic attribute as he describes the "flash light photo" that he took of her nude, one night in Diamond Key which is a little sandbar about a half a mile off shore which is under water at high tide (53-54). Chance comments: "The water is just beginning to lap over her body like it desired her like I did and still do and will always, always" (54). Thus, Chance is seen overpowered by the romantic feelings regarding Heavenly Finley, his dream girl.

Furthermore, Chance Wayne is shown fearful and insecure. As Princess asks Chance Wayne's talent in acting he replies in negative and says: "something always blacks me". . . . That means he was not so good at in acting for he was disturbed by something while acting (43). Furthermore, when Princess asks him whether it is 'fear' that disturbs him, in her question's reply Chance Wayne says: "No not fear, but 'terror'. . . .

otherwise would I be your goddess caretaker, hauling you across the country? Picking you up when you fall?" (43). Chance Wayne shows his feminine quality by exposing his 'terror' regarding his career and success. In order to be a star, he runs after Princess. Not only running but he also follows her orders and commands. In short, he is quite 'fearful' regarding his weaknesses and personal life.

Chance Wayne is a legless sweet bird and he tries to fly to his destination depending on others legs. And sometimes he even tries to blackmail others and ultimately experiences insecure at the moment of crisis. For instance, in order to blackmail Princess Chance Wayne forces her to sign on the checks and he even threatens her to disclose secrecy of Princess's addiction to the narcotics department of F.B.I. But Princess seems very strong and determined and eventually she threatened Chance Wayne by saying: "I could deduct you, as my caretaker" (46). Finally, Chance was seen "trembling and sweating" because he feels insecure in dealing with Princess (46). Here, Princess is so strong and powerful that a bleak and dependent man like Chance is nothing for her.

The male protagonist Chance Wayne equally discloses his feminine trait as fearful and insecure in the first act of the play. As he hears about the 'tragic ordeal' of Heavenly because of his past contact with her, he feels great terror and says, "Jesus! If something happened to Heavenly, will you please tell me-what? (23). He feels insecure and fearful, for he has hoped to get Heavenly and hoped to be a famous star. Chance Wayne, being passive and dependent, doesn't try to get success through his own effort rather his mind gets occupied with fear because of his dependency.

Unlike Chance Wayne, Princess is a very real and strong character in the play. In spite of grand neurosis, Princess is seen very hopeful and secure. For instance, Princess is

feels "short-winded" and asks for "oxygen" to Chance but still she doesn't abandon her confidence and courage to live (24). Furthermore, as Princess suffers severely from the grand neuroses and feels quite uneasy, Chance Wayne asks: "Are you sure you don't want a doctor?" (27). Princess shows her stoic endurance that is basically considered as masculine trait as she replies, "No for god's sake. . . . No!" (27). Princess's stoicism becomes more obvious as we discover her ability to cope with trouble and pain through the dialogue below.

CHANCE: Why are you so scared of doctors?

PRINCESS: (*hoarsely, quickly*): I don't need them. What happened is nothing at all. It happens frequently to me. Something disturbs me... adrenalin's pumped in my blood and I get short winded that's all, that's all there is to it. I woke up [. . .]. (27)

Thus Princess isn't showing only type of difficulty regarding her serious disease, but she is about tolerating it. This stoic endurance is conventionally attributed to the male but in this play female character has this masculine trait

Furthermore, Princess seems very practical for she is acting as an agent of truth forcing a weak man to confront reality. Princess is seen too much practical especially regarding time and life. She tries to convince Chance Wayne who understands time as "enemy" (120), by saying that "there's no valuable knowledge than knowing the right time to go" (37). Here, Chance Wayne merely blames time without understanding his impracticality that destroys him. In contrast, Princess knows to use the appropriate time to succeed in life. Thus practicality of Princess and impracticality of Chance Wayne are

directly linked to masculinity and femininity respectively in a patriarchy. So Chance Wayne deserves the feminine identity.

In the same way, Chance Wayne denies his passivity and competitiveness and blindly requests Princess to talk about him and Heavenly to Miss Powers who is the owner of the Hollywood studio and columnist. Here, Chance Wayne also wants to use Princess to move forward his career. Eventually, Princess refuses to talk about him to Miss Powers: "Talk about a beach-boy I Picked up for pleasure, distraction from panic" (120). Moreover, she forces Chance Wayne to face reality as she says to Chance: "Chance you have gone past something you couldn't afford to go past; your time, your youth, you have passed it" (120). Thus, Princess makes Chance understand about his lost youth and time but Chance Wayne, denying the power of time, wants to recapture his youth and golden time. So, being impractical, he ultimately faces his failure. Chance's irrationality and innocence comes into light as he unrealistically believes that Princess will help him and Heavenly to a Hollywood career by sponsoring "a local contest of talent" that will be rigged for them to win (56). And thus he goes off in pursuit of Heavenly.

Furthermore, Chance Wayne has been portrayed as irrational and scatterbrained throughout the play. He believes that he can achieve success in life by performing misdeeds to the people to whom he depends. For instance, he tries to gain power over Princess by blackmailing her. Once Chance Wayne secretly records all the conversation concerned with Princess's addiction on the tape recorder and threatens her power: "Princess! Do you know something? All this conversation has been recorded on tape?" (44). But Chance Wayne is no match for such a ruthless pragmatics: "When monster

meets monster, one monster, one monster has to give away And IT Will Never Be Me. I'm an older hand at it. . . . With much more natural aptitude at it than you have" (46). Thus Chance naturally seems too much weak because he lacks rationality that is must for a male in a patriarchy. In contrast, Princess has natural aptitude regarding skill to hold power and use it in an appropriate time.

As we analyze the interpersonal characteristic of Chance Wayne and Princess, the latter is seen dominating independent and free. And the former has been shown as follower, subservient, and submissive to Princess. He cannot be anything himself rather he tries to achieve his goal being subservient to Princess. Chance Wayne's dependency on Princess is seen clearly as Chance Wayne finishes narrating his past life;

PRINCESS: Is that the end of the story?

CHANCE: Princess, the end of the story is up to you. You want to help me?

PRINCESS: I want to help you, can you believe me not everybody wants to hurt everybody. I don't want to hurt you can you believe me? (55)

Here, Chance Wayne acts as a passive male having less courage. He lets Princess to handle his further life. His life depends on Princess who can direct his life towards any direction. Due to his dependency, ultimately he was abandoned by Heavenly, Princess and time itself.

But Princess is seen independent, dominating and she is very famous artist and star. And her drives for creative expression, popular acclaim, and power over others are rooted in a desire for self-sufficiency, which is traditionally masculine, not a feminine trait. Princess addresses Chance as a 'boy' and gives him orders. For instance, after

Chance tells her about the broken glasses of Princess she orders Chance: "Take that splintered lens out before it gets in my eye" (31). After obeying her instruction Chance Wayne Counters: "You like to give orders, don't you?" (31). Giving instructions and orders is Princess's natural aptitude, for she is independent and she has hired him for sexual and physical services. That's why Princess asserts her power and replies Chance Wayne's Question: "It's something I seem to be used to" (31). Thus Princess dominates Chance Wayne because of her self-sufficiency.

Moreover, Chance Wayne is presented submissive to Princess. Chance Wayne who lacks confidence and courage for the success of his life, doesn't believe on himself rather he continuously bows down in front of Princess. Princess plans to leave the hotel as she knew that she "wasn't welcome" in that hotel because she had come there with a "criminal degenerate", Chance (114). And, when Princess says that she asked them to get her a driver, Chance Wayne, being submissive says, "I'm still your driver" (114). Thus, Chance doesn't want his autonomous identity and manhood rather he likes to be her driver throughout his life. Furthermore, Princess offers Chance a way to get out of town and avoid the impending castration that has been ordered for him .He can remain in her employ:

PRINCESS: You'd better cam down with my luggage.

CHANCE: I'm not part of your luggage.

PRINCESS: What else can you be?

CHANCE: Nothing But not part of your luggage. (122)

Hence, Princess shows her dominating masculine stereotype as she sees Chance Wayne part of her 'luggage' and orders him to come down with the luggage she has. And

Chance Wayne becomes submissive and overprotected and says he is 'nothing' that means he doesn't have his own individuality and identity.

The play also dramatizes the use of alcohol, drugs and hashish by the principal female character, Princess and less importantly Chance Wayne. Princess uses drugs and alcohol to overcome her pain and grief that shows her endurance. Most importantly, the female character Princess is abandoning her femininity and adopting masculinity by using this hashish and pills. Chance Wayne also takes alcohol and other pills but he takes very less. Princess drinks to much alcohol and other types of addiction and as a result she cannot recognize the place where she lives and with whom she is staying: "I don't know who you are?" (24). Through the use of alcohol she tries to forget "everything" and she also wants to forget who she is (26). Thus, unlike Chance who always keeps on recalling his past life, Princess, by the help of alcohol and sexual pleasure with Chance, wants to forget everything.

The play dramatizes the progressive narrowing of Chance's possibilities. Despite frantic efforts to attain a chance at celebrity through manipulation and even blackmail, he finally has no choice but to accept a horrifying death in life, a castration that is his poetically just reward for the betrayal of Heavenly, and his own youth. For Williams's hero, castration is the ultimate sign of his feminization, the reduction of his drive for the success to a harlotry that delivers him into the power of those who would punish him for it. Eventually Chance is forced to abandon his illusion of success and accept the failure that is in some sense the consequence of his misdeeds. Though he has considerable Charisma and personal power, he had put himself in a position of servitude to the fading star in order to further a career for which it soon becomes evident that he has no aptitude.

Finally, as he reaches near the cold clutches of castration that has been ordered by Boss Finley, he blames the power of time: "I don't ask your pity, but just for understanding-not even that -no, just for your reorganization of me in you, and the enemy, time, in us all." (124). So, Chance Wayne is basically portrayed as weak, dependent and substitute in the play because of his feminine role and Princess is seen comparatively stronger, independent and self-assertive because of her masculinity.

IV. Conclusion

There is difficulty to arrive at a definite conclusion in any literary work in general and a popular and powerful work like *Sweet Bird of Youth* in particular. The play doesn't fit to any categorization. The power of Tennessee Williams's play lies in the fact that it has stirred the minds of a large number of readers and critics since its first publication in 1959 and has been performed frequently. The play has encouraged audiences and critics to make its multiple readings of the numerous performances in different parts of the world. Though there have already been a number of multiple readings of the play, the present study has drawn a distinct conclusion through an application of feminist literary theories in general and the discussion of gender roles in particular derived from different theorists and writers. Generally, Lois Tyson, Janet Saltzman Chafetz, Sheila Ruth and numerous other writers' essays and works have been used to understand the meanings of gender and its impacts on the people. The main body of conclusion has been drawn from the Lois Tyson's emphasis on the conventional gender roles in his book, *Critical Theory Today*. Thus the researcher proves that there is reversal of gender roles as the male and female characters are assigned with the reversed roles.

Tennessee Williams has successfully challenged the conventional patriarchal gender roles by exposing Chance Wayne, a male protagonist, who basically functions as a female, and the female character Princess, who has attributed with masculinity. Chance Wayne, whose ambition, dream and success of life are never translated into the reality, is because of his entrapment in patriarchal society wherein masculine stereotypes are valued and enhanced. The protagonist Chance Wayne even tries to blackmail Princess for his personal success.

In the play, Chance Wayne's dependency, not only for economic support but also for the better Hollywood career, is ascribed to his femininity that he has internalized. Chance Wayne expects to move forward in his life without doing anything rather acting like a conventional female. He wants to be submissive, dependent, and subservient to Princess. Thus because of his violation of the patriarchal values and norms, he becomes pathetic and socially marginalized character.

The male protagonist Chance Wayne betrays the masculine stereotypes by functioning as a sexual object. For instance, Chance Wayne is a gigolo, and he abandons his individuality as he sells himself to Princess. He earns his livelihood, not by his any significant deeds, but he does it through being a male prostitute. In contrast, Princess develops her masculinity as being economically independent, intellectually creative and socially self-sufficient individual. She hires man like Chance Wayne for sex and other services and even keeps him under her strict domination. Moreover, Princess's power lies in her creative aptitude towards art and film. Thus, Princess strives for art and success in her life and eventually she gets success.

Chance Wayne, who is impractical and scatterbrained denying the power of time, tries to regain his sweet youth and his sweet heart Heavenly. But ultimately he faces his horrible misfortune that is castration. Unlike Chance Wayne, Princess is seen very much practical and rational regarding her understanding of time and life. Princess also desires to capture her youth and time but she does it through art and her acting in films. Thus Princess understands the power of time. She even knows how to utilize it and further career.

On the contrary, Chance Wayne enhances his feminine trait being or acting as a homosexual person since, homosexuality is considered as feminine attribute in America. As a result, Chance Wayne fails to have performance in the bed with Princess and experiences his feminine side of personality. It happens so because the patriarchy expects a male to be sexually active. But Chance Wayne realizes his sexual impotence and vulnerability as he shows his sexual inability with Princess.

Unlike Chance Wayne, Princess acts as a sexually desiring subject. Princess has been portrayed as sexually active that bore her masculine trait in a conventional patriarchy. She, unlike a traditional female, hires Chance Wayne for sex and always appeals him for sexual pleasure. Thus, Princess remains as desiring sexual subject and Chance Wayne functions as a mere sexual object that sexually remains passive.

Another most important case wherein the gender role is seen to be reversed is that the male protagonist Chance Wayne depends economically on female character Princess who is in financial control. Since masculine is directly linked with the material success that a man achieves in the society, Chance Wayne abandons his masculine stereotype as he fails to be breadwinner. In contrast, going beyond her feminine role in the traditional society, Princess adopts masculinity being financially very strong.

Moreover, the physical characteristics of Chance Wayne and Princess also largely differ. Here, under the physical characteristics, Chance Wayne, whose mind gets preoccupied with his lost youth and time, worries about his appearance and aging unlike a traditional male. Chance Wayne, being a nostalgic sweet bird, yearns for the physical beauty and his lost youth. In the traditional patriarchy views a man who tries to maintain

his physical beauty as having feminine qualities. But female character Princess doesn't yearn for beauty and youth rather she intellectually maintains it through the creative art.

In the same way, Chance Wayne's feminine traits become obvious as he lacks confidence, courage, and determination to head his life. He cries for the things that he has lost .For instance, he weeps and becomes mad for his failure to achieve Heavenly and he also equally cries for his inability to stand as a great Hollywood star. Moreover, masculinity is further adopted by Princess as she is portrayed as having stoic endurance. In spite of her severe grand neurosis whereby she feels short-winded, she shows courage and confidence regarding her illness and successful life.

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