



Of Boyz and Men: bell hooks and black feminist agenda on maleness

Thesis submitted to
Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Philosophy

by

VIOLINA BORAH



**Centre for English Studies
School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067, India
2011**



**Centre for English Studies
School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi- 110067, India**

Date: 18.07.11

Certificate

This dissertation titled "Of Boyz and Men: bell hooks and black feminist agenda on Maleness" submitted by Violina Borah, Centre for English Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is an original work and has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any other degree, diploma of any university or institution.

This may be placed before the examiners for evaluation for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy.


(Dr Navneet Sethi)

Supervisor

Dr. Navneet Sethi
Associate Professor
Centre for English Studies
School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110 067



(Prof. G. J. V. Prasad)

Chairperson

Prof. GJV Prasad
Chairperson
Centre for English Studies
School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-110067

Date: 18.07.11

Declaration by the Candidate

This thesis titled “Of Boyz and Men: bell hooks and black feminist agenda on maleness” submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is an original work and has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any other degree, diploma of any university or institution.

Violina Borah

(Violina Borah)

M. Phil Student

Centre for English Studies,

School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies,

Jawaharlal Nehru University,

New Delhi, India

To Maa and Deuta ;

*who taught me to dream big and desire to fulfill
their dreams through mine*

Acknowledgements

When I learned to dream

you gave them wings.

When I lost my way in darkness

You lit the candle and

showed me which way to follow.

When I opened my eyes

you pointed to the glory and the wonders,

I knew I was ready to go.

The strength that you hold me with,

I dared to aim for the sky and

with every mistake I learned to grow.

Each time I fell I had your hand to hold,

You pulled me back to my feet,

loved, cared and sometimes did scold.

If there is 'forever'... I know,

Whenever I look back there will be you.

I thought writing acknowledgement will never be a problem. Compared to the thirty thousand words I have written for my dissertation, writing a page of gratitude for all the help I have received was surely going to be easy but little did I know about the enormous responsibility of thanking someone in this manner. There is a constant fear of missing out someone or the other. I contemplated not writing any names or if possible not writing an acknowledgement itself if possible but, I was firmly told that this page can not be skipped. So here I am writing the most difficult part of my dissertation.

First of all I want to thank Dr Navneet Sethi for being serene and tolerant towards all the tantrums I have thrown over the last four years since 2007 and for being patient and guiding me, pointing out every vacuous blunder I have made especially during the last six months. Though her strictness scared me to work hard but at the same time her love, care and the expectations for me made me more worried that I may disappoint her. She has been a source of inspiration, a friend to share emotions and a perfect guide to show where I am going wrong. I also want to thank her for the scrumptious food that followed after all the admonishing sessions.

I also want to thank my other teachers, Prof. GJV Prasad, the coolest chairperson ever, Dr Saugata Bhaduri and Dr Dhananjay Singh for being there whenever I needed their help. Attending different courses they have offered since I enrolled in CES have helped me formulate and broaden my ideas.

Just thanking is not enough for all my friends who are always there at every odd hour to listen to problems, finding out solutions, making meanings out of senseless sentences which are typed in sleep, laughing over stupid mistakes yet being stern at times to remind not to repeat them and despite being busy taking out time to meet and console each other in the course of dissertation. Without them dissertation would have been more challenging.

I did not want to name people in the fear of missing out, but it will be unfair if I do not name Debaditya da for taking the pain of going through my chapters at the last moment and Gourab da for constantly reminding me to finish writing on time and fixing deadlines for me.

I would like to thank American library (Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata) and CSCS library; Bangalore for all the necessary study materials for research I have acquired. Not to forget all the others whoever has helped me finding a book, an article or a website at the time of crisis.

Last but not the least I offer my heartiest thanks to my laptop for enduring all the tortures I have done in its never-been-switched-off mode. Despite being on the verge of crashing due to my carelessness it has always recovered my lost data.

Apologising for the missed out names at last I present my gratitude to my parents who made everything possible supporting me in every phase of my life and never questioning and doubting me for anything. It is their trust that has moulded me into what I am.

Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter I: On Being a Man	8
Chapter II: On Being a Wo(man)	30
Chapter III: Of Boyz and Men: Through the vision of a visionary feminist; bell hooks	50
Conclusion:	72
Bibliography:	77

Introduction

My research aims to do a formalised intellectual enquiry in to definition and critique of maleness in Black Feminism and in the critical works of bell hooks. Men and masculinity played a crucial role in women's movements and literary domain at the same time. The issue of being superior, stronger or powerful is the basis of struggle between the two sexes. It is believed that men have placed women and femininity in a very subordinate position. There are various theories evolved about the causes of male domination and seeking remedies for the same. The early feminists started the struggle based on liberty, equality and fraternity and they fought for equal rights which men were enjoying. In the later stage the feminists grew more rigid watching the narrow lane that was followed in the name of equality and they felt that nothing changed as expected. The recent liberal feminists have given their analyses a sophisticated touch, bringing to the front the gendering of the laws, professions, the media and the state. Radical feminists believe that women should deny themselves their femininity to defy patriarchal mores. However, following a period of radical feminism, select schools of feminism have criticised the radicals for their approach. The radicals, in their aggressive attempts to fight masculine domination have resorted to adopting patriarchal structures of power and have proved to be the subject of mockery in the process.

It is seen that one group of feminists critique the supposed rational stand of masculinity and the other characterises maleness itself as a disease harmful to the women as well as men. The primary focus of this research is to explore the domain of 'maleness' from different feminist perspectives especially in the writings of bell hooks. The scope of my research is the treatment of black males in the Black Feminist Movement and Black Feminist Literature. 'Masculinity' defines the quality or condition of being masculine. However, there are several synonyms used for 'Masculinity' such as manfulness, manliness, maleness and so on. Nonetheless, in my view, the word 'maleness' here seems more accurate to be used to define the paradigm of masculinity as, the word 'maleness' stands for the properties and characteristics of the male sex. I feel 'masculinity' is a property that is inherent in maleness.

This research is an attempt to highlight the perspectives of earlier white and black feminists on maleness and how they are similar as well as different from bell

hooks's viewpoint. According to my observation she does not look at 'maleness' from a 'stereotypical eye'. Here the phrase 'stereotypical eye' projects the multiple interpretations which define or read the body of black male within the boarder of negative connotations such as Black Americans are not cultured, they are criminals and sub-humans. On the contrary bell hooks holds that American Culture criminalized and dehumanized black males. hooks says that there is suppression and repression too within 'maleness'. She, through her works creates a space where 'maleness' is viewed more from the eye of an individual and less from the eye of a writer or a feminist. In this research, I have looked into the multiple layers of 'maleness' and tried to analyse how bell hooks's interpretation and projection of 'maleness' is different from other critical perspectives.

Virginia Woolf in her work, "*A Room of One's Own*" writes:

All this pitting of sex against sex, of quality against quality; all this claiming of superiority and imputing of inferiority belong to the private-school stage of human existence where there are sides, and it is necessary for one side to beat another side.
(628)

However, hooks in her first book "*Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*"(1981) explores how the Black women were given very insignificant roles both in the Feminist and Black Liberation Movement. Though this book not only talks about the black women and their rights but it also brings forth the predicament of African-American men and how African-American men undercut their own 'maleness' in white America.

bell hooks is considered to be one of the foremost intellectuals of her generation. Being born and brought up in a segregated community, her main concern in her writings is racism. She considered the female ancestors of her family as her role models. bell hooks's pen name is a tribute to her mother and grandmother. To emphasise to her message she writes her name in lowercases, which is one thing that shows her difference. Most of her essay collections are centred on the experience of African American women within the frame of 20th century Feminism. Nevertheless, her writings are not limited to the feminist concerns but she has extensively worked on community building and education. According to her; everything starts from a community and then it takes a bigger form. Memoirs, patriarchy and sexual politics with regard to feminism are most common in her writings which include concerns of

feminist movement, the relevance of pacifism, solidarity among women, the nature of revolution and the role of men in the feminist struggle.

Conversely, bell hooks does not create the category of 'Other' to talk about the maleness. The earlier feminist critic Simone de Beauvoir, who in her work '*The second sex*' (1973) tried to explore the categories of 'men' or 'women' within the sub-category of 'Immanence' and 'Transcendence'. De Beauvoir resorts to "Immanence" while describing the historic domain assigned to women: a closed-off realm where women are inferior, passive, static, and immersed in themselves. "Transcendence" designates the opposing male lot: active, creative, productive, powerful, extending outward into the external universe. De Beauvoir believes that women's inferiority in society is a result not of natural differences but of differences in the upbringing of man and woman. On the other hand, male domination is not inherent or fated but conditioned at every stage of development. She claims that "Man learns his Power." This research has tried to deconstruct the realm of 'Power' and look beyond the normative pattern of the functionality of the same.

Black Feminism as a movement came out of the feeling of dissatisfaction of the black women from the Civil Rights Movement and Feminist Movement during 1960s and 70s. Both the movements ignored the issues regarding the Black women and they were left as they were in their position of intersectionality. Black feminism articulates the complexity of black American women's demand for social, economic and political equality. It shows the desire for a compatible and progressive vision of social justice based on the historical and ongoing struggles against the race and gender oppression black American women have experienced at home, at work, in their communities and, moreover, within the dominant culture as a whole. Alice Walker's term *womanism* focuses neither on the patriarchal oppression of women nor does it criticise men but on the contrary it celebrates womanhood. It argues that women do not have to forge an identity of their own outside masculine presence. She claims harmonious existence of the sexes is possible but women should not forge their identity on masculine terms. A woman's identity is her own but that doesn't imply that she has to mitigate masculine existence to do the same.

Womanist 1. From womanish. (Opp of "girlish," i.e. frivolous, irresponsible, not serious.) A black feminist or feminist of color. From the black folk expression of

mothers to female children, "You acting womanish," i.e. like a woman. Usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or *willful* behavior. (Walker, xi)

An important facet of Black Feminist theory is the idea of Intersectionality. African American experiences are created by various forms of oppression, established within social structures, which work together. Different forms of oppression, such as gender, sexuality, race and class, must not be combated alone. Solely tackling the issue of racial bigotry is of less because it in a way leaves other people, being oppressed by the same hegemonic forces. Intersectionality was first adapted by the Combahee River Collective. In 1973 black feminists who were primarily from New York felt the need of forming a separate group. As a result they formed National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO) with the effort of Barbara Smith. Later this group changed its name to Combahee River Collective as a tribute to Harriet Tubman who freed 750 slaves in a military expedition in 1863.

This group brought this crisis to the forefront in the 1970s with their revolutionary essay asserting that their identities and allegiance were not restricted to only gender and feminism, and they have stated that the several multilayered forms of oppressions, particularly racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia, were concurrent. Black feminism started to theorise these multiplicities and interlock oppressions consequently after the Combahee River Collective's statement.

The most general statement of our politics at the present time would be that we are actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual and class oppression and see as our particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking. The synthesis of these oppressions creates the conditions of our lives. As black women we see black feminism as the logical political movement to combat the manifold and simultaneous oppressions that all women of color face.¹

bell hooks does not limit the Feminist movement to a particular group of a society but she says it is for all. In '*Feminism is for Everybody*' (2000) she shows how everybody including the men, the youth and even small children are part of the movement. Here she appears different from some of the other black feminists as she shows community building, teaching and loving each other is the only way to be equal to each other. During the initial days of black feminist movement, people received a wrong impression about the movement being anti male, but since the late second wave

¹ The Combahee River Collective statement: Black Feminist organizing in the seventies and eighties (Volume one of freedom organizing series).

feminism that idea is changed as men were also welcomed in the movement. They agree that men are equally oppressed like the women in many ways. bell hooks is one of those who took up this issue of male within and the outside of the Feminist movement. In her collection of ten essays '*We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity*' (2004) she describes how black men are marginalised by the white society. The white American society has criminalised and dehumanised the black males in ways which let them to be oppressed and has harmed the Black community to a large extent. '*Will To Change: Black Man and Masculinity*' (2004) is another book by hooks which takes up male issues like fear of intimacy and loss of their patriarchal place in the society. She examines the life of men's journey from boyhood to teenage to manhood and how patriarchy plays a pivotal role in building his thinking. bell hooks's feminism is a female outlook of the male subject where the female does not lose her femininity because the object of her attention is male. In comparison to the female body, the male body is neither the object of a sexual gaze, nor the subject of commodification. The female subject is studying the object in the natural way – not through a male perspective nor subjecting him to a voyeuristic travesty. She studies him in the only way possible: a female eye observing a male form.

In the first chapter I have incorporated perceptions of maleness in different disciplines like psychology, sociology, religion, and popular media. Multiple social constructions, crossing over different theoretical perspectives and moving over different disciplines have helped to build up a strong notion about maleness. Following the same this chapter will shed light on to how the idea of maleness is constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed in manifold fields of studies. Discussions on whether maleness is inherent in an individual or is it a stereotype or it is a concept created by the society and numerous social factors like race, class, religion, patriarchy and media has been the focal point. In doing so, views of various thinkers from different philosophies are being analysed in the course of the chapter to strengthen the statements made. "...the sociology of masculinity is informed by and locates itself within, feminist theories" (13, Whitehead and Barret). The chapter concludes introducing feminism and its various constituents and their outlook on maleness.

The second chapter explores the black feminist discernment about the issues related to men. Firstly it analyses the perspicacity regarding maleness within the

feminist movement. Further scrutinising it through the views of different feminist thinkers the issue is being discussed within the black feminist domain. Feminism is not just theories which are set around a specific ideology. Different set of ideologies are framed around it and putting them in to practice is the main aim of feminism. The politics of patriarchy, fight for equality, and struggle for eradication of sexism, oppression and domination are the main objectives around which the concept of maleness is being formulated within feminism. Apart from looking into the stereotypical notion of men and women being complementary or opposites, there has been an attempt to focus on companionship, love and other positive aspects attached along with the binaries of man-woman relationship in defining maleness. The chapter ends with introducing bell hooks and the visionary feminist thinking on the matter of maleness.

The third chapter focuses on how bell hooks has taken up the issues which men face. On her visionary feminist stance she has taken up issues like race, patriarchy, sexism and various social problems which created a gap between the two sexes. This chapter will analyse the feminist theory of bell hooks and discuss the works produced by her where she has shown her way of dealing with these concerns. In her works men refer mostly to the Black men. hooks analyses the reasons because of which men have to act in a certain way in the society and indicates how to overcome the consequences and build a bridge to connect both the sexes. Instead of taking the feminist struggle as a competitive base she has considered it an appeal to address these social issues where she wants men to be comrades in struggle. The attempts in this chapter are to look into hooks's ideas on maleness with a critical perspective and posit her theories within a creative and cultural context.

The primary sources of this research include essays, books, interviews, book reviews, critical documents and articles in different periodicals. Apart from selected works of hooks, collection of her lecture videos on cultural criticism is also taken into account. Other contemporary black feminist writings are also being added in to this research. Movies and documentaries regarding Black Feminism and the issue of men will be another source which has been dealt with during the research. hooks has extensively looked in to the issues of men in almost all her works which directly and indirectly have been helpful in the research.

Most of the black feminist writings have come out of the experiences of being oppressed or the view of the oppressor. My position as a research scholar in the Third World and from the post feminism era who has not suffered what the Blacks did and has no intimacy with the 'White supremacist capitalist patriarchal' culture is going to be unbiased and different. I am going to look in to the subject of maleness as conceptualised and criticised by bell hooks. Her significant theoretical significant works have enriched the domain of black feminist literature. Till now not much work has been done on bell hooks concerning the issues of man and masculinity. Being a non Black, non American and a non male talking about Black Feminism and masculinity has taken the topic beyond race, gender and country and this is what makes it different. The Western Feminists made the men- women equality as the basis of the movement but the Third World Feminists stressed satisfaction of basic material needs and according to them men and women are standing in the same line. From the third world perspective we have witnessed the difference from the First World in social, political and economic sector. I am trying to bring out these differences we have faced critically comparing with hooks's experiences by evaluating the standpoint of males in the Black Feminist Movement and outside of it.

For my research largely the historical research methodology has been employed with regard to the literature, socio cultural and political condition. An extensive study has been done of majority of the works of bell hooks and analyses have been done according to the topic. Both analytical and comparative study is being done about the treatment of maleness and its development which is traced in the Black feminist movement on the basis of different books, articles, recordings, newspaper clippings and data. The research is being completed based on mostly the works of bell hooks, but for the comparative study other contemporary and early Black Feminist works are also looked upon. Various other books on the subject of definition and analysis of maleness have been discussed and used for the work. The availability of materials was not a hindrance as it is one of the most commonly discussed topic but its vastness gave me trouble while making it concise and framing it within these few pages of my dissertation. Nevertheless I shall utilize the existing research resources to make my dissertation concise and add value to the existing research.

Chapter One

On Being a Man

We think manhood is eternal, a timeless essence that resides deep in the heart of every man. We think of manhood as a thing, a quality that one either has or doesn't have. We think of manhood as innate, residing in the particular biological composition of the human male, the result of androgens or the possession of a penis. We think manhood as a tangible property that each man must manifest in the world, the reward presented with great ceremony to a young novice by his elders for having successfully completed an arduous initiation ritual. (Kimmel.266)

One nursery rhyme called 'What are little boys made of', origin of which can be traced back to the early 19th century says that little boys are made of snips of snail and puppy dog tails and girls are made of sugar, spice and all the other nice things. Like the thymes 'Ring around the roses' referred to the deaths by plague and 'London bridge is falling down' refers to what its title shows, in the same way must be there is some political significance like the battle of sexes to the rhyme but after all this is given to the children to read. This helps them differentiate between boys and girls and at the same time helps them to create their identities which can not be called healthy.

What are little boys made of?

Snips and snails, and puppy dogs tails

That's what little boys are made of!"

What are little girls made of?

"Sugar and spice and all things nice

That's what little girls are made of!"

The questions on defining gender, sex, equality of the two sexes, and empowerment over each other have been widely discussed and talked over and over again. Despite being the most analysed topic, discussions never cease to erupt when this issue is taken up. Every individual has his/her own perception on sex and gender and comments and statements regarding it are available in abundance. Hence the focus has to be to look at what changes do people want to see in the institutionalised construct termed as gender and its sub forms such as feminine, masculine, femaleness, maleness, homosexuality, heterosexuality etc.

As the topic of this dissertation suggests black feminist agenda on maleness, the primary focus is to locate maleness within the paradigm of black feminism. One of the major themes of the black feminist theory is intersectionality².

Black women sit at a theoretically interesting point. Collins argues that black women are uniquely situated in that they stand at the focal point where two exceptionally powerful and prevalent systems of oppression come together: race and gender. Being able to understand this position as something she calls “intersectionality” opens up the possibility of seeing and understanding many more spaces of cross-cutting interests. That is, understanding the social position black women ought to compel us to see, and look for, other spaces where systems of inequality come together.³(Collins.1)

To incorporate the arguments regarding maleness and its definitions through the intersectional model of black feminism this chapter has looked upon various disciplines like sociology, psychology and religion. In doing so one has to keep in mind certain things like politics of power, the dominance and sexuality.

It is always the female body that has fascinated everybody. Starting from the sculptures voluptuously crafted showing the female body, advertisements endorsing different products to the various pornographic descriptions the male body is so less discussed as compared to the female body. Similarly in literature the male issues like their sexuality, feelings, their body, and life have been discussed in a minimal level. It is lately when the GLBT (Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual-Transsexual) movement started its expansion, the male body is discussed often. If we see why it is so, then we see the comparison between the gay and the straight men. There was a need to go through this usually unexplored subject. The last two decades have proved to be an era when masculinity is most discussed. Men’s activities have become subject to debate on both male and female front and slowly it has become the area of research through critical insights. Just like women men are also fashioned within the sociological construct where they are groomed through stereotypes. Men’s sense of gender comes from “dominant representations of masculinity” (1. Whitehead and Barret), so to understand them one has to look through these representations.

² The term is coined by Kimberley Crenshaw in 1989, a feminist sociologist term. Leslie McCall in *The Complexity of Intersectionality* says it is a methodology to study the relationship between various social elements and the formation of subjects through it. Socio cultural constructs like race, gender, class, religion etc and their interaction at a multidisciplinary level can be called intersectionality.

Maleness and masculinities can not be confused as one thing. The masculine identity can be seen distinctly apart from the facts of biology that every human body possesses. Studies show that being a man and having simply a male body is not enough to be called a man. It is utterly the choice of the man who he wants to become, but these choices are always being manipulated by various socio-cultural factors. A man has to live in a certain way, perform certain activities and avoid many other things despite his will do to those. A person by birth with certain physical organs, genitalia to be precise; which is considered to be the prominent marker of sexuality, is regarded as man. Though, even after that through out his life there are various instances where his sexuality is being questioned depending upon a mixture of social pointers that he has to fulfil to be called a man. Men are sometimes praised for being manly and almost always blamed or ridiculed about not being one. Not being manly automatically denotes to being like a woman.

Biologically sex is what the body is. It will be either male or female. It can not be said that gender is limited to the body. It is compilation of various behaviours, qualities inherited psychologically, characteristics related to one's personality and most importantly the social norms one follows while living a life arranges one's gender. These qualities or behavioural patterns are the ones which are used to describe a person as manly, a real man, macho and women as feminine, soft, ladylike, a real woman. Sometimes these qualities are specified in terms of sexuality and then it becomes problematic when the qualities of the opposite sex are reflected in a person he or she is criticised of being so.

The mentioned negativity is causing disparity among the sexes. It is the self consciousness which leads to what you are in the society. This self consciousness is developed in one through the qualities which are defined by the society distinctly for men and women. It is often seen that man are more concerned when it comes to the point of their maleness. They try to be defensive each time to prove how manly they are. If a teenage boy is asked if he is caught doing something like smoking, often the reply comes; his friends challenged him about his being man. If he does not do it he will be considered not manly enough or worse he will be called sissy or a girl. Boys can not stand these and they can go to certain extent to prove his manliness even if it is

something wrong he has to do. They are told how to behave in a certain way, when to express their emotions and in which way.

Toughness is something they are made to practice since their childhood. These are bestowed upon the boys not only by their parents but also cinema, music, government policies, administration and most importantly the women themselves. Usually girls like their partners to be stronger, tougher, and muscular and they like to remain under so to say his protection and care. It will be rare where it is seen girls choose weaker boys over the stronger one or shows interest in effeminate boys. There is a constant effort put in by the teenage boys to show off that they are tough and they can bear anything to protect the 'so called' weaker sex, or in other words in the fear of being called weaker. This is what aids to create bullies in schools. This fear often to be seen among the men especially the younger generation is their fear of homosexuality.

The relationship between gay sexuality and masculinity appears, at first glance, quite simple: gay sexuality negates masculinity. The litany of terminology associated with homosexuality over the past century provides ample demonstration of the never-ending association of the homosexual with the effeminate: limp-wristed, shirt-lifting poofs, pansies and queens. (Edwards. 70)

The way women are comfortable in their sexuality men rarely seem to be. The first things they think is what will the other men think if he does something. It becomes a habit to act accordingly and this way they add on to qualities that define masculinity. The fear of homosexuality is seen very deeply enrooted within men. They see homosexuality as a threat to their identity and this undercuts their notion of masculinity. If they are masculine and sure enough about their own maleness they should never be scared of other people's orientation. They do not usually have a reason why they dislike homosexuality so much but they admit that homosexuality is bad. They consider it to be a physical or social disease. They are afraid to be seen with a homosexual man because he might also be considered to be homosexual. This is considered defying the moral values they have been taught since their childhood. 'Boys don't cry' and 'Boys will be boys' kind of saying is still ubiquitous in every society. Judith Butler says;

Hence, the fear of homosexual desire in a woman may induce a panic that she is losing her femininity, that she is not a woman, that she is no longer a proper woman, that if she is not quite a man, she is like one, and hence monstrous in some way. Or in a man, the terror over homosexual desire may well lead to a terror over being construed as feminine, feminised, of no longer being properly a man, or of being a

“failed man”, or of being in some sense a figure of monstrosity or abjection. (Butler, 24)⁴

Is it all in the mind?: A psychoanalytical view on maleness:

There is ‘destiny’ no more than there is ‘nature’ or ‘essence’ as such. Rather, there are living structures that are caught and sometimes rigidly set within historico-cultural limits so mixed up with the scene of History that for a long time it has been impossible (and it is still very difficult) to think or even imagine an ‘elsewhere’.

(Cixous, 1975, p. 83)⁵

The lines above by Cixous points out that male and female are constructed positions formulated by their arrangements on the behavioural patterns they show in their day to day experiences. The differences that are based on anatomy, power structure between male and female becomes fixed because they are being practiced in a certain way.

In practice, however, they become fixed: the realities of power bolster the reduction from subjective to objective, from psychological to physical, from gender (a psychological and behavioural state) to sex (a chromosomal and anatomical one). It becomes impossible to see them as constructs, and so they become absolutes. (Frosh, 11)

In psychology usually femaleness has been defined by males if one looks at the history of psychoanalysis, but it is not always the same. Psychoanalysis still has to find out from where sexual difference evolves. Positioning it within the construct does not prove the origin of anything rather makes it more uncertain and ambiguous. This uncertainty opens doors for more analysis on the topic. As psychoanalysis is known for its misogynistic theories of constructing sexual difference because of its patriarchal biasness, it is difficult to give a psychoanalytic definition of maleness which will stand in a position fulfilling all the norms of maleness and at the same time undercut the gender prejudice.

Looked at in this light, it is not surprising that psychoanalysis has been often seen more as part of the problem of the continuing domination of patriarchy and misogyny than as part of the solution to it. (Frosh. 12)

⁴ Qtd : In *Constructing Masculinities*

⁵ Qtd : *Sexual Differences: Masculinity and Psychoanalysis*, page no 10

Psychoanalysis can not entirely be seen as a neutral tool for studying sexual differences. Patriarchal conceptions are embroiled in the measures opted for psychoanalytic studies of sexual differentiation.

When one looks in to how Freud has explained the absence of phallus in females clearly can be seen as biasness towards males. Hysteria; which is a psychological illness related only to females. These cases are the basis of Freud's case studies and interpretation of sexual differences. Stephen Frosh quotes Freud,

They notice the penis of a brother or playmate, strikingly visible and of large proportions, and at once recognise it as the superior counterpart of their own small and inconspicuous organ, and from that time forward fall a victim to envy for the penis. (25)⁶

Reading psychoanalytic theory, one's identity as a male or a female develops through identifying with the same-sex parent. The conflict which is inherent within a child called oedipal stage leads to this identification during his psychosexual development. When the child is about the age of three he/she feels a strong attachment towards the opposite sex parent. At the same time negative feelings come out as a fit of jealousy of not being in a position where the other parent is. When they grows up a little more the desires are relinquished by identifying with the same sex parent. They copy the parent's behaviours and learn to be and act in certain ways which the parents show. Whatever they learn from the parents can be called as masculinity for boys and femininity for girls.

Nancy Chodorow in her psychoanalytic theory suggests; the most important role in a child's gender construction is played by the mother. This is very natural because the mother bears the child and she stays with the child more than anyone else does. She can relate to the son because of the differences and connect to the daughter because of sameness. At last the bonding with the daughter remains because of the same experiences. Despite the mother's wishes to keep the bonding with the male child intact, it fails because the boy starts to distance himself from the mother and sees himself in his father's norms and starts identifying with him, this is how a boy gains his maleness from the father.

⁶ Freud Qtd in *Sexual Difference: Masculinity and Psychoanalysis*. page no 25

Chodorow has disagreed to Freud-Lacanian concept of irreducible uniqueness of gender and she has been critiqued for looking at gender as social than naturally given. Keeping both the theories apart one can look at it in a more open way, without the influence of the parents or the society, letting the child choose his/her own identity. It is possible in a way, but how far that is doubtful. An example is stated below:

A Swedish couple have kept their child's gender secret⁷. They think that they should let the child choose what he or she wants to be. If by birth the child is being treated in a particular gendered way he or she will become what the construct has been always. Letting the child choose its gender when it will be able to differentiate between what it wants and does not want is a right thing to do. But there are very few people who will agree to it. People are commenting that this is a case of child abuse. This is denying the child its birth right and so on and so forth. But these people are missing the core point of giving the child freedom to choose its gender.

These concerns are also not deniable because there is a chance of treating the child as an outsider when he or she enters school. The child may question why he/she was raised in that manner when he/she will notice that our society is based on gender binaries. There is something one pictures mentally about own sexuality and hence try to match it with the physical and social way outside. That way exploring gender identity would be the best option an individual can have. Sometimes kids are forced to act in certain ways against his/her will just because the constructs view it as wrong. The parents of this child made it clear that they will let the child what it wants to wear and play with. Without imposing something forcefully on someone because it has been going on can not be considered a right way at present. It is also going on and hence psychology of a child is being affected in various ways.

A boy committed suicide at the age of 18 complaining he was not raised according to his wish and proves intersexual freedom wrong. That was a case where by mistake during circumcision one of a twin boy lost his penis. Parents with the advice of the doctor raised him as a girl with sexual transplant. When he grew up as a girl he revolted when he felt the hormonal changes. He went through another surgery to get his

⁷ For details see: <http://www.thelocal.se/20232/20090623/#>

manhood back but was depressed and hence committed suicide blaming his parents for tempering and denying with his sexuality.⁸

In both the cases parents seem confident in whatever they were doing. The media and the society around tried to call it child abuse and denial of birthright of the child. The psychology of a child is built up in this way. Media will follow the child, ask questions to the neighbours, in getting admission to a school it will be difficult to convince the authorities about the hidden gender and at last the child might feel uncomfortable when he/she will not know where he/she belongs among the classmates. At last that child may become a victim of “otherness”. Stephen Frosh points out what Lacan says, the language is something which does not inform but evoke (20). This evoking is concerned with the reaction the other will give. And hence a thread of reactions is built. This way society speaks for a child’s particular behaviour and that language demands the child to act in a certain way. Sometimes it happens according to the construct sometimes it does not. The ones who go against the constructed norms are outsiders or clustered as a different species so to say.

How the body Matters in performing gender:

For Judith Butler identity is created by ideology and gender is “tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through stylized repetition of acts.” (Butler.179)

She gives importance to the independence of the individual in scrutinizing how the bodies are being normalised to call ‘human’. Before naming gender an individual is born with a sex but choosing one’s own body to follow the sex leads to navigation through structured norms and is focused to critique of the society and various transformations through these criticism. It is hard to figure out whether society will be supportive of determining personal gender of an individual. In *Gender Trouble* Butler explores the dynamics through which genders are constructed and performed, in *Undoing Gender* she concentrated in undoing the survival based questions of gender and the performative resistance at par both body and ideology which is necessarily social and not individual.

⁸For details look up: <http://www.thelocal.se/20232/20090623/#>

These social constructions create each individual teaching ways to value, see and respond to things accordingly. As Judith Butler says there is no difference between the sexes. Men and women are same. It is the performative aspect which differentiates them. The social constructs are the elements which are performed by every individual and thus the gender and sexual division prevails in the society. Sexuality and gender continue to be a focus of modern discourse on sociology, philosophy and psychology. In *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Judith Butler claims about sexuality and gender that shows their connection to power in society.

Butler makes two primary claims about sexuality and gender. She argues that sex is not located within the body in a way that cannot be changed or altered in any way. She also argues that sexual desire and sexual orientation are also not innate, but are created as social constructions. In this sense, categories like male, female, homosexual or heterosexual are not innate qualities of human beings but categories created by culture to lend notions to gender behaviour. In *Melancholy Gender/ Refused Identification* Butler explains how Freud in *Mourning and Melancholia* has acknowledged identification as the incorporation of the lost object. (Butler. 21.) An individual slips into melancholy after rejecting a desired object. It is an unfinished process of grieving. This lost of an object is stored in an individual as his ego. Explaining further she tries to put it in this way that the rejection or abandonment of a sexual object puts the melancholia inside the human being. This becomes the bodily ego and hence he/ she try to fulfil it through gender, by choosing what identification that ego demands.

Drag thus allegorises heterosexual melancholy”, the melancholy by which a masculine gender is formed from the usual grieve the masculine as a possibility of love; a feminine gender is formed (taken on, assumed) through the incorporative fantasy by which feminine is excluded as a possible object of love, an exclusion never grieved but “preserved” through the heightening of feminine identification itself. In this sense, the “truest” lesbian melancholic is the strictly straight woman, and the “truest” gay male melancholic is the strictly straight man. (Butler. 33)

The dissatisfaction inside an individual due to the loss has come out in performing what that individual has lost, thus they start imitating being that and a gender is constructed in the process. Thinkers usually fall in to the comfort zone and try to use evolutionary psychology which follows the Darwinian explanation of gender being genetic, but many have rejected to think of gender as fixed, unchangeable biological factors.

Sociological understanding of maleness:

Psychology helps to build up certain norms that society carries forward. The society then operates through these norms in constructing maleness around the boys and makes men out of them. In his book *Guyland* Michael Kimmel says that in a society, for the boys certain people matter a lot in constructing their gender- the father, coach, teachers, brothers, priests, uncles, seniors and bullies of school. Due to the influence of the above mentioned people boys; even though they want to, can not live in a certain way. Basically the book talks about white middle class privileged boys who go to college to have fun and hang around and never want to come out of that feeling of college. Along with these boys there are many others who face the same things in the same surrounding and situations which build up their maleness and create 'men out of boys'. Kimmel uses the four rules psychologist Robert Brannon has suggested and points out that these has not changed yet and there is no possibility of much change here after too.

1. "No Sissy Stuff!" Being a man means not being a sissy, not being perceived as weak, effeminate, or gay. Masculinity is the relentless repudiation of the feminine.
2. "Be a Big Wheel." This rule refers to the centrality of success and power in the definition of masculinity. Masculinity is measured more by wealth, power, and status than by any particular body part.
3. "Be a Sturdy Oak." What makes a man is that he is reliable in a crisis. And what makes him so reliable in a crisis is not that he is able to respond fully and appropriately to the situation at hand, but rather that he resembles an inanimate object. A rock, a pillar, a species of tree.
4. "Give'em Hell." Exude an aura of daring and aggression. Live life out on the edge. Take risks. Go for it. Pay no attention to what others think. (Kimmel.45-46.2009)

The perception of masculinity varies from culture to culture as for some culture it may be an indicator for social status, some may relate it to wealth, race and class. Greater masculinity can bring one respect and social status among their peers. Virtue and virile are two words associated with men and constantly used in the process of training the boys to become masculine or 'men'.

Gender identification of the self is what a sociological perspective is based on about maleness or femaleness. The gender related behaviours are motivated by this identification as certain things are expected to be done by only male and certain by only

female in the sociological set up. Masculine men are believed to behave in particular ways which includes behaving in a dominant way, being more competitive, aggressive etc. Usually more than the behaviours the meaning inside those behaviours is what matters in defining maleness of a man.

Since birth the meaning of one's sexuality is discussed in social situations with elders, educators, friends, peers and parents and in these discussions shared cultural conceptions of being a male and a female in the society is being constructed. *The Sociology of Masculinity* covers the critical studies regarding men, their behavioural patterns, the way they practice their maleness and different values and perspectives about men.

....the sociology of masculinity seek to highlight the ways in which men's powers come to be differentiated, naturalised and embedded across all cultures, political borders and organizational networks. (Whitehead and Barret.15)

The behaviour of 'the other' is considered as non standard and is in many cases as social problems in almost all the cultures. These signs which are considered as 'non standard other' are viewed in the society as being a homosexual or men showing weakness are called effeminate and females portraying a little bit of manly behaviour is called a tom boy. Sociologically viewing; these labelling leads us to something called peer pressure and which is there in each society and culture. In the society the factor of religion comes in which performs as the moral teacher of every individual.

The Role of Religion in defining Maleness:

Of all the discourses available religion seems to be the most biased one towards men. A religion always puts the men on top of everything. Fundamentally speaking God is always a 'He'. All the religious heads are male. The religious prophets are men, the religious texts are written by them and so as the religious codes to be followed are created by men. Defining men in religious terms is very difficult without showing its biasness towards men. In Christianity it is said that men and women are created out of god's own image. Eve was created out of Adam's ribs is believed. Hence she is a lesser being than Adam. Judy Tobler points out;

The biblical cosmogonic myth of Adam and Eve for instance, tells of the first woman created from the body of the first man, as his helpmate, and thus seen as only indirectly created by God. (39)

Literal interpretation of scriptures conceive the metaphor “Father” to literally mean that God is male not female. Lambert and Kurpius⁹ suggest that when God is referred to as father, God is classified as male. They have noted that some would argue that God is only symbolically referred to as father to demonstrate proximal relationship and it does not imply the maleness of God. But at the end it is all same. In Assamese language the father is called *Deuta* the literal meaning of it is God and at last the Holy trinity the father, son and the holy ghost affirms the maleness of God and hence all the religious beliefs of man being man prevails in the name of religion.

David Murrow in his book “Why Men Hate Going to Church” says;

Masculinity is an informal code imposed on all the men of the tribe. In order to be accepted as a man, one must stand up to danger, bear up under suffering, and sacrifice oneself for the good of others. This code of conduct helps a man overcome his natural instincts (fear, hunger, loneliness, etc.), so he will do what’s best for the tribe not for himself. Masculine traits such as bravery, stoicism, and self-sacrifice don’t come naturally to a man: they are drawn from this cultural well. (Murrow, 104)

Thus it is seen that with time masculinities have become plural, it is been changing and it has formed discourse relating to the recognition of the differences in being a man. In the *Sociology of Masculinity* it is defined as;

...masculinities are those behaviours, languages and practices, existing in specific cultural and organizational locations, which are commonly associated with males and thus culturally defined as not feminine. So masculinities exist both as a positive, inasmuch as they offer some means of identity signification of males, and as a negative inasmuch as they are not the ‘Other’ (feminine). (Whitehead and Barret.15-16)

It can be seen that though biology plays an important role in human behaviour but it is not the sole factor to control everything related to behavioural patterns. Basically hormones do not control everything a human being does. It is also the socio-cultural performances of certain behaviours which come from the surroundings a human being lives in.

⁹ For details see: Relationship and Gender role Identity and attitudes with Image of God. page no 55-56

Another thing appears while defining masculinity is the power play. Women are seen to be accepting the dominance and power of the men folk as if it is very natural to be dominated. Arthur Brittan calls masculinism a dominant ideology (54).

In the case of the masculine ideology, this is to claim that men have a collective ideology which they collectively force women to accept as being natural and inevitable. This implies that men constitute a class, and that they maximize their class interest. (Kiesling. 113)

Here accepting this ideology is problematic because not every male belong to the same class and their stance in society varies regarding time, place and status in the society. That way their ideology of domination should change. Domination comes in different forms, depending upon the class, religion, position in work or society, household position. Men dominate the weaker ones. The physically stronger ones dominate the weaker ones, the higher position holder in a working class will dominate his workers under him, the breadwinner of the family can dominate all the others of the family who depends upon him for living and the domination depending upon sexual orientation happens very often. For example gay men are tried to be dominated calling them unnatural, weak and faggots.

Power plays an important role in constructing these identities. Scott Fabius Kiesling says that;

Thus the 'powerful' identity for men is not symmetrical to the expectation of a 'powerless' identity of women, since a man's powerful identity is rewarded (with power), whereas a woman's non- powerless identity may be punished. (113)

Identity construction is always creative and people are free to create their own identities. But factors like power force to push themselves in to frameworks which are predetermined and take the shape as it is directed to be. Kiesling draws his examples from his study of the fraternities and its male members. The members of the fraternity have to play a role of power which becomes his identity. He divides this power in to seven types. Following Foucault's power structure he believes that 'power is action that modifies action'(114) and these powers are not separated from one another but they form what Foucault called a net like organisation(115). Following are the types of power Scott describes.

1. Physical:
 - b) Coercive physical power: power of the mugger

- c) Ability physical power: action made possible by using physical ability or skill
2. Economic: rewards one action and processes the possibility of another action. e.g. labour is paid and he can purchase after payment.
 3. Knowledge: the process of gaining knowledge in order to perform an action.
 4. Structural: power of a place within a structure. Classical example; hierarchy.
 5. Nurturant: process of helping other.
 6. Demeanour: power of solidarity.
 7. Ideological: it is the defining process through which other powers are recognised by individuals. It helps in identifying what is powerful and what is not. (115)

Men organise hierarchical communities using this power structure and learn to act and think accordingly which affects their identity construction and it differentiates them from the rest of the people. The outcomes of this identity construction are different for men and women in society. For the use of power in the same thing a man may be rewarded and the woman may be punished and vice versa. These power forms have multiple faces in various instances in people's lives. Male and female relationships are also surrounded by the power structure. One way that men define themselves is by claiming that they are 'powerful', stronger than women and hence that is what masculinity is all about. Men are seen to become jealous when their wives earn more than them, and because of their physical appearances they try to define who is a man and who is a 'less-man'¹⁰. There is one thing that is hardly noticed by people, and that there are very few men and women there are who can fulfil each and every criterion which is required to be called masculine and feminine. If an individual does not display one of the physical or behavioural characteristics, will he be a less-man or she a less-woman? But this has become such an accepted norm that people are used to defining themselves using these traits.

Looking back to the Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*, the distinction of gender identity is very marked out. Lady Macbeth is shown as the stronger partner of the couple in that she goads Macbeth to commit regicide in order to attain power which she herself will enjoy. However, she could only provoke her husband and prayed to be 'unsexed' so that she could perform the act herself, because these are things that can be

¹⁰ By less-man I mean men who are effeminate or homosexual.

done only by a man according to the prevailing beliefs. The provoking is done by questioning the manhood of Macbeth and the hired killers. The way Macbeth and Lady Macbeth perceive maleness is enclosed with aggression and violence. Lady Macbeth says if Macbeth does not kill he will not be a man anymore. On the other hand Siward is unmoved after hearing the news of his son getting killed, because he thinks that he had a death of a hero and that is the proof of his being a 'man' and it is not in a man's nature to grieve. Further, the fact that his son's wounds were at his chest prove that he was not running away from the enemy and this elates him because it implies that his son was a real man and not a coward. When Macduff hears the news of the murder of his family, Malcolm tells him to take the news as a man but Macduff replies "even I feel as a man"¹¹.

Thus, gender stereotypes are comprised of four sets of rules and expectations for behaviour consisting of both 'must's and 'must not's for each gender. One should consider looking at the characters of both Lady Macbeth and Macbeth and analyse which traits are drawn on each character and who is more like a man. Aggression, violence, murder instincts and all the so called 'manly' characteristics are present in Lady Macbeth, but she did not or could not commit the crimes because she is a lady and the same acts are done by Macbeth to prove that he is not a 'less- man'. Modesty was viewed as a sign of weakness, a low-status character trait for males that could adversely affect being what they want to be. Modesty in women, however, was not viewed negatively nor was it linked to status. Hence both the characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth draw criticism.

Masculinity cannot be reduced to the sole exercise of raw power in the empire, society or family, or nation; it was never so one- dimensional. Instead, Modern masculinity contained a whole series of attributes that reflected both social realities and the hope for future. (Mosse. 15)

Sexuality is a domain where power is more actively dominant over the weaker partner. Most cases it is the man who dominates the woman. Katharine Wood and Rachel Jewkes in an article provide information with a study conducted in a South African township of Cape Town how rape, violence and sexual coercion work with everyday love. Girls, especially teenagers who are barely aware of sexual intercourse

¹¹ 4.3.221 Macbeth

are forced by men to indulge in sexual activities when all these girls seek are love and affection from someone. The authors quote interviews of girls; "He told me that if I accept him as a lover we have to engage in sexual intercourse and do the things that adults do." (Wood and Jewkes. 134) This contract is further formulated by using physical assault, beating the partner if they refused to indulge in sexual activities. Among the girls that the authors interviewed, 60 percent of them said that they were forced to do what the male partner wanted and there was no way to protest. If they wanted to end the relationship then they were accused of being infidels and hence underwent more beating. Violence is very common between married and unmarried couples, so it is perceived as an inevitable part of a relationship.

The ideal of masculinity was invoked on all sides as a symbol of personal and national regeneration, but also as basic to the self-definition of modern society. Manliness was supposed to safeguard the existing order against the perils of modernity, but it was also regarded as an indispensable attribute of those who wanted change. Indeed, the exhortation "to be a man" became commonplace, whether during the nineteenth century or the first half of the twentieth. (Mosse. 3)

There have been attempts to erode the stereotype that has cocooned maleness across boundaries through enlightenment and trying to create a 'new man' out of it. These attempts have been failures because the traditional 'outsiders' like Jews, Blacks, Orientals, homosexuals, womanly men and manly women are still considered exceptional in negative standards. In the struggle for their liberation these countertypes of ideal maleness end up imitating what is stereotyped or set themselves as opposite to the same and fail in defining their standpoint and end up providing what modern masculinity needs in strengthening their stance. Hence; the division between the 'stereotyped ideal' and 'the other' remained intact and added more fuel to the conflict regarding it. This created more divisions and that is why defining maleness has become more difficult. The countertypes that are created around the stereotypical maleness have challenged it and issues regarding it increased. Nothing changed and at last the 'new man' appears to be the same old one that has been defined, deconstructed, redefined and refined time and again.

Though the masculine stereotype could exist regardless of political and ideological background, as a stereotype it necessarily restricted individual freedom, because, as we mentioned before, stereotypes were classified not individually but in groups; manliness and what it stood for hardly varied, always reflecting society's traditional values. (Mosse. 8)

Mosse says that this stereotyping of maleness is what the Germans call *Bildung* i.e. self cultivation. But the society which is very tolerant about accepting these stereotypes and creation of groups instead of considering every man as individuals, this concept of *Bildung* fails here. Though the society changes its faces time to time these stereotypes remain intact, perhaps a few more criterion added to what a man should be like. In symbolising the woman of the society it is always very different from the man. The woman symbolises chastity, innocence, traditional attire, love, beauty and tolerance and is always compared with nature. The man has to be bold, courageous with a striking physical fitness and most importantly the progress of the society is added to their various requirements to be the real man. From the very beginnings of society, there has been labour division between men and women. The men had to go out to work and earn for the family and the women had to take care of the home and children. This labour division did not make the women inferior to men, but it also became the stereotype as women only had to do certain things and men must do certain other things only. The division, the complexity and groups emerged more intently with time. Mosse claims during the eighteenth century, the word effeminate came in to being to refer to the men who were more delicate and soft, which was considered unmanly. With the nineteenth century, the women's rights movement came into being, which challenged the stereotypical male identity that prevailed. After World War I the emergence of the New Woman with cropped hair, working outside the house, smoking and mingling with what is called 'the society' which was mostly male dominant challenged the gender division.

Masculinity cannot be reduced to the sole exercise of raw power in the empire, society or family, or nation; it was never so one-dimensional. Instead, modern masculinity contained a whole series of attributes that reflected both social realities and the hope for the future. Middle class sensibilities, as we shall see, demanded a "quiet strength" that did not conflict with virtues such as fair play, harmony, and order, which an undue display of power must not disrupt. (Mosse. 16)

In recent times have the stereotypes created around defining maleness changed?

The observation seems more or less negative. The boundaries of these stereotypes perhaps have been disrupted and new dimensions are opened up to view maleness in a brighter light, but conventions still win. Earlier views regarding maleness helped to build up the new ideas about manhood and that mingled and created some new stereotypes. From where the transitions started can not be demarcated but one can

certainly point out the changes which helped defining maleness. War, chivalry, machismo and the aristocratic behaviours that are included in defining masculinity continued to the modern times.

The earlier ideals of manhood, confined to the aristocracy, were, to a large extent, based upon a warrior caste; however, the refinement and ritual of court society had tempered such an image of masculinity long before the end of the eighteenth century. (Mosse. 17)

Maleness in Media: Hollywood War Films:

If one looks into Hollywood war films, all the things which are considered to be stereotypical attributes of manhood are still portrayed as accepted ideals. Particularly masculinity and patriarchy are represented in films in various ways. Masculinity can be observed best in male dominated environments such as military environments, and this is why war films and such filmic narratives propose better prospects to analyze it. Masculinist discourse like war films portray different layered meanings of maleness which can be seen as dominated by patriarchal conservative thoughts and ideologies. No matter whether the messages of these films are pro or anti war, they maintain certain socio-cultural norms of maleness which are prevalent in all the films.

Listening to advice from everybody about what a boy should not become, what ways a boy should never behave, have become a constant pressure on the boys in how they are going to present themselves in front of the society. In an attempt not to disappoint anybody, regardless of whether it keeps one's own happiness at stake, the boys try to walk in the lanes that look like perfect paths to becoming a man, and joining army is one such path.

Boys connect to violence from their childhood through various means, starting from the toys their parents provide. Though the mothers of the kids try and teach them not to fight and create problems, fathers feel proud if the boy fights back and gets even with others. These fathers feel disappointed when the boy he has does not shape up according to his will and this forces the boy to take steps against his will. He-man, ninja, superheroes who have capacity to overcome tremendous odds are the inspirations of young boys. War becomes the ultimate site to prove their manliness. They join the army but it is not an easy task, as privates they have to face the wrath of their superiors and constantly being addressed as girls, sissies, ladies etc. They are not allowed to feel

emotional at all. If they do they are doomed. The movie *Full Metal Jacket* (1987) portrays a certain Gunnery Sergeant Hartman who constantly abuses the privates and they have no choice but to say "Sir, yes Sir".

Gunnery Sergeant Hartman: Where in the hell are you from anyway, private?

Cowboy: Sir, Texas, sir!

Gunnery Sergeant Hartman: Holy dog shit! Texas? Only steers and queers come from Texas, Private Cowboy. And you don't look much like a steer to me so that kinda narrows it down.

Gunnery Sergeant Hartman: Do you suck dicks?

Cowboy: Sir, no sir!

Gunnery Sergeant Hartman: Are you a peter puffer?

Cowboy: Sir, no sir!

Gunnery Sergeant Hartman: I'll bet you're the kinda guy that would fuck a person in the ass and not even have the goddamn common courtesy to give him a reach-around. I'll be watching you.¹²

There is no apologizing for anything and no place for emotion and girls are just prized possessions for the soldiers. Even if one is married his fraternity of warriors comes first. Homosexuality if found among any soldier is immediately terminated. The ones who get emotional in someone's death are never considered man enough to face the war. In *Top Gun* Tom Cruise was never accepted as a friend or a companion by the others because he held himself responsible for his friend's death and mourns for him. He was allowed to fly and fight again when he was confident enough to let his friend's memories go. Taking the pain and not complaining is the motto.

Role of Race and Homophobia in defining maleness:

Masculinity thereby can be called a homosocial enactment. There lies a factor: fear, in homosocial bonding which is called homophobia. Homophobia is intertwined with sexism and racism. Kimmel quotes Wilkinson who defines the true American as vigorous, manly and direct and not corrupt like the Europeans, never luxury seeking and rather rugged, he is not an aristocrat. The slaves entered later and they replaced these noble men who were seen as the unreal men in comparison to the ideal ones. The Europeans followed there after and especially the Irish and Italian men were considered too passionate to be 'men'. The Jewish were considered very studious and physically

¹² Film: *Full Metal Jacket*. Released in 1987

frail. During the World War II the Japanese and after the Vietnam War the Vietnamese served as the compared unmanly bunch. Asian men because of their physical build and nature were hardly considered men.

Kimmel writes that American men consist of Jewish, Italian, Asian, Irish, African, Native, gay 'ideal maleness' is seen only in a few select number of American males as the mentioned American men are never considered men.

Thus Black men were depicted as rampaging sexual beasts, women as carnivorously carnal, gay men as sexually insatiable, southern European men as sexually predatory and voracious, and Asian men as vicious and cruel torturers who were immortally disinterested in life itself, willing to sacrifice their entire people for their whims. (Kimmel.281.2001)

Zeroing down the others as unmanly on the parts of Manly American men were the result of homophobia. This is the fear of seeing as unmanly made them do that. Racist comments, sexist behaviour and aggressiveness are all because of this fear of seeing as a less- man.

This is the case with every individual who is insecure about his being. Usually in schools bullies choose the weaker students to pick on. Because they know they will win. Yet they are not satisfied because it actually did not prove their strength so they pick on someone else again and it continues. The victims of the bullies also give in because they also need attention. Attention given by the bullies whom the weaker ones think as the role models of the schools and colleges make them feel important too. That is why there are no cases of complaints. When there is complaint there is more trouble as they will permanently be considered faggots. Popular Rap artist Eminem in one of his interviews said that he uses the word faggots not to mean someone is homosexual but it is a way to take away their masculinity. Hence no one wants to come under that category and submit to whatever odds come their way.

In the popular musical serial Glee the gay boy Kurt is always bullied by David- a sturdy football player because of his sexual orientation. Later in the progress of the series it comes out to Kurt that David is also gay and hence because of insecurity to admit his sexuality or thinking about the treatment he is going to get, he chooses to torment Kurt as a refuge. In the same series Kurt joins the football team to prove to his father that despite being gay he is man enough to play football. Again Kimmel says,

In that sense, homosexuality becomes a kind of shorthand for “unmanliness”—and the homophobia that defines and animates the daily conversations of Guyland is at least as much about masculinity as it is about sexuality. (50)

Who are American men?

Homophobia and racism have contributed majorly in defining and discussing maleness. America is populated with ‘hyphenated’ Americans. African-American, Jewish-American, Chicano-American, Irish-American, Asian-American and not to forget the Native-Americans comprise major portion of America’s population. Thus this diversity of people and their history affects American maleness. bell hooks in almost all her works suggests that the ‘white supremacist capitalist patriarchy’ of America has defined maleness in their own way which has the main criteria of being non- coloured. Hence a major chunk of America’s men will not be considered ‘Men’. The question arises: are the ‘mainstream’ American men scared that the coloured men will overpower them and prove them to be unmanly? Do the struggles of the coloured people to gain their identities change the preconceived notion of American masculinity? These questions will be discussed in the chapters that follow.

This research focuses primarily on black Americans. The racial, ethnic and socio economic status of the blacks is seen as playing a pivotal role in defining African American maleness. Limitations in each and every aspect of life and institutionalised racism have created a different definition for the African American men. Freedom of expression has long been denied to them and hence they have accepted the prevailing norms of maleness created by the white society. They were only able to display their strength, earning and supporting their family and dominating women was regular but any of the rights which white men possess are not enjoyed by the black American men. This has kept them in a confined place of their own and hence they had to find out ways to express themselves. They chose crime and disobedience to be their prime actions of expressing themselves.

However, no one knows whether among all the black men arrested and listed on the police database, any actually committed a crime. They have been victimised, criminalised and denied their manhood all along. So their reactions were to this as why not commit the crime and then submit to the offence instead of being blamed for nothing. Racism is something which should not be understood only in terms of slavery and lynching. This era which is considered as post racial witnesses many forms of

racial violence among which a lot more are ignored as petty issues. African American men always have had a negative experience with the American criminal justice system. This discontent provokes them to act in ways which appear even more criminalised. They are often detained, almost always questioned, charged and arrested, beaten and many times killed without the proof of their guilt just because they are to be guilty of something. They are denied their right to education and are expected to end up in places which are not meant for civilised people. Intelligent black boys in class are always shut up by the teachers and never allowed to put forward their views.

This is why Rapper and actor Ice T said in his autobiography that for entering into a job with a reputation people need school education and degrees but for entering into crime, nothing is needed and it is easier. People therefore choose the easier way to become famous and in the process maybe killed and they are proud of that. Another thing the black Americans take up is sports to portray their manliness and also proves to be the only way to receive a higher education.

Despite these disparities and institutional racism not all the Black American men have shown negative behaviour. They are able to attain a particular style of expression, hairdo, clothing, walk, stance and speech which Richard Major calls as 'cool pose'. They do not live in a cultural vacuum. bell hooks says,

expressive of the cultural crossing, mixing, and engagement of Black male culture with the values, attitudes, and concerns of the white majority.¹³
(hooks)

For African American women the experience with their men is different. They talk about their men focusing on certain points which others have not experienced to comment about. The feminists and non feminist women, the coloured and non- coloured women, black and non- black women have given their own explanations of their understanding of maleness. The next chapter will include a farther detailed study on understanding maleness through the eyes of women.

¹³ For details look up : <http://stevenstanley.tripod.com/docs/bellhooks/misogyny.html>

Chapter Two

On Being a Wo(man)

You can't own a human being. You can't lose what you don't own. Suppose you did own him. Could you really love somebody who was absolutely nobody without you? You really want somebody like that? Somebody who falls apart when you walk out the door? You don't, do you? And neither does he. You're turning over your whole life to him. Your whole life, girl. And if it means so little to you that you can just give it away, hand it to him, then why should it mean any more to him? He can't value you more than you value yourself. (Morrison 306)

No one owns anyone. Women do not own men or vice versa. They are to live together, love each other and support when needed. Instead of looking for superiority and inferiority and all the other binaries there is a need to understand how the sexes complement each other and live in harmony, irrespective of caste, class, race and sexual orientation. But there are still disparities that erupt between the two sexes and the blame game continues. The feminists look in to the matter in the ways that are discussed in the chapter.

(We)-men on men: a feminist view:

The society which is predominant almost everywhere is fundamentally patriarchal. The human identity includes both men and women, but it is the man who is considered the model¹ for this identity. John Stoltenberg calls it The Heterosexual Model.

In this model, men are the arbiters of human identity. From the time they are boys, men are programmed by the culture to refer exclusively to other men for validation of their self-worth. A man's comfort and well-being are contingent upon the labor and nurture of women, but his identity—his 'knowledge of who he is'—can only be conferred and confirmed by other men. (41)

Judith Keagan Gardiner says that misogyny created feminism and feminism helped creating masculinity (36) Different strands of feminist theories look at maleness in varying ways. If one is critical about its rationality then another reviews its effects on women, other men and society. People usually term these criticisms as 'male bashing' and think that these come out from the hatred that women nourish within themselves. Most feminist theories are based upon the violent nature of the patriarchal society.

Seeking equality and ending sexist, racist behaviour becomes the main focus of these theories. The magical transformation of men and maleness is not possible overnight as everything based on superiority has been in abundance in the society probably since the beginning of civilization or before that.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle in his writings has shown women as inferior to men as they are considered unable to reason as men do. “The female is a female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities,” said Aristotle, “We should regard the female nature as afflicted with a natural defectiveness.” (Beauvoir 675)

Rationality, thus, is always defined to be masculine, and sexuality and emotion to be feminine. In earlier writings when women were always called vicious, sinful, morally low, and irrational, the time came to react, defend and redefine their identity. The writings which are framed around this topic started demeaning men instead of raising the status of women by showing the wrong markers put in to their identities.

The Early Feminists:

Christine De Pizan is considered to be the first woman to have penned against misogyny. Her character Lady Reason in *The Book of the City of Ladies* speaks up

that these attacks on all women—when in fact there are so many excellent women—have never originated with me, Reason” but were occasioned rather by men’s own vices, jealousies, and pride. (18)

Mary Wollstonecraft in her “Vindication of the Rights of Women” says that men hide behind reason to do prejudices. These reasons are imbibed by them and they never try to go in to their roots and eradicate them in order to stop discrimination against women. This happens, she says, because of men’s cowardly nature to face the reasons and hence they remain within the cocoon they create around themselves with the codes provided by society about the conduct of men and women. Wollstonecraft claims these kinds of views as shallow and narrow and unjust, and she demands justice by asking for breaking away from the shackles that bind the women and let equality prevail which is the healthy way to survive in the society. Women could see that men

were not living up to their own reasons and they were not valid ones to let it be the way it was. The feminists believed that certain positions were enjoyed by men unworthy than women and to prove their eligibility to hold those positions or in certain ways their superiority the feminists put their effort in gaining equality in political and educational sphere. In doing so they were caught up between critiquing men and in certain ways imitating them.

It continues that men think of women as prized possessions, the other half, complementary and inferior as always. In *The Second Sex* Simone De Beauvoir says that women have always been dependent on men and though women are not slaves to men they still do not share equality. Despite of all the changes happening in women's situations nothing of much significant advantage is taking place. Legal status is not equalised and on the other hand it has limited the choices of women. The world still belonged to men and they acted as the provider, even as the provider of the rights. Following these prejudices the feminists sought refuge in educating people against this discrimination and demanded change of laws. Critics did not leave the matter to see as a desperate attempt of the women to enter in to the male dominated institutions and not questioning the masculine norms that governs based upon the abstract reasons.

Helen Cixous says that psychoanalysis is formed on the basis of woman and the less successful repression of femininity of masculine sexuality by them. (104) In order to lay a stronger foundation to the issues to be dealt with feminists turn to the roots of the reasons.

Let masculine sexuality gravitate around the penis, engendering this centralised body (political anatomy) under the party dictatorship. Woman does not perform on herself this regionalisation that profits the couple head- sex, that only inscribes itself within frontiers. (Cixous. 108)

The psychoanalytic theories of Freud and his follower Lacan are criticised which are based on negativity. The lack of penis or penis – envy as they have termed it and said that because of the presence of this particular genital part men have advantage in society. Men are scared to lose that body part and women envy its absence in them.

Luce Irigaray disagrees to this model of penis privileged idea of constructing gender identity. Irigaray reversed the theory of absence of penis as a marker to define maleness and not femaleness as they fear losing it which Freud termed as castration anxiety.

Is the primitive, or most primitive, character of "penis-envy" not an essential factor in establishing the *primacy of the male organ*? In making the phallus necessarily the archetype for sex? The primal sex? And making the penis the best representational equivalent of the Idea of sex? There can only be one desire: the desire to ensure domination by greed, by appetite for appropriation. If anything were to contradict this desire- the little girl's pleasures, for example-the whole economy of sexual affects, and affections, would have to be reinterpreted. (Irigaray, 58, 1985)

Men soothe this anxiety thinking about the absence of it in women. This constant fear of being 'non-men' if the only thing that makes them men is taken away defines their maleness. This rejection of the psychoanalytic theory about the construction of maleness and femaleness opens up a question. Does it lead to a solution to the air of superiority that men hold and define narcissistically as maleness?

Nancy Chodorow also rejects the theories that Freud provided on human aggression. According to her not every human being is driven by violent traits when they are struck by certain emotion. Men are more prone to aggression and hence usually react in a violent way when humiliated.

Hormones, the structure of masculine personality, and/or the social and political organisation of gender, male bonding, and male dominance, all lead many men to react to threats with violence and aggression in a way that most women do not. Men find themselves and organise themselves into groups whose goal is extreme violence, and perhaps they get pleasure from extreme violence and aggression. The military in all societies is by definition masculine, and descriptions of military training always note how such training involves the invocation of ideologies of aggressive masculinity and explicit, often sexualised deprecation of women. (Chodorow, 252, 2002)

War is a result of this aggression and as discussed earlier, for men war is a way to prove their manliness. Things like nuclear weapon tests and depletion of nature is totally credited to the men by eco feminists, who criticize the belief that having a penis gives them command over nature or the planet.

For some other feminists sexuality is the only thing that defines a man or a woman. In order to define maleness they have drawn theories that are solely based on sexist behaviour of men and in this case women are always seen as the victim and the

men as oppressors. For Catherine McKinnon masculinity defines men, and not the other way. She sees the father as rapist, the husband sadist and the male doctor as opportunist. Her radical views conclude that every social order including workplace and sports are dominated by the traits of masculinity and society adds sparks to them and hence it continues to be the dominant indicator of male - female differences.

Instead of defining femaleness as lack of the penis, can't maleness be defined as the lack of a womb? The theory that women feel the absence of the penis hence through penetration and bearing children they try to fill up the void has very shaky base to be interpreted. Motherhood is something that is considered a way to get equal to men. The masculine roles of the society are to men as motherhood to women. Being a parent has hardly to do with defining a man on his masculinity. But for the woman it is always the parental portal. These gender role differences put insecurities in both male and female in identifying themselves through these.

Cultural feminists on maleness:

Can a refusal to be a man be a way to support this cause? Theorist John Stoltenberg proposes to men be included in the feminist cause only by denying their maleness. The root causes of dominance, violence, sexism, oppression are being credited to being a male. Denying one's manhood can not solve these problems. Anyone can assert power on someone else. Being a man or a non-man does not have anything to do with it. It is accepted that in a heterosexual relationship the above mentioned elements are naturally present. People have to be educated against this perceived naturalness.

As a reaction to this many theorists have come up with the victimhood of the male which provokes them to behave in ways that appear to be natural because of their abundance. The cultural feminist theorists tried to offer a different view from the radical feminists. They see men and women as complementary to each other and good and bad traits in both and consider them traditional characteristics. They do not see aggression as inherent in men. They rationalise the victimhood of men as the cause of the inhuman but natural behaviour of men. Dorothy Dinerstein posits the argument which states that mothers in the child rearing process exert a certain amount of power, control and dominance over the child. The child fears the mother's life giving power and its

withdrawal. Hence the child when grown up transmits these fears in the form of misogyny and violence on other women including the mother.

The men who are not victims of anything; the ones who belong to the privileged class do the same at times. What can be their explanation of being so? Kimmel explains thus in his book *Guyland* what compels the so called privileged boys to turn in to stereotyped 'men'. Kimmel blames it on the 'guy codes' that have been taught to boys since their birth. These codes are created by society, and that is men in general. As Seidler says;

With the identification of masculinity with reason, men become the protectors of and gatekeepers for this dominant vision of modernity. We set the terms on which others can be permitted to enter. (Seidler. 19)

The cultural feminists also have come up with theories like 'mother's domination' and other societal pressures on the boys to justify their behaviour. In a way it points out that as kids boys suffer domination from the mother and hence growing up they take out their 'revenge' on every women they have a closeness or does not have anything to do with.

The online journal The Broad Street Review featured in the editorial how women have to conduct themselves in order not to fall victim of the naturalness of men.

Earth to liberated women: When you display legs, thighs or cleavage, some liberated men will see it as a sign that you feel good about yourself and your sexuality. But most men will see it as a sign that you want to get laid. Forewarned is forearmed.¹⁴

Women are raped, physically assaulted, and taken advantage of if they are staying alone, abused on the basis of what they are wearing. Sarakay Smullens has given examples of the cases of female victims she has dealt with, who are traumatised after being victims of inhuman behaviour from men. The journalist Lara Logan was raped and violated by hundreds of Egyptian men, an accident victim was fondled on the way to hospital by ambulance attendants, a college girl date raped, female masseuses are always thought of as prostitutes and male masseuses masturbate while massaging female clients. In almost all the cases the women are blamed and these cases usually go

¹⁴ For details check:

http://www.broadstreetreview.com/index.php/main/article/male_sex_abuse_and_female_naivete/

unheard of justice. One explanation is given that the woman must have provoked the man in some way. Lara Logan was beautiful and she wore a dress showing a little cleavage and that became the cause of her assault.

What can be drawn from these incidents of sexual abuse to women? Theorists blame the society, the upbringing, the violence the men have to suffer in their childhood and the hormones. But when most cases of rape are analysed it is always clear that the rapist does not have a particular kind of characteristic. They can be of different ages, bodily builds, and class, race and the place where they come from is not specific. There is not any special criterion to identify a rapist in any circumstances other than when they are caught red handed. The daughter of a woman whose house was burgled many times and suffered attempted rape was advised to do many things by the Broad Street Review, for example- keeping a burglar alarm, keeping the front door closed all the time, having a strong door instead of the flimsy ones and to dress in a different way than she does. She snapped back asking why she would change her lifestyle when the mistake was made by someone else. The people of the society, especially the men who are doing all the wrong deeds have to change. As a reply to this Dan had to say;

Ann, you see, saw crime as a personal issue to be solved through her own ingenuity. Sarah perceived it as a political issue to be solved by changing the world. And surely political solutions can be valuable over the long run. In the short run, I would suggest, it's usually easier to change your own behavior than to change someone else's.¹⁵

Men through an Indian-eye view:

Recently a news item sensationalised Indians about the sex change of children. There is a hospital in Indore where people from all over India rush to get their child operated and “correct” their gender. The operation is called genitoplasty which is done mostly on adults with faulty genital organs. But the fetish for a male child has

¹⁵ For more details please refer to:

http://www.broadstreetreview.com/index.php/main/article/male_sex_abuse_and_female_naivete/

http://www.broadstreetreview.com/index.php/main/article/male_sex_abuse_and_the_silence_of_women

taken people to do it on their children though they are being told that the child will be infertile and the condition is irreversible after the injection of hormones.¹⁶

While thinking it out in Indian style; in a heterosexual relationship the husband is always God- "*Pati Parmeshwar*". The literal meaning of the word *Swami* or *Pati* is master. Indian women are raised to believe that they must worship their husbands. The men are groomed in a way from their childhood where they know they will always have someone to clean up after them. It is a scene in almost all the Indian households in the village areas especially: the woman does everything to keep the man happy. They cook and work and manage the household and serve the husband in the best possible way. At last there remains nothing better what she cooks as she gives the best ones to the husband. Still she has to be the victim of his abuses. The man hardly takes a glass of water himself. It is not only in the families where the husband is the sole breadwinner. In the families where the husband and wife both work the household work is still the woman's duty. Even if she walks in late and the husband is on leave, she will have to come and cook and feed him. It is in almost all the religious scriptures that women are the responsibility of the father before marriage, being handed over to the husband after marriage and when she bears a son it's his responsibility thereafter when the husband is dead. She is always considered a dependent no matter what. The marriage vows also say on the man's part- "From today I take the responsibility of your dwelling, clothes and food." The woman has to say, "From today onwards I will serve (*sewa*) you till death and always obey you." In English it sounds more like a slavery agreement. But in Indian languages it is very emotional and serious. In this context if masculinity has to be defined; it appears that they are the dependent ones. They depend upon the women for every little thing and if they try to act in a different way, like helping the woman, equally sharing every work and taking responsibility of each other in a healthy way, he will be called a wimp- "*joru ka gulaam*". So they like to be treated as superior and hence behave in within the unrelenting ways.

¹⁶ <http://www.hindustantimes.com/News-Feed/madhyapradesh/Indore-doctors-turn-scores-of-baby-girls-into-boys/Article1-713863.aspx>

Ecofeminists' characterisation of maleness:

Your masculinity is only as secure as your last competitive achievement. This fear of what nature might reveal is an endemic aspect of dominant forms of masculinity. It is built upon a denial of what cannot be denied, since it remains part of us. (Seidler. 18)

Ecofeminist theorists draw war as a militarised act in which man conquers nature and says that in every way male privilege is being protected. Joni Seager says that “environmentally destructive ethos includes a cultivation of hypermasculinity, secrecy, fraternity, and an inflated sense of self-importance” (169) and, the “culture of nuclear destruction” is “a private men’s club, within which masculinity is both an explicit sexualized expression and an implicitly taken-for-granted context” (172)

Men have been always associated with nature as if it has been the norm for this to be essentially the underpinned statements of hegemonic masculinity as ‘fixed in nature’, and always termed ‘normal’. To put very simply; the ‘wild’ animals have been used to be compared with the supposedly inherent aggressive nature of men. The image of ‘The Hunter’ is often romanticised in a hypermasculine way. The kings, lords, and every other warrior soul have to be good hunters. Hunters kill animals, wars kill people. In this way masculinity is not seen only against nature and women but humanity. Hence; when Robert Bly wanted to revive the wild man image in his ‘Iron John’ it is being criticised by the ecofeminists. He also suggested cutting the psychic umbilical cord which binds men and women together instead of sharing responsibilities together.

The eco feminists also look at maleness in another way. Ecofeminism has become stronger over the last two decades. It started with delineating the interconnectedness of the oppression of women and nature; the whole ecosystem is included in it. Slowly it has broadened into a more convoluted liberation theory by singling out theoretical correlation with a perspective for grounding political coalition. As an alternative to the woman-nature connection as a disintegrated association for women, ecofeminism tries to observe the flipside of this association, which is the ‘men with culture connection’.

Ecofeminist philosopher Val Plumwood suggests, oppression is not the only way that should be credited to hegemonic masculinity. She complicates the dominator identity of men by giving a new term called ‘master identity’. This identity gives out a wider space to discuss the importance of other categories alongside gender. As all

oppression is not class based, it is not only gender based either. She suggests that instead of dealing with the dualistic associations of man- woman- nature relationship it will be less complicated if people think in terms of being a 'human'-that is the master identity.

Maleness from the Marxist feminist viewpoint:

The study of men and masculinities is being emphasised by the Marxist theories with particular implications towards the agency of oppressed people. The predominant focus of classical Marxism is class and its attitude towards maleness is narrowed down to the class oppression between worker and master. Marxist feminists consider men mainly as oppressors of women like other theories based on dualisms do. One thing is ignored while calling them oppressors that men also suffer the same consequences- from other men and they themselves are trying hard to end it. The complex ways in which power relations which are based on class, gender, ethnicity, race, disability, minority, religion and other identities Marxists try to analyse society in those ways. This identity based on intersectionality often overlaps. As everything is seen on the basis of binaries, there can be no theory on masculinity without a feminine theory. Both can not run parallel or individually. Though the Marxist feminists are trying to scrutinise these social divisions as their allies in drawing conclusion about the oppression, Marxist politics of maleness is always mixed with the working class, feminist values and is sexually liberating in a way.

Still this alliance of Marxism and feminism remained unhappy. The working class still had two sexes according to the socialist feminists and studies were done on the basis of this class division. The global labour force was based on this segmentation and had kept wages higher for men and lower for women labourers. But slowly it took a turn and hence economic restructuring happened after industrial revolution. Capitalists preferred women and children at lower wages which left the men jobless in the industrial front. So the men helped to force women out of it and established a family wage system where the man has to be the only provider of the family.

In the workplace, education and other socio economic spheres the participation of women increased slowly. This has been connected to the loss of jobs for men, decline of the male breadwinner theory and shortage of many privileges that were enjoyed by men. Men are seen as victims or thought as marginalised. Errol Miller wrote *Men at Risk* on this very subject. The victimization of men as a result of the women movements seems problematic because it turns around the basis of women's movements. The aim of the women's movements was to be free from oppression. Men in certain conditions are unable to fulfil their roles because of the higher ambitions of women and hence they started blaming the women for that

It is an age old concept that men gain authority, power, and prestige and even attract women through their good job and handsome salary. In the context of patriarchy it plays a pivotal role to gain the position of a breadwinner, after that he will be recognised as something else in the society. If this role is denied to men mainly as a result of unemployment, problems occur in the family front because men tend to lose self esteem and domestic violence rises. The women just wanted to avert the prevailing theory conceived in the society about the male breadwinner and contribute equally to the maintenance of the family. Chodorow and Dinnerstein talk about men and women being together instead of playing this blame game and redefine masculinity. Staying at home and helping to bring up children while the woman is at work does not change the maleness of a man. This is what the men need to understand that being a breadwinner is not the full realisation of maleness. Maleness is undergoing changes currently and trying to adjust to the required alterations demanded by the feminist ideologies and patriarchal norms.

American white feminist pioneers dealt with this matter of defining and analysing maleness in a way which was based on commonalities and tried to portray a different vision from the early feminists. Hence they called masculinity as non colossal as Michael Awkward has point out;

These scholars emphasized gendered similarities even when they recognized that doing so seemed to many to confirm beliefs that feminism placed a transgressive middle-class white womanhood at its center and thus normalized that class's struggles and aspirations. They did so even when they became aware that black women like Alice Walker and Barbara Smith believed that that emphasis marginalized and, in some cases, pathologized other female realities and responses to social conditions. (293)

Many critics have pointed out that this attitude of the white feminists who have articulated masculinity as something very large to which men has ample access and power and who were being supported by male partners left the African American women out of the discussion. During the period of 1960s racial politics the awakening of the black women came out of the participation in these race struggles. Mainstream feminism failed to look at the black men and women relationship with sufficient interest that gave a way to the African American women to show it to the world. Alice Walker's *Third Life of Grange Copeland* and Toni Cade Bambara's anthology *The Black Woman* showed how many black women were compassionate with the mainstream feminism's anti patriarchal stance but they also felt that their fates were interconnected with the black men because of the history they share of oppression, racial discrimination and the struggles. (Awkward. 293)

The white feminists have seen things like race, class and oppression with the interest of women's issues, but for the black women there concern women, children and black men. That is why the literature of the time of struggle and after the black women writers have revealed their discontent towards the white feminist ideas and at the same time the fight against intra communal misogyny and constantly seeking a solution for it.

In 1970s works like Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, Ntozake Shange's for colored girls, and Gayl Jones's *Corregidora* and early 1980s fictions such as Gloria Naylor's *The Women of Brewster Place* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, as well as in influential 1970s critical formulations found in texts like *The Black Woman* and Michele Wallace's *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman*, the lives of black women are depicted as constrained both by racist forms of white patriarchy and by intraracial, that is to say, domestic and black communal, forms of misogyny. (Awkward. 293)

Alice Walker posits this in her theory of 'womanism'. In "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens" she explains a womanist, black feminist or feminist of colour is someone who is committed to the survival of entire people in its wholeness which includes male and female both.

A woman who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually. Appreciates and prefers women's culture, women's emotional flexibility (values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter), and women's strength. Sometimes loves individual men, sexually and/or nonsexually. Committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Not a separatist, except periodically, for health. (Walker. Xi)

Drawing ideas from this notion and many others the black feminists have defined maleness intertwined with their own experiences dealing with white racism, patriarchy and black male of their community.

The Black Feminist View on men:

The systematic structure that encloses the socio cultural framework of identity construction in America is based on as bell hooks calls it; white supremacist capitalist patriarchy. It is the white patriarchy which lets the black males to negotiate the various ways they will like to be socialised. The identity of black men has been institutionalised and they have no choice but to be a part of it. Racial atrocity and minimal or no option of multiplicity have barred black men expressing their existence.

But in a racial or colonial capitalist society where the racially oppressed are a numerical minority, how can racism be overcome when the majority of the population gains from it and presumably will defend these privileges as rational and objective interests? Here even the solution reached by victims of classical colonialism, the ejection of the colonizer and the achievement of national independence, does not seem to be a realistic possibility.¹⁷ (Blauner)

The struggle and fight to acquire an identity, respect, power and a position in society is constantly going on in the black males. The white feminists have considered that black women were already liberated, and the black men were never of their concern to take up as a subject. Dealing with their own issues regarding freedom, liberation and white male oppression had been their main focus. They did not consider that the working class poor black people could be included in their struggle. The white feminists kept away from the issue of black men not because they were afraid of the hypermasculine beings or rapists- the black males were represented as, but because they were not aware of the realities and for them the black men were not in a position to be sexist. Later their attacks on men included the black men in the form of terror. Robert Staples points out that Susan Brownmiller and Diana Russel talk in their works about the reaction of assault by black males on white women:

¹⁷ Qtd in *Black Masculinity and Sexual Politics*. page no 1

This almost seemed a throwback to the fifties and before when the worst crime possible was the violation of a white woman's body. To rape black women was tolerable; to sexually assault a white woman was an abomination and a sign of not knowing one's place. (Staples. 122)

This shows the white women as racist as the white men. The phenomena of white privilege has been denied and protected but active and effective at the same time since the interlocking of hierarchies happening in the society. The whites were taught about racism as a thing which brings disadvantage to others but they are trained to overlook it. Staples again quotes that mostly black women were raped but white women were screaming rape. Hence out of the discontent of the feminist movement black women came out to voice their own stance- about themselves and black men altogether.

Capitalism worked at its best in creating a situation for the black men where it was not only difficult but impossible to find productive and meaningful work. This was a way to keep the black people's strong will to resist subjugation and oppression at check. Black men could never find any kind of job mostly. But on the other hand black women were getting jobs easily in white households though they were economically exploited, manipulated by the socio economic system and always physically and mentally assaulted. Despite all these odds black women had to work because there was no other way to support the family. The woman was the sole breadwinner of the family in most cases. This caused problems in the family front of the black households as psychology plays a serious role in dealing with these situations. Black men felt emasculated and women overworked. This turmoil led to the dishevelment of black family structures. Depressed black men often fled from home and the family become mother oriented.

Unfortunately enough the simple minded blacks never understood what held the strings of this blame game. The forces that worked on them were pretty complicated and hence the black women thought the black men were lazy and wanted to sit and laze around and do not try hard to support the family. On the other hand black men accused the black women of stealing their jobs. Supporting the families had been tough and the relationship of black men and women was sore. This affected not only one but all the other relationships a family has. The capitalist assessment of maleness and femaleness was accepted by the blacks and as a result they suffered.

According to white American men's definition of ideal maleness, the first condition was not being black. This hindered the black men to gain equal political and social status in America. Their first struggle therefore was to overshadow the dominant ideas of white masculinity and establish their own identity. African American men were presented to the public eye as uneducable, licentious, and idle and criminals. The American cultural system which is mainly based on race and gender has labelled black manhood in a way feminised and on the other hand as hypermasculine. Denying and accepting and redefining these identities have taken away a large part of the feminist studies as well as studies on black men. In doing so there is a separate identity created which can neither be moulded with the idealised American masculinity nor that can be merged with the struggle that black women and men altogether are holding. Though there are similarities between all the other coloured masculinities there is always a difference when it is analysed through the experiences they go through. Ranging their identity crisis since slavery and post slavery conditions black men have undergone various changes regarding their individuality.

The black feminist theorists tried to maintain a level of understanding between the oppression the black women have suffered and sympathising with the victimization of black men. The black feminists tried to look at the mainstream masculine ideologies which are based on sexist notions and at the same time critically examine the hardships the black men and other men of colour have faced and their reach to the mainstream masculinity. Lately they have invited black male intellectuals to join with the causes black feminists are trying to fight with, for example male violence, racial abuse, sexual assault etc.

Twentieth century has proved gender as a social construction so the sexual differences have nothing to do with the naturalness of being feminine and masculine. So to call black male behaviours as black masculinity would be wrong. That is why it is being tried to see not only certain qualities of the black men as their maleness but domination over black women, other minorities, struggle for liberation and sometimes interrogating their own identities give rise to new set of ideologies that can be called maleness whether critically or sympathetically.

Within black feminist movement the ideologies differ among theorists but there is confusion in the movement about the real oppressor. Who oppresses whom is the question. Black men have become more active during and after the liberation struggle

and they have been able to exert their power on the socio-politico-cultural-economic structures of the country. They can see the flaws and injustice happening with wrong principles of the existing power. They have stood as leaders for their cause but tend to ignore that the women of their community have been supportive of them and they have equal right to freedom of everything. The attitude came that women are not needed in the serious matters and patriarchy shifted from the mainstream to the black males.

Being emasculated or castrated by the white society has been the complaint of select black men and they held the black women responsible for that. But doubly marginalised black women have been never in such a position to do anything so as far as the blame is concerned. The black women have been treated as breeding machines, sexual objects, economically exploited on work front and always forced to be whatever they did not want. White women preferred their husbands to keep sexual relation with the black maids being afraid of adulteration with another white woman. Reducing black men to a position where the women can never look up to them for protection and help brought them no good.

Still, the problem of defining what sexist behaviour among black men is a complicated one. On the institutional level, most black men do not have the power to force women into subordinate roles. Most of the institutions in which black people are located are controlled by whites. The most significant exception, the black church, has a male leadership and a largely female constituency. (Staples. 124)

African American maleness covers a vast array of outlook and operation which reflects the diversity of their distinctive demonstration of experiences since slavery to the current scenario. During slavery America denied the African Americans the right to be human and all the powers, privileges were refuted. The difficult task of showing that these rights also belong to the African American had been a tough task when they are not even considered human beings, let alone showing maleness or womanhood. Another thing attached to black males is rape. It is said that to invert the symbolic castration of black males they tend to rape females may it be whites or blacks. When the African Americans were lynched their private parts were exposed and almost always sexually harassed in the process. Trudier Harris explains how there is a communal rape happening while one is being executed in front of a crowd. Critics analogise lynching with rape and again rape and castration are put on the same bench as racial oppression.

The American white men were never going to grant socio-political status and power to the black men and that way it was not possible for the black American men to fully adapt into the ideal model of maleness of the American society. But when they gained a bit of power they turned out to be exactly like the white American men in action and talks. Instead of seeing how the people interconnect everybody seems competitive hence the notion of hierarchy increases. This is the case with the African American men and women. They are caught up with the issue that whose problems are bigger and hence their main motive of the struggle is lost in their internal disputes.

Zora Neale Hurston's "*Their Eyes were Watching god*" has shown us different types of African American men of different class and temper. Janie's first husband Logan; who treated her as a labour he has attained in a contract called marriage. Just a helper who will help her in ploughing his field, plant crops, take care of the pigs and cook for him and be a sex partner at night. For him a wife is not a companion but a domestic help who is bound to work and behave according to his will. The next husband Joe Starks, with whom she fled and settled down, had a larger view on life. He was a good social worker. He developed a backward place. Established a township and became its mayor. Joe's entire standard of life circles around his admiration of his maleness. The concepts of maleness are mixed with his right to power, wealth, and being an authority. His pomp and show leaves him out as an outsider- white man like. Janie's appreciation did not take much time to turn into feeling of restlessness as his behaviour towards her showed that he had no respect for her.

The characteristics of both the husbands are different starting from Logan's dirty, forgotten to wash feet to Jody's suave stylish look. In one thing they match exactly is the way they treated the wife. The treatment of woman defines both the men and this is why Janie could not live with any of them. One did not try to stop the wife when she said she is going to leave her. The other one dies of ego crash hating the wife without any mistake.

Then Tea Cake came to the scene. He is totally opposite of whatever Janie's first two husbands were. He was young, fun loving, full of energy and in every way treated Janie as his equal. Not only playing checkers but he wanted her to work with him. His notion of working is totally different from that of Logan or Jody's. Because

Tea Cake wanted her to work to share some time and experience together. Unlike Logan who married her as his help for field work and making her do hard labour. On the other hand Joe tried to command her in front of other people to show his authority and make her work with his instructions. Another difference that perks up is the willingness to talk and listen. In relationships soreness erupts at times and there are ways to sort it out. It is done through discussion and understanding, and this has to be done with words. Logan never talked to Janie and Joe never listened to Janie, even when she left Logan and Joe was in his deathbed.

Tea Cake was the ideal modern man with little flaws that can be ignored. But with him Janie was the happiest. Though jealousy, pride and anger were inside which is natural he proved to be a hero. People do mistakes and hence he died because of his mistakes. But these mistakes do not wash away the character he portrayed as an ideal partner every woman wants to be with.

All the three characters of Logan, Joe and Tea Cake put forward different traits of maleness which are critically scrutinised by the black feminists in various ways. One thing always remains clear, yet people tend to ignore it is being together and sharing a bond.

Those things that bother black men—feelings of inferiority, fear of vulnerability—are not often talked about. What is articulated comes out sounding like insensitive male chauvinism: accusing black women of being domineering, sexually hung up and the like. Little wonder that workshops on black relationships sometimes degenerate into shouting matches. (Staples. 123)

The problem that lies here is that the behaviours of men which are now called sexism were a while ago normative male behaviours. When women started retaliating; the blame came upon the feminists.

In the last few decades black feminist notion has been that there is a rapid growth of distrust and even hatred among the black people: male and female. Though they have admitted that white racism is behind it but there is also a belief that the ignorance of blacks about the sexual politics also plays a huge part in it. Is it justified to call black men who are prison returned, addicted and unemployed so called bad men of the society are the only culprits? Robert Staple quotes Pauline Stone; “within Afro-American culture maleness creates privileges—that is, certain freedoms and rights are

attached to being male.” (Staples. 125) Manipulation by the white capitalists based on gender inequalities among the blacks work here too.

The movie *Boyz n' the Hood* shows a picture of the African American boys growing up in a locality where it is hard to do homework because of the noise of police sirens. This movie has shown with the will to change things and move beyond the stereotypes. Life in a hood is not easy and the psychological turmoil each individual go through especially the youth; is the base on which depends how the change is going to come. Though separated Furious Styles and Reva care for their child Tre and has taken necessary steps to keep him away from the flow in which all the youth were drowning. In the beginning of the film the school kids of barely 6-7 years were talking about how blood stains turn plasma coloured when they dry on the roads. The father says only a real man can raise his children. In raising this boy he was stern and strict in everyway but never forgot to show the reasons why. He says in a locality where they live there are more arms and ammunition shops then stationary or bookshops. This is because there is someone who does not want them to study and pursue their dreams but get killed in street fights or by police. Early fatherhood and school dropout is a major problem and at last though carried away by emotions when his friend gets killed Tre is moved towards violence but he remembers this is a wrong turn and returns. But it is not easily understood by everyone and some are willing to live a violent life despite the odds and negativities in it. Just blaming something for one's fate and sufferings does not work. One has to uproot the cause of it.

African American feminists discuss maleness within the relationships between men and women of their community, other coloured people and their relationship with the white dominant culture. bell hooks is one of the prominent black feminist who has taken up these issues theorising picking up the notions of other black feminists and her own experiences and gives out a view how to end the matters that bother the whole community; not only the black women. In the last few decades she has repeatedly taken up the issue that including men and discussing the problems with them and instead of pointing out and fighting trying to solve it with love. She focuses her theory on the basis that human beings can not live alone, they are communal animals. For the African Americans this notion of community should work even more than the others because of the experiences they have shared.

hooks sees the men as comrades in struggle and instead of looking at the male- female bonding as sexual she terms it as political friendship. She draws instances from her childhood and tries to put them alongside the theories to give it more emphasis and at the same time analyse the rights and wrongs from which she has learnt and developed her theory. She also believes in non monolithic structures of masculinity on which the early African American community operated along. She tries to work on removing the stereotypical notion in which black maleness has been painted by the white society. It takes us back to the womanist theory of Alice Walker who seeks the development of all the individuals; not only women. In the same way hooks shows how her theory is not anti male but it included girls, boys, men women and all the others who live in a community which she calls 'beloved community'. Helping each other, and talking to each other and living with each other with love. Dialogue is a major theme in which she puts her theory in to work.

The next chapter will take up select works of bell hooks and her notion of maleness will be discussed in a detailed manner.

Chapter Three

Of Boyz and Men: Through the vision of a visionary feminist, bell hooks

Visionary feminism is a wise and loving politics. It is rooted in the love of male and female being, refusing to privilege one over the other. The soul of feminist politics is the commitment to ending patriarchal domination of women and men, girls and boys. Love cannot exist in any relationship that is based on domination and coercion. Males cannot love themselves in patriarchal culture if their very self-definition relies on submission to patriarchal rules. When men embrace feminist thinking and practice, which emphasizes the value of mutual growth and self-actualization in all relationships, their emotional well-being will be enhanced. A genuine feminist politics always brings us from bondage to freedom, from lovelessness to loving. (hooks.123.2004.a)

bell hooks calls herself a visionary feminist. Her vision about feminism encloses certain features around which she documents her theory. She deals with racism and sexism within and outside patriarchy, the importance of family and most importantly the idea of love. The interconnectivity of race, class, gender, sex and other intersectionalities formulate her view on feminism. hook's writings encompass sketches from her life's experience to highlight her theory.

To place hooks as a theorist within the critical domain is not difficult despite the diverse topics she has chosen to work on. One common factor that can be picked up from each of her work is her disgruntlement towards what she calls white-supremacist-capitalist-patriarchy. Now that appears to be highly oversimplified if she finds only one entity to blame for everything. Her works highlight the oppression, suppression, discontent of the people of colour-specifically black Americans but despite her claims to have incorporating "everybody" in her theoretical framework many aspects are left out. Her theory of feminism was supposed to encompass the women outside academia and let them share the thoughts she developed from feminism. It does not seem that she has yet reached out to the people of the periphery. This chapter is an attempt to show how hooks has move over different aspects of society starting from the first social unit-family to mass-media, work force and popular culture and points out how racism prevails everywhere in America and the root cause for it is only one thing that is "imperialist-white-supremacist-capitalist-patriarchy".

hooks in *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics* illustrates a critique of the conflict between second wave feminism's reformist view and the revolutionary

views. The reformists emphasised on gender equality on the other hand the revolutionary feminists could not just overthrow the existing gender based system just because that way women will get certain privileges, and enjoy more rights. This system had to be uprooted to put an end to sexism and patriarchy. hooks explains by promoting 'lifestyle feminism' how the reformist feminists cooperated with the feminist movement. Lifestyle feminism is the idea that anybody can assimilate in the feminist thinking and bring it in their life without bringing any change to their political views. Another feminism practiced by the reformists is 'power feminism which revolves around the idea of how privileged women use feminism in order to assert power upon underprivileged women pushing them behind. Revolutionary feminism had been put on a backseat then. hooks expresses her disappointment in the feminist movement in its current situation because of its lack in having the strong sense of sisterhood. It is one revolution where everybody was supposed to work together towards achieving a definite goal. The competitiveness which has popped up among the different strands of feminisms has hid the actual objective of feminist movement. Because there is groupism the participation as a whole in raising awareness is missing. The differences between the reformists and revolutionary feminists prove her argument.

hooks also points out that early radical feminist writings incorporated rage, anger and hatred of men but there was no solution provided to end these feelings. There was no scope of reconciliation where men and women may work together and find a common ground for that. Militant feminism also gave women liberty to express their rage and hatred towards men but there was no permission to talk about love. Loving men in a patriarchal society without being afraid of exploitation and oppression was beyond imagination for them. Outspoken feminists about feeling for men are rare. hooks quotes Barbara Deming, whom she considers among those who was not afraid to talk about her love for men. Deming fears the idea that women are more and more falling for the idea that "men are hopeless" (hooks. Xii.2004.a). Because of this feeling women forget that men are capable of change and they have other feelings too. Because of the patriarchal set where all the feminist women are born and brought up they are taught to keep silent about the issues of men. Hence there are very few writings available by women who have dealt with true feelings about men. The way radical feminists labelled the men as oppressors and dominators also in way hid the true nature

of maleness that people get to see in the house and society. This labelling limits the possibilities of understanding men and maleness in a serious manner. It transpires because it is an easy way to blame someone and accuse and prove someone wrong then to find a way to change it and make alliance and challenge the system. The need to take up this issue of what women really feel about men and where the problem lies has influenced bell hooks to put in words her thoughts and contribute in the feminist literary domain. She says that from feminism she has learnt a negative thing and learning that negative things has forced her to look at the positive side of it and it created the visionary feminist we have in bell hooks today. She says;

It is a fiction of a false feminism that we women can find our power in a world without men, in a world where we deny our connections to men. We claim power fully only when we can speak the truth that we need men in our lives, that men are in our lives whether we want them to be or not, that we need men to challenge patriarchy, that we need men to change. (hooks. Xvi.2004.a)

hooks is a radical feminist but with different views about the feminist theory. According to her the inclusion of men is essential to carry forward the feminist struggle. There are sexist women as well as feminist men. So it can not be specific whom the struggle should embrace and whom to discard. Men too suffer from sexism practised by women and women can dominate other women in the same way men can. Sexuality takes an important part of her discussing other matters related to feminist theory. Celebrating and loving ones own sexuality and expression of the needs based on it has a lot more to do in carrying out healthy revolutionary strategies of the struggle which is based on mostly gender inconsistency.

Race, gender and sexuality:

Race and gender in its intersectionality has been a tricky matter yet important in understanding maleness and femaleness. People of colour have a different experience in America on the basis of race, gender and sexuality that is smeared with oppression and discrimination and makes the 'otherness' more prominent which makes life even more difficult for them. bell hooks says that feminist movement has a goal though it has lost its importance over other issues that have come up in the movement; is the ending of racist and sexist oppression. This according to her will enable women, men, girls and boys to participate in the revolutionary struggle of feminism. (hooks. 68. 2000) Feminism has been a struggle primarily by women and men due to various

misunderstandings have developed an anti feminist stand. Many feminists believe and have been vocal about how men are the only reason for their oppression. But hooks repeatedly has put it in plain words that women are just as oppressor as the men are for themselves. She has discussed it thoroughly how men are equally victims of the same oppression faced by women.

As a visiting faculty for the Department of Women's studies in Ohio State University hooks has delivered a lecture in Hitchcock hall from October 18-29, 2010 on the resistance against sexism and racism. She spoke curtly that people are not keen about talking how harmful sexism and racism are for the development of humanity. In white dominated areas race is frequently talked about and it is not considered a problem anymore. Especially after the election of president Obama racism is seen as a negligent issue. On the contrary people are engaging more in white supremacist domination. Coloured people going crazy over whitening beauty products show how it is still a dominant issue. Coloured people have become complacent about the issue of race and hence it has been more difficult a situation to deal with. People have accepted more or less what the system has to offer. How many truly go with the statement of 'Black is beautiful' with heart and soul is doubtful. Instead of sitting at home and sympathizing with about such issues and keeping quite when the voice is needed will enhance such issues and nothing can be solved. This is kind of a self learned helplessness which helps Americans live in a cocoon of 'we are not a part of it' and ignore racism. Some even consider racism as natural and hard to alter.

In *Feminist theory: from margin to centre*; hooks has used the examples of the relationships shared by black men and women versus white men and white women to portray the sexist oppression through the feminist lens. She quotes Maya Angelou who sharply recounts that the relationship between black men and women is different from the relationship shared by white men and women. Angelou says;

I don't really need you to run my institutions. I need you in certain places and in those places you must be kept- in the bedroom, in the kitchen, in the nursery and in the pedestal. Black women have never been told this. (148, conversations with Maya Angelou)¹⁸

¹⁸ Qtd in. *Feminist theory from margin to centre*. Page no148

It appears that hooks has undercut her own statement about the position black women held in the family and the society. In her books whenever she has discussed her family she never ceased to portray her father as an ultimate patriarchal figure who kept the whole family under his control. He did not want his mother to work, but she defied his order and had gone out to work which became a reason for the disputes in their family.

The amount of discrimination and oppression suffered by the black men and women is enormous through out since the beginning of the history of slavery began and post slavery blues. The history they share have made them understand the hindrances the present and future of American society holds for them and hence to create a positive impact on their lives the black men and women have to join hands in their struggle, helping out each other, overcoming the odds. White women and men of the upper middle class according to hooks will hardly understand the bonds shared by the poor or the working class people and hence there is no essence of the liberation movement for them, as they do not have to struggle for it and the connection with the opposite sex for them is totally different from that of the black or any coloured people in America. Influenced by this bourgeois white culture, the people of colour started behaving differently and slowly lost the bond they have shared. Feminist movement made the women fear that men already have their own struggles from where women did not benefit much and if men are included in the feminist struggle they may lose the movement to men again. Feminism does not belong to women and trying to make it solely a women's movement have cost the women more sexist oppression and the emergence of black feminism drew in more racist issues in America. hooks in the introduction of *The Will to Change: Men Masculinity and Love* writes that;

... many women insisted that they were weary of giving energy to men, that they wanted to place women at the centre of all feminist discussions. Feminist thinkers, like myself, who wanted to include men in the discussion were usually labelled male-identified and dismissed. We were "sleeping with the enemy". We were the feminists who could not be trusted because we cared about the fate of men. (hooks. Xiii. 2004.a)

Men and women can equally be oppressive on one another and on the same sex. hooks has not been hesitant to speak out how men has the played the major part in practicing sexist oppression. Society has moulded men and women both with the sexist ideologies which can not be escaped. Consciously or unconsciously people fall victim

of it. The creation or development of sexism is not in question. It is about after knowing the fact people still are enslaved by it and it is widely in practice still. Instead of being a part of sexism and blaming each other people should work towards lessening the burden and look for a way to eliminate it. In *Feminist Theory: from margin to centre* hooks says;

All men support and perpetuate sexism and sexist oppression in one form or another. It is crucial that feminist activists not get bogged down in intensifying our awareness of this fact to the extent that we do not stress the more unemphasized point, which is that men can lead life-affirming, meaningful lives without exploiting and oppressing women. Like women, men have been socialized to passively accept sexist ideology. While they need not blame themselves for accepting sexism, they must assume responsibility for eliminating it. [. . .] Men are not exploited or oppressed by sexism, but there are ways in which they suffer as a result of it. This suffering should not be ignored. (73. 2000)

Men are not naturally sexist but they participate in a society which is already sexist and practices sexism in its ideologies. It is not an accusation that men are sexist but an appeal to understand the wrongs of the system understand it and try to eradicate them. Men are to be seen as the primary agents who maintain and support this construct the eradication is not possible without their participation in the struggle. That is why hooks calls for the men to take up responsibility to transform and change it. Men have more opportunities to interact with the system and have agencies and if they want then sexism can end. She also states that people are hurt because of rigid sex roles in the society. Feminists or women can not and do not deny the fact that men are also hurt in different ways, but that does not give them licence to exert oppression on women. Sexism starts at home and gives a way to racism which resides outside. So if racism has to end, end of sexism is the primary concern for that. She also points out that men are not unwilling to change; many of them are just scared to adopt a change from the way patriarchy has brought them up. Patriarchy has kept men away from knowing themselves. One they give up the teachings of patriarchy they will be able to let go the will to dominate and will be transformed.

Racism against African Americans in popular culture:

Anyone witnessing the current cultural and academic focus on race has to note the new way race is being talked about, as though it were in no way linked to cultural practices that reinforce and perpetuate racism, creating a gap between attitudes and actions. There is even a new terminology to signal the shift in direction: the buzz

words are *difference, the Other, hegemony, ethnography*. It's not that these words were not always around, but that now they are in style. Words like *Other* and *difference* are taking the place of commonly known words deemed uncool or too simplistic, words like *oppression, exploitation* and *domination*.¹⁹

In the lectures about Criticism of popular culture and racism hooks has shown how blacks are still represented as the Other in popular culture. bell hooks explains in *Yearning* that her family has taught her to consume popular culture smartly; because television, movies or any mass media depict the reality of a black life in a contrast way. These are operated by the white class, so they portray the picture of the African Americans as the whites perceived. She does not deny the fact watching and enjoying shows like Ed Sullivan. But they never cease to complain about the misrepresentation of blacks in such shows. She says; "Watching television in the fifties and sixties, and listening to adult conversation, was one of the primary ways many young black folks learned about race politics" (hooks. 3. 1990)

Popular culture works as a continuous stream which provides information about life and the various elements related to it about surviving in a society all over the world. Mostly the assumptions of the representation the popular culture provides is positive, but sometimes in representing the other of the society someone does mistake. In authenticating someone else's lifestyle, emotions and sentiments and different choices are misrepresented in popular mass culture. Stereotyping the Other has been the biggest drawback of the popular culture. Movies, pornography, fictions and graphic texts etc are also seen typecasting the racial Other. hooks has discussed how popular culture like movies have not only depicted the common beliefs but have aired the prevailing prejudices too. Ever since Hollywood is making movies there is hardly any film which has not shown the black man in the negative light.

Is it only Hollywood which tries to pigeonhole the blacks? Except for the sci-fi, horror and other fantasy movies the film industry tries to make movies that depicts the reality and present in a manner which will send a message to the society. On the other hand the producers and directors have to focus on the point which movies will sell. After all it is all business.

¹⁹ For more details : Critical interrogation: Talking race, Resisting racism
(http://www2.ucsc.edu/culturalstudies/PUBS/Inscriptions/vol_5/bellhooks.html)

hooks criticises the movie "*The Brave One*". It has shown a lithe white woman-Jodie Foster as a victim and at last she overcomes the odds by killing the bad guys-black and Hispanic men. Would it have been same if the victim woman was a black girl killing white men to escape her victimhood? In the book *Outlaw Culture*, hooks has said that as enlightened witnesses people watch these movies knowing the fact that black and the Hispanic men were taken in the film as villains because they are seen as the bad men of the society, who are criminals. Knowing the fact that people will call against racism because of the representation of coloured people as criminals, the filmmakers tried to enclose a noble black character in the film too; the character of Terence Howard as a foil to the violent and sadistic bad guys. People may watch the movie and sympathise with the white little victim but the glossed media coverage will hide the representation of men of colour in the movie in a stereotypical way. What people tend to ignore is looking at something in a critical way. hooks says that it is necessary to connect popular culture to theoretical paradigm. The politics of different is learnt from popular culture.

She has been criticising mass media and Hollywood of negative representation of the blacks but not once she mentioned the movies which are being adapted from the wonderful novels penned by African Americans; such as the transcreation of *Beloved*. These films are also classics and close to people's hearts. hooks says there is a constant conscious manipulation done by the media in representing the images. She does not acknowledge the fact that the receptor of the media are also intelligent enough to sort out the good and bad out of it. Media produces, but the job of criticism is left for the audience. She questioned director Wayne Wang; the director of the movie *Smoke* why he took a black person for the character of a thief she claims he had no answer to it²⁰. The question also arose in my mind is it not the same if it was anyone else in that character; for example: a Jew, an Indian, Irish or Native American? If it is a film about African Americans and the villains are white Americans is it also not a racial misrepresentation?

²⁰ For assistance see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQ-XVTzBMvQ&feature=related>

She also talks about how media has played a role in taking women out of the feminist movement and putting them back confined in domesticity. She gives an example of the movie *Leaving Las Vegas*.

One of the issues that no one wants to talk about is that finally the most successful political movement in the United States over the last twenty years was really the feminist movement and that there is a tremendous backlash to feminism that is being enacted on the stage of mass media. So that films like *Leaving Las Vegas* really are about ushering in a new old version of the desirable woman that really is profoundly misogynist and sexist. It's no accident, we know that when women went into the factories in the World Wars because men were not here, that when those wars ended, mass media was used to get women out of the factory and back into the home, well in a sense mass media is being used in that very same way right now, to get women out of feminism and back into some patriarchal mode of thinking and movies to me are the lead propaganda machine in this right now.²¹

In her book *Outlaw Culture*, in the introduction hooks states that popular culture helps to develop a critical consciousness among people and that leads to decolonisation of mind. This opens up site for challenge, intervention and change of imagination of people. Again in another book *Black Looks*, she mentions in the introduction that mass media and representation of race in popular culture helps to maintain the exploitation, oppression and over all domination of black people along with developing a counter hegemonic consciousness.

Male domination over women became a new source of entertainment as hooks gives the example of the show called O.J Simpson trial and its popularity. Black man on men homicide increased between the age group of sixteen to forty five. Out of the work sphere domination and violence was the only social connection the black men were compelled to have because of the influence of these shows. Even shows like 'The Incredible Hulk'²², the animated series being telecast by Disney Channel which is usually watched by children, are no different in showing sexist element. Devoid of any class, race, religion boys are fond of this show and hence they assumed and grew with the fact that monstrous and brutal strength is what one needs to escape any crisis. hooks says that when boys were asked by sociologists about what will they do if they become

²¹ Transcribed from the documentary movie: "Cultural Criticism and Transformation." Lectures by bell hooks.

<http://www.zimbio.com/RBG+Afrikan+Centered+Cultural+Development+and+Education/video/60/bell+hook+Cultural+Criticism+Transformation>

²² Hulk's powers grow out of anger. Only love can calm him down and get him back to his human form.

powerful like hulk what will they do? Most of the boys replied that they will crash their mothers. (hooks. 128.2004.a)

The Hulk is a rational white man who is a scientist who turns into a coloured beast when he is driven by passion and anger. He commits violent crimes when he is in his beast form. He is the example of the ultimate patriarchal man who tries to overcome the inner (coloured) beast to be the normal (white) human form. He seeks a cure for this beastliness. She quotes from *White Hero Black Beast* by Paul Hoch; “– the white hero achieves his manhood, first and foremost by winning victory over the barbarian beasts of the other- in some sense- ‘darker’- races, nations and social castes.” (hooks. 129. 2004.a) hooks also gives examples of recent films like *Men in Black*, *Independence Day* and *The Matrix* which are attempts to valorise white masculinity over the darker other. The American government has been misogynist and have conducted violence against the other- gulf war, and the war against Iraq are justified for them because they consider it is their duty to control the rapist, terrorist, murderers of the darker other.

Another most important cultural form that deals with patriarchy and misogyny is rap music, to be precise ‘gangsta rap’. hooks says that gangsta rap is popularised by the white male executives in the music industry and it gives the rappers to voice patriarchy and misogyny . Money, power and sex are the lucrative offers made to the young underclass black males who are used by the ruling class white males to promote patriarchy among the blacks. These rappers are role model to numerous youngsters who blindly follow their style, clothing, attitude and way of carrying themselves. In the patriarchal setting where this popular culture is promoting hatred and violence, it is no way of portraying a desired role model. It is a trick of the white patriarchal male to teach the white youngsters that the darker other is a threat. hooks says “.... mass media demonization of black males as the epitome of brutal patriarchal masculinity deflects attention away from the patriarchal masculinity of white men and its concomitant woman hating.” (hooks. 130. 2004.a) White men are trying to define the black men in a certain way and they are falling prey to this trap and have been adapted to the model from which it is difficult to make a come back, but not impossible.

White media has tried to connect the rap lyrics and the violence in it with the homicide and actual violence that ran in America. But it is shocking to note that the

famous album of NWA (Niggas With Attitude) *Straight Outta Compton* was released in 1989 but the crime and homicide rate was higher during 1984. Mainstream media showed concern with the cause of feminists, calling the gangsta culture and the music related to it as violent and misogynist but lack of proof or conscious ignorance has put the facts behind that these are promoted by the same media who criminalizes their own constructions. On the one hand white media looks at the black artists with a super critical eye and on the other hand the white artists who sing similar songs are just called bad boys moving out of line comparing to the natural gangstas. For example an article of Orlando Sentinel refers to the album of Geto Boy *We Can't Be Stopped* as highly misogynist, horribly violent imagery and the same article, album *Use Your Illusion* by Guns N' Roses is called merely obnoxious because of the song 'Back of bitch', Axl Rose declares war on women in this song. The use of the same word 'bitch' is considered more offensive when a black rapper used it than the white rocker. In his interview for Rolling Stone on one of his albums Axl Rose has commented directly using words like faggots, niggers, immigrants in his song One in a Million. But he was not charged for it by media like they for the rap group Public Enemy in 1990s which was considered as anti- Semitic because of a statement made by a band member.²³

Media publicize only the negative news about the African Americans but never tried to unravel the lack of resources to express their traditionalism through mass media or popular culture. Instead the white music record companies chose to represent and sell in market the downbeat gangsta rappers over the rappers who tried to raise a voice against the political system. Media decides to talk about the negativity the rappers show in songs like One Million Bottle Bag about alcoholism and its adverse effect in the coloured community and ignore the songs like Police by NWA which shows white police brutality on coloured people.

There are other examples of songs by white singers which never caught the attention of the white media to hype it with its nature- of language and the themes. Elton John's song 'Ticking' is about a man, who goes into a bar and kills fourteen other people, 'Nebraska' by Bruce Springsteen, features shooting spree, Stephen Sondheim's score for *Assassins* sang mostly in first person about presidential killers- attempted or

²³ For farther details visit: <http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=2891>. *Fear of a Rap Planet*

successful. These songs of killer instincts did not catch media's eye but one of Ice -T's song which was not a rap but a rock song called '*Cop Killa*' and Paris' song '*Bush Killa*' became the butt of all controversies in the time when Clinton was campaigning for denunciation of Sister Souljah- a female rapper.

The white capitalist market was and is based on this racial structure and seems like it will continue to be so. Still people of colour are drawn towards its different materialist calls. It is the yearning for power, money and the things it can provide through which a man can prove his maleness. This greed has been controlling the conscious of the black men and they are being submissive towards the white capitalism.

hooks looks at why this greed has engrossed the black minds to behave in the ways the supremacist white society wants them to. She explains,

1. The education of black youth who started disagreeing with the older generation about their way of life. In the university setting black youths learnt the values of justice, honesty and integrity which made them look at the domineering whites in a critical way in the workforce. The lack of money, low wages for the blacks, discrimination in positioning the blacks in jobs have attracted their attention. First in disgust with the system and then fascinated by the lucrative offers the capitalist society makes they merge in it to be exploited in a different, civilised way.

They moved from brilliant critiques of white supremacy and capitalism into assimilating into whiteness and striving to get money by any means (selling dope, creating fashion etc.) (hooks. 18.2004.b)

2. Another important thing hooks mentions is work. Blacks of different generations have different opinions about work. She quotes Nathan McCall who says that his step father used to believe that the blacks can overcome racism through working hard in slavery and trying to have a life with whatever meagre amount they earned. There is more to life than earning money. But the new generation is reluctant to work under whites and obey their orders to make a livelihood.

More than any other group of men in this nation black males have realistically understood wage slavery. They have been far less likely than other groups of men to believe that employment will lead to self-esteem and self- respect. (hooks. 21.2004.b)

Black males tried to look for other options thereafter. Best they could do was turning themselves toward music and looked at it as a site of possibility. Julius Lester is being quoted by hooks, “The musician is another who lives a subterranean existence, playing at hole-in-the wall clubs or wherever he can get paid for playing.” (23 hooks) To avoid working under a white master blacks opted for this alternative. But it is about the older generation. The new generation looked at music in a different way. Hence the gangsta culture erupted. It is a way to defy patriarchal thought that waged labour is the only respectful way of earning a livelihood. Some considered assimilation with the white will get them superiority. But it was the other way and instead of power and recognition they were psychologically hurt. “Even a conservative, assimilated black male like Collin Powell, who has major access to money and power, suffers from the racialized disrespect shown him by his white male counterparts.” (hooks. 24. 2004.b)

The jobs which the older generation of African Americans call satisfying are not considered so by the young ones. hooks quotes Nathan McCall. In *Makes Me Wanna Holler* he writes;

In spite of his belief that work was the answer to overcoming racism, I could tell that race-related pressures at his full-time shipyard job were eating my stepfather up inside.²⁴

The younger generation feels the truth hence they look for the easier ways to earn money; stay satisfied and overpower the domination. In doing so, negativity takes its position so the real meaning of being cool and composed lags behind. Hence doing something that defies white authority became a passion for the black men. Prison defined their strength or being a man. “Media teaches young black males that the patriarchal man is a predator, that only the strong and the violent survive.” (hooks. 27. 2004.b) In *The Ice Opinion* – the memoir of rapper Ice T, he says greed for money lures one to do crime and they deal with crime like any other jobs. He also points out it is not only about money. He says crime is kind of sexy in its own way

The young black leftist men were raising voice against the wrongs of capitalism, fought wage slavery and tried to fight for their rights. But this does not get them money to live on and that is how hustling rose out of need.

²⁴ Qtd in *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity*. Page no 25.

Black power militants, having learned from Dr King and Malcolm X how to call out the truth of capitalist-based materialism, identified it as gangsta culture. Patriarchal manhood was the theory and gangsta culture was its ultimate practice. (hooks. 25.2004.b)

Gangsta culture is much glamorised by the media and movies represent imprisoned men as strong and powerful. The music that has come out of this culture is criminalised too by the media and unknowingly by the people who are singing these. bell hooks tries to argue against this representation, “gangsta rap” does not appear in a cultural vacuum, but, rather, is expressive of the cultural crossing, mixings, and engagement of black youth culture with the values, attitudes, and concerns of the white majority, some folks stop listening.”²⁵ She adds that misogyny and sexism are there in rap but it is not a new thing that has been promoted by the black rappers. They are just continuing what was already prevailing in the patriarchal society. She goes on blaming the white supremacist capitalist patriarchal society who according to her has used the young black male as fields to sow the seeds of patriarchal norms. Hatred and violence against women is the core of patriarchy and she says politically the black male rappers should be held for their contribution in enhancing these elements through their music and a feminist critique is needed. But blaming them does not solve the problem.

“Hedonistic materialist consumerism with its overemphasis on having money to waste has been a central cause of the demoralization among working men of all races.” (hooks. 29.2004.b) Producing misogynist, sexist and violent lyrics brings the rappers name, fame and money. So they are going with the flow and making money out of it. But writing such lyrics and singing them does not mean one is a sexist or violent or a criminal at heart. An interview taken by hooks of rapper Ice Cube was edited out mostly because he talked against male violence on women and justification of women hating rap lyrics. The interview encompassed socio-political thoughts and self determination of the black people. That is why the white media did not find it catchy enough to publish. The sparks of a hardcore feminist talking to a sexist rapper was missing. She clarifies that the sexism, misogyny and the hatred the black women receives from the black men despite been trying to stand by and support them, it will be dealt with resistance. But the core point is to strike at the root which has heated up and carried

²⁵ For details look up: Sexism and Misogyny: Who Takes the Rap? Misogyny, gangsta rap, and The Piano by bell hooks : <http://stevenstanley.tripod.com/docs/bellhooks/misogyny.html>

forward these harmful social elements and that is the white supremacist capitalist patriarchal society. For a positive result in ending this discrimination and domination based on race the struggle has to be both by whites and the people of colour. The people who are patronising certain things have to stop doing so in order to eliminate that. hooks says;

Until all Americans demand that mass media no longer serve as the biggest propaganda machine for white supremacy, the socialization of everyone to subliminally absorb white supremacist attitudes and values will continue. Even though many white Americans do not overtly express racist thinking it does not mean that their underlying belief structures have not been saturated with an ideology of difference that says white is always, in every way, superior to that which is black. (hooks. 116. 1996)

The 'Man' in the house: Patriarchy, the Fathers and Love:

“Patriarchy is a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence.” (hooks.18. 2004.a)

Patriarchy is a disease created, supported, nurtured by men and which is utterly harmful for male body and mind which hampers the spirit of the society and nation. It is not a word used in day to day conversations because mostly men try to associate patriarchy with feminism, women's liberation and tries to show that they are not part of it. But knowingly or unknowingly almost every man is suffering from this disease. Patriarchy is a part of the interconnected socio political system that hooks named as “imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy”- in America.

Patriarchy is first taught to people by religion. God is male, God created man in his own image to rule the world and everything on earth and later created woman to help man and support and follow him. So whoever believes in such teachings are believers of patriarchy and they practice it. hooks' parents were patriarchal and hence she was made to follow the rules and regulations imposed by patriarchy. She was taught to be weak, serving and calm and on the other hand her same age peaceful brother was taught that showing rage and being violent was good for a boy. Basically patriarchy teaches people to hide their true feelings and embrace fake attitudes. Especially for boys feeling pain and hiding their emotion is taught from a very young age. Michael Kimmel in Guyland talks about an incident where a boy is taken to the barber shop for a haircut. For the nappy hair of African Americans the gelling, smoothening, and heating process

is very painful. The boy cried in the process and the barber curtly told the father it seems his son is spending too much time with his mother and hence turning emotional, so the father should spend more time with the boy to teach him how to be a man. The age of that boy was just three years.

hooks quotes psychotherapist John Bradshaw; his definition of patriarchy in his book *Creating Love*; “The dictionary defines ‘patriarchy’ as a ‘social organisation marked by the supremacy of the father in the clan or family in both domestic and religious functions...’ Patriarchy is characterized by male domination of power.” (hooks.23. 2004.a) he also says that in the patriarchal system all the other emotions are repressed except for fear. As almost all the educational, religious and familial systems are governed by patriarchy fear is the only element that helps it to run. In the social system everybody learns about patriarchal attitudes inside the family and these are strengthened by the other social institutions like education and religion.

People think that patriarchal thinking and teaching is endorsed by the men. So in the contemporary society the female headed households are considered to be weaker base in the teachings of patriarchal norms. But it is not true because most of the families with single mother promote patriarchy with a greater passion than the two parent households. This happens due to lack of experience of staying together with a patriarchal man and hence idealizing it even farther. Apart from sexism, rape, violence against women in general, most patriarchal violence take place inside domesticity, among the partners and on the children by both the parents and elders of the family. Children are unaware of the system of patriarchy and not knowing what to term it they take it as a normal phenomenon of life. Later these children become the most patriarchal ones having grown up learning from their experiences.

Patriarchy as a system has denied males access to full emotional well-being, which is not the same as feeling rewarded, successful, or powerful because of one's capacity to assert control over others. To truly address male pain and male crisis we must as a nation be willing to expose the harsh reality that patriarchy has damaged men in the past and continues to damage them in the present. If patriarchy were truly rewarding to men, the violence and addiction in family life that is so all-pervasive would not exist. (hooks. 31. 2004.a)

The believers in patriarchy try to blame the feminists for having brought up the issue which they consider not an issue at all. Patriarchy was going on and accepted and adapted by everyone. The discussion of domination, sexism, violence and hardship due

to patriarchy and the very fact of giving a term to this institutionalized construction seemed problematic for such people as they think it is a way of male bashing. But hooks says that it is the visionary feminists who has been talking about patriarchy in their struggle to end patriarchy. "The crisis facing men is not the crisis of masculinity, it is the crisis of patriarchal masculinity. Until we make this distinction clear, men will continue to fear that any critique of patriarchy represents a threat." (hooks. 32. 2004.a). This is happening because patriarchal norms are imprinted on the psyche of people in various ways. hooks quotes Terrence Real who terms it as psychological patriarchy:

Psychological patriarchy is the dynamic between those qualities deemed "masculine" and "feminine" in which half of our human traits are exalted while the other half is devalued. Both men and women participate in this tortured value system. Psychological patriarchy is a "dance of contempt," a perverse form of connection that replaces true intimacy with complex, covert layers of dominance and submission, collusion and manipulation. It is the unacknowledged paradigm of relationships that has suffused Western civilization generation after generation, deforming both sexes, and destroying the passionate bond between them. (hooks 32-33. 2004. a)

hooks states that hence psychological patriarchy and its effect on daily life is the problem and not men, there is need to work together to fight against it. People though realize the harms of patriarchy they quite have not learnt to act against it. Without naming and acknowledging the problem is not going to help. hooks points out that the willingness to change and finding an alternative to patriarchal masculinity is the only solution to end this.

The way to change and bring out the willingness to change will come through love. hooks feels that the women could not share the emotions with men properly and this miscommunication of sentiments have left them apart. Men and women need each other's love and support to create a healthy society. This bonding suffers because of the hurdles put by patriarchy. More than anyone else the children need a fathers love because patriarchy has shown that a fathers love is more important than mothers love in a family. She mentions about a billboard sign in America which says "Each night millions of kids go to sleep starving for attention from their dads." (hooks. 2. 2004. a) Just because this attention is rare and the craving for father's love is hardly fulfilled children learn to overvalue it and dream about having love from father in any form. When they are unsuccessful gaining it in positive ways they turn negative in order to grab any attention from their fathers. Whenever there is something wrong done by the

child is being reported to the father or threatened by the mother to tell on child to his/her father there is a thrill of confronting him in a way. Hitting, hurting and abusing may be a negative way of contact with the father, children long for it. Everyone adapts to the fact that withholding, refusing, withdrawing whatever the others desire from a man is natural and that is what maleness is.

hooks picks up instances from her life about how as a child she wanted to be daddy's little girl but at the age of five she realised that he will never express love to her or any of her siblings no matter how hard they try to show that they need his love. By nature their father was an angry man, like all the patriarchal men behave as per the teaching that men should only show one emotion and that is anger. Hiding their true emotions men forget they can love too and they want love from others. Daddy Gus, hooks's maternal grandfather was the one man from whom she could find the expressed love and encouragement to show that she needs love. But her patriarch father and other men used to term him as henpecked and a less-man. There is fear and this fear is not female fear for males. Men fear men for shaming if the true feelings are being expressed and the patriarchal ego would be struck. The patriarchal man never tries to be the ideal father the children desires. Even if he is physically present, his presence does not have anything good for the children as they feel the absence of the father they long to see.

Males in our nation do very little parenting. Yet we hear so much about the importance of having a man in the house. The absent man, the absent father, has been the constant sign folks point to when they want to critique black families. This is especially the case when those critiques are coming from unenlightened white folks. (hooks. 101. 2004. B)

The black children learn about the ideal father from the television screen which shows the ideal nuclear white families with fathers who is not abusive, controlling, angry, and violent and never ignore their children. In black families it was believed that 'abuse' is good for a child for a better bringing up. Abuse is not called abuse but punishment. Every child resent this though accepted as the part of their growing up. This was during the fifties and sixties and after that during eighties the black television shows also portrayed similar kind of fathers in shows like *The Cosby Show*. Children fantasise about these kinds of fathers but in real life fathers were never like that. In the families where the father was absent, children used to think the other children who have fathers are better than them. But hooks clearly says, in her case she many a times

wished her father not to come back, “If only he would die, we could live” was her thought. (hooks. xv. 2004. a). She says that is why is it better to have a loving and caring home without a father than having a father and being terrified of his domination all the time. One thing has to be done is to teach the children whose father is absent that there is no lack in his life because of their father’s absence. The patriarchal overvalue of the two parent family has to be overthrown. Black men have learnt from patriarchy that making babies is the only thing they have to do as parenting. That is why they never care about leaving the family behind.

The core reasons for dysfunction in black families are blind allegiance to patriarchal thinking about sex roles and the coupling of that thinking about with rigid fundamentalist religious beliefs. Dominator culture creates family dysfunction. (hooks. 117. 2004.b)

Children learn from their parents about every familial value and dysfunctional families offer nothing but negativity and the child frames its life mirroring what he/she sees in his parents. Lack of love and the lack of the willingness to express the yearning for love cripple the bonding of the family. The patriarchal medians never let men love freely and out of fear children and women can not demand love from men and love men back. Instead of love there raises conflict, not on gender equality and struggle but the blame game of who did not fulfil whose role in the family. Relational recovery is the first step to be taken which can be done through understanding the nature of the conflicts going on between the black family partners. Emotional connections are loathed by men because of the sexist patriarchal constrain. This harms the men more because women are ‘allowed’ to express their emotions freely. Positive bonds can be re-established through, as hooks quotes Terrence Real; “men and women will not completely love one another until both recover the state of integrity in which they began their lives.” (hooks. 122. 2004. b) This recovery began as slavery ended and for that only one thing people needed is the will to change and submit to love.

Relational recovery will lead black males and females away from the dominator model of relationships, where one person is up and the other person down. It will lead us away from patriarchy towards a loving feminist politics that will enable us to fully embrace gender equality. And, more importantly, to sustain a vision of loving relationships rooted in mutuality, a vision that says there is enough love for all of us, our needs can be met and our longings fulfilled. This is the love Toni Morrison evokes in her eighties’ novel *Beloved* when she creates an image of the black male as healer of wounded hearts, able to “take the broken pieces that I am and give them back to me in the right order. (hooks. 132. 2004. b)

Whatever hooks points out in her works about the suppression, oppression, superiority and patriarchy; I do not disagree with her viewpoint. There are some notions that would have been better accepted as I see them. Taking up the issue of maleness is a visionary attempt, but I found the approach a little discriminatory. Hegemony is a big term which can creep into anything and everything in life, society, state, country and any other institution. Depending upon hegemony there are divisions which are being followed by everybody though they are not correct. Criticizing these institutionalizations is a correct measure but showing oneself as victims all the time is not 'self-love' but self pity.

The way she justifies black male rage seem a bit lame because it has been a long time since slavery ended and people now have started reacting against anything wrong. If something still remains highly unacceptable, not cooperating can be a gauge. Everything is not a conspiracy theory. She herself pointed out that first time while coming out of an all black area to a college with white student made her feel uncomfortable to assimilate. If white students tried to intimidate her she considered that as a racist act, because she thought that they are approaching to show that they are not racist and that action is itself an act of racism. Blaming another race for everything the other race suffered is also endorsing racism. She has built a persecution structure around which all her theories move and mostly she laments being unheard and unanswered in her books.

Another problem that could not be ignored is the repetitiveness. All her works discuss, deconstruct and problematize the same things but she has failed to suggest a solid solution to the problems she has taken up. "*Amor Vincit Omnia*"²⁶ was in the Canterbury Tales days. Basing something only on love is easier said than done. Her statements like –“Read any article on black masculinity and it will convey the message that black men are violent” (hooks, 47, 2004. b) are generalised and does not seem healthy argument. In feminism personal is political. Inclusion of instances of her own life as examples to prove her arguments have strengthen her stance but at the same time it has opened up certain windows for the critics to peep in. She has talked about love being the only solution to keep the black Americans united and end sexism and racism.

²⁶ Love Conquers All. Geoffrey Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales: The Prioress wears a gold brooch with the inscriptions *Amor Vincit Omnia*. (The General Prologue. page no 5)

The question remains how far she has been successful in having a love relationship. She insists that' "...the shame women felt not because men refused to share their power but because we could not seduce, cajole, or entice men to share their emotions- to love us." (hooks. 1.2004. b) To counter this question one may say that it is not the task of the author to bring the changes. The author just theorises matters. Barry Boyce in an interview with bell hooks writes, "She wanted to marry theory and practice, and when they started to slide toward divorce, as they are wont to do, she would bring them back together."²⁷

It is accepted that being a black in America had been and to some extent till now may seem difficult. Struggles had been going on and still continuing, but one thing has to be remembered there is probably no race in the world which has not faced racism, sexism or oppression in one way or the other. Instead of problematizing the issue by talking about it on and on one should seek solution which is profound and it should not sound against anyone.

There is a need still to end patriarchal culture, need to change the way to look at gender and sexuality, need to learn how to love among family, society and nation, unlearn the wrongs that the white supremacist capitalist patriarchy has taught, a community based on love has to be created at home and in the world as a whole. Visionary feminism has offered a vision to everyone within and outside of relationships through mutuality, a vision of partnership minus the domination and hooks has put love in between these to change and enhance the way one looks at maleness.

The poem below by Antwone Fisher describes the sentiments of a black male who was without his parents, was sexually abused at a very young age, full of rage, hatred and anger for everybody, but he did not give in. He stood for himself, struggled and proved his worth in life overcoming all the odds. Change is possible. And bell hooks appeals for this change in men of colour to denounce the definition white patriarchy has given to them and define themselves with their worth and for that men will have the support of their women with love.

²⁷ Love Fights the Power, Barry Boyce , Shambhalasun.

Who will cry for the little boy

who will cry for the little boy?

Lost and all alone.

Who will cry for the little boy?

Abandoned without his own?

Who will cry for the little boy?

He cried himself to sleep.

Who will cry for the little boy?

He never had for keeps.

Who will cry for the little boy?

He walked the burning sand

Who will cry for the little boy?

The boy inside the man.

Who will cry for the little boy?

Who knows well hurt and pain

Who will cry for the little boy?

He died again and again.

Who will cry for the little boy?

A good boy he tried to be

Who will cry for the little boy?

Who cries inside of me.²⁸

²⁸ *Who will cry for the little boy*, Antwone Fisher

Conclusion

While working on the subject of maleness many questions have been brought up and discussed in the chapters through different perspectives. Is maleness a construction or is it inherent in men? How the media responds to maleness and treats it? Who is responsible for all the discriminatory remarks that come up while discussing maleness or femaleness? How much patriarchal system is responsible for the distinctness of maleness that have been conventionally standardised and accepted by almost everybody? Can it be called a stereotype? Does the idea of maleness differ respectively depending upon the class, race and religion?

Human identity in the individual and interpersonal level is the product of social contexts within which people live and this has been argued, established and still debated issue. Social contexts do the work of teaching people whether they are allowed to express their feelings in a certain condition, which relationships are allowed to pertain, which roles in the society are preferable, what is undesirable, something which can be avoided, how to dream within limitations, to remain within the realm of possibilities, things people should always be obliged to and the standards to be followed aesthetically, virtuously and which is common good.

After researching in various fields like psychology, sociology, religion, popular culture and within the family, looking at views of different thinkers, everyone's perception does not seem distinctly different from each other. One may claim diversity as compared to the other but at the end I find it quite similar to each other and maleness for me has become a mixture of all these discernments. Not one thing can be denied entirely or the other accepted thoroughly.

Like feminism, the study of masculinity also has three phases which is being described in *The Sociology of Masculinity*. These are considered as three theoretical waves which follows the patterns of the feminist movement.

- The first wave starts from the beginning of 1950s. "The first of these waves are concerned with the problematic of male role performance and the cost to men of attempting to strictly adhere to dominant expectations of masculine ideology.

- The second wave arose in the early 1980s and sought to highlight, not so much the cost to men of patriarchy, but centrality of male power to dominant ways of being a man.” (hegemonic masculinity comes under this wave and places masculinity as a powerful concept)

- “The third wave within the sociology of masculinity has been influenced by feminist post-structuralism and theories of post modernity.”(15:Whitehead and Barret) Identity and self plays an important role in theories of this wave and these studies lead to queer theories, normativity, performativity and sexuality.

The studies on masculinity put forward certain questions and had tried to answer them. These questions vary from what is masculinity to different components that have influenced defining maleness. Does maleness have been influenced by biology? How the concept of power works within masculinity? How maleness is different from person to person? What does identity have to do with maleness? Has it become a discourse in itself? Is sexual expression is derived from maleness? Can maleness be seen without its twofold of femaleness? And at last will the concept of maleness ever end?

The answers to these questions are always contestable and open ended as the opinions vary from person to person. Anything said can not be taken as the ultimate view regarding maleness as notions change time to time respectively depending upon time, space and people. For example sporting chest hair used to be a masculine trend in the movies in older times but nowadays waxed six pack abs have taken their place. Again this can not be taken as the ultimate change because it has happened only in a certain pocket of the society; so to say in movies. An effeminate portrayal of Captain Jack Sparrow by Johnny Depp in *Pirates of the Caribbean* may seem ideal to someone over the manly character of Achilles played by Brad Pitt in *Troy*. A person is born with his/her biological body with every necessary element that lets the person survive. Later while growing up he/she derives the qualities and characteristics from the teachings of his/her surroundings. The boys are given guns and *G.I Joe* toys to play with and girls are given the kitchen set and Barbie dolls to mould them in to the men and women they are ‘supposed’ to become one day.

It is something which is known to everybody and yet while being questioned not many will be able to answer what exactly maleness mean to them. Without theorising

maleness if we take a peek on it, still there will be the consensus of people in established norms through which one has been looking into maleness. It can not be traced back since when these norms are set or developed. They are on the surface and have been adapted to everyone's lives in certain ways. Apart from reading the theories, whoever I have personally asked about their perception on maleness, everybody replied in the stereotypical constructed manner which they have been experiencing all their lives. Mostly people define maleness in opposite to femaleness. It is because we are taught to look at everything with respect to the other and for being identified as a man the other is not only a woman but other men who does not fall into the category of manly man depending upon the preset criterion. These qualities which define a man being man includes strength, being more expressive about their sexuality, virility, courage, heterosexuality, boldness and most importantly he should not be emotional. Slowly hegemonic construction of gender pulled in qualities like economic independence, authority over women and other weaker men and the quality to dominate; dominate others and dominate their true feelings. On the other hand women are trained to adopt certain qualities which are exactly opposite to that of men. She has to be sensual, meek, humble, soft, and emotional- who can cry her heart out and dependent. This stereotype includes the physical appearance as well as the mental attributes of a human being. That is, the symbol of masculinity is attributed by men who looked manly and at the same time he can show off his virtue through his masculinity.

Gender is thus a construction that regularly conceals its genesis; the tacit collective agreement to perform, produce, and sustain discrete and polar genders as cultural fictions is obscured by the credibility of those productions—and the punishments that attend not agreeing to believe in them; the construction 'compels' our belief in its necessity and naturalness. (Butler. 114. 2004)

In my perspective maleness appears as a set of different characteristics, temperaments and merits. Over the period of times these characteristics have transformed but the processes in which an individual is fashioned have not been changed. It is a construct which is powered by the biological, hegemonic, sexual, social, economic and political markers. Patriarchy still rules even if people may not realise its existence. Even in matriarchal or matrilineal societies, the way they operate is nothing but the reflection of patriarchy practiced by the women. There is an irony in matriarchal systems also, for example in Meghalaya. Matriarchal system prevails there till date; the

husband may not be the head of the household but in terms of many things including selling and purchase of property the woman who is the head of the family has to have the consent of someone else who is a male- in most cases maternal uncle. Whenever there is a competitive examination if the girls top the exam it becomes far more hyped news than usual. Very recently the three toppers of the Chartered Accountant examination are girls. It was the headline of many newspapers. If the toppers were boys, that would not be mentioned in the news. We ignore these issues but they are a form of patronising patriarchy and it defines almost everything.

Within the society we live according to relational values. Some of these relationships are attached to us by birth and some are created by association. These are the various roles we play. One plays the role of a child to the parents, siblings are born then a new relation is created and slowly a girl becomes someone's wife, a mother, a grandmother, aunt etc and in the same way a boy plays the role of a father, brother, uncle, grandfather. We act differently in front of different people. For example in front of a teacher and in front of a friend one's behavioural pattern changes. That way maleness or femaleness is also portrayed by individuals in different situations differently. So it can be called role playing in a way.

Feminism has acknowledged people a different perspective towards maleness culminated with struggle, desires, violation and violence. The works that were produced by feminists were different from whatever produced by men, about men and for men. They were successful somewhat challenging the stereotypes by putting forward their view on men. Black feminism brought in the matter of race in to it. bell hooks has mixed the concerns regarding sexism, racism, domination, oppression, popular culture and mass media and the patron of all these –the patriarchal system (the imperialist-white-supremacist-capitalist-patriarchy) to formulate her ideas regarding maleness. She has deconstructed the prevailing ideas about and against men put by the former feminists and have suggested ways to understand maleness instead of being critical about it. She bases her faith in love, not only the love between lovers or partners but self love and love for the community and all the people.

Maleness as a discourse can never end. Every statement regarding it are subjective and at the same time contestable. Views differ and new observations come

up. No matter how much it is said nowadays gender disparity has ended and everyone is equal, everyone knows the reality. There have been changes and possibility of changes cropping up but the end can be seen no sooner. These questions will do their rounds may be in a different form and context. This dissertation has been an attempt to critically look at these questions which still remains unanswered and I conclude with a hope that it has opened up questions for farther critical analysis.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

hooks, bell. *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*. Cambridge, South End Press.1981.

_____ *Bone Black: memories of girlhood*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996.

_____ *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*. Cambridge: South End Press, 2000.

_____ *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. Cambridge, South End Press.1984, second edition, 2000.

_____ *Killing rage: ending racism*. New York: H. Holt and Company, 1996

_____ *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations*. New York: Routledge 1994.

_____ *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love*. New York: Atria Books, 2004(a).

_____ *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity*. New York: Routledge, 2004(b).

_____ *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*. California: Between-the Lines, 1990.

_____ (With Cornell West) *Breaking Bread: Insurgent Black Intellectual Life*. Cambridge: South End Press, 1991.

_____ "Critical Interrogation: Talking Race, Resisting Racism". *Travelling Theories, Travelling Theorists*. Eds. James Clifford and Vivek Dhareshwar.

Vol 5. 1989. Web.23 June. 2011.

<http://www2.ucsc.edu/culturalstudies/PUBS/Inscriptions/vol_5/bellhooks.htm

>

_____ Cultural Criticism and Transformation. Presented by The Media Education Foundation. *RGB-African Centred Cultural Development and Education*. 9 June. 2007. Web. 15 May. 2011. < <http://www.zimbio.com/RGB+Afrikan+Centered+Cultural+Development+and+Education/video/60/bell+hook+Cultural+Crticism+Transformation> >

_____ “Doing it for daddy”. *Constructing Masculinities*. Eds. Berger, Wallis and Watson. New York: Routledge, 1995. (98-106)

_____ “Misogyny, gangsta rap, and The Piano”. ZMagazine. February, 1994. Web. 12June. 2011 < <http://stevenstanley.tripod.com/docs/bellhooks/misogyny.html>>

Secondary Sources

Awkward, Michael. “Black Male Trouble: The Challenges of Rethinking Masculine Differences”. Ed. Judith Keagan Gardiner. 291-304

Antwone Fisher. Dir. Denzel Washington. Perf. Denzel Washington, Derek Luke and Joy Bryant. Fox. 2002. Film.

Beauvoir, Simone De. “The Second Sex”. *The Feminist papers from Adams to Beauvoir*. University Press. Ed. Alice S Rossi. New England, 1973

Belsey, Catherine and Jane Moore, eds. *The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism*. New York: Blackwell Publishers, 1993.

Berger, Mourice, Brian Wallis and Simon Watson. Eds. *Constructing Masculinities*. NewYork: Routledge, 1995

Blauner, Robert. *Still the Big News: Racial Oppression in America*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001.

Bobo, Jacqueline. Ed. *Black Feminist Cultural Criticism*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2001.

Boyce, Barry. "Love Fights the Power". *Shambhala Sun*. July. 2006. Web. 10 July. 2011.

http://www.shambhalasun.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&d=299&Itemid=0

Boys n the Hood. Dir. John Singleton. Perf. Cuba Gooding Jr, Ice Cube, Laurence Fishburne, Morris Chestnut. Columbia Pictures. 1991. Film.

Brod, Harry and Michael Kaufman .Eds. *Theorising Masculinities*. California: Sage Publications. 1994.

Butler, Judith. "Melancholy Gender/ Refused Identification". *Constructing Masculinities* .Ed. Berger, Wallis and Watson. New York: Routledge, 1995. 21-36.

_____ *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Michigan: Routledge, 1990.

Butler, Judith and Sara Salih. *The Judith Butler Reader*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2004.

Chodorow, Nancy J. "The Enemy Outside: Thoughts on the Psychodynamics of Extreme Violence with special attention to Men and Masculinity". Ed. Judith Keagan Gardiner. 235-260

Cixous, Helen. (1975) *Sorties*. *New French Feminisms*. Eds. Elaine Marks and Isabelle De Courtivron. Sussex: Harvester, 1981.

Cixous, Helen. "Stories: Out and Out: Attacks/Ways out/ Forays". *The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism*. Eds. Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore. New York: Blackwell Publishers, 1993. 101-116

Collins, Patricia Hill. "Intersecting Oppressions". *Sage Publications*. Web. 16 June. 2011<http://www.uk.sagepub.com/upmdata/13299_Chapter_16_Web_Byte_Patricia_Hill_Collins.pdf>

- Combahee River Collective. *The Combahee River Collective statement: Black Feminist organizing in the seventies and eighties. Volume one of freedom organizing series.* New York: Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1986
- Connell, R.W and James W. Messerschmidt. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept". *Gender and Society*, Sage Publications. Vol. 19, No. 6. Dec. 2005. Web. 22 Nov. 2011, pp. 829-859, <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/27640853>>
- Dayringer, Richard and David Oler. *The image of God and the psychology of religion.* The Haworth Pastoral Press. New York. 2004.
- Deterline, Kim and Art Jones. *Fear of a Rap Planet: Rappers face media double standard.* *Fair.* March/April 1994. Web. 16 June. 2011. <<http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=2891> >
- Edwards, Tim. *Cultures of Masculinity.* New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Frosh, Stephen. *Sexual Differences: Masculinity and Psychoanalysis.* New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Full Metal Jacket.* Dir. Stanley Kubric. Perf. Mathew Modine, R. Lee Ermey and Vincent D'Onofrio. 1987. Film.
- Gardiner, Judith Keagan. *Masculinity Studies and Feminist Theory.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.
- Hacker, Andrew. *Mismatch.* New York: Scribner, 2003.
- Hoch, Paul. *White Hero, Black Beast: Racism, Sexism and the Mask of Masculinity.* USA: Pluto Press. 1979.
- Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God.* USA: Harper Collins, 1991.
- Irigary, Luce. *Spectrum of the Other Woman.* USA: Cornell University Press, 1985
- Independence Day.* Dir. Roland Emmerich. Perf. Will Smith, Jeff Goldblum, Bill Pullman, Margaret Colin, Vivica Fox et al. 20th century Fox. 1996. Film.

- Jardine, Gail. Rev. "To Be Black, Male, and Conscious: Race, Rage, and Manhood in America". *American Quarterly*. The Johns Hopkins University Press. 48.2 (1996):385-393. Web. 22 Nov. 2011. < www.jstor.org/stable/30041544>
- Kadam, Amrita U. "Docs turn baby girls into boys". *Hindustan Times*. 26 June. 2011. Web. 29 July. 2011 <<http://www.hindustantimes.com/NewsFeed/madhyapradesh/Indore-doctors-turn-scores-of-baby-girls-into-boys/Article1713863.aspx>>
- Kimmel, Michael. *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*. Harper Collins. New York, 2009.
- _____ "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity". Eds. Stephen M Whitehead and Frank J. Barret. 266-287
- Lambert, Christina D. and Kurpius, Sharon E. R. 2004. "Relationship and Gender role Identity and attitudes with Image of God". Eds. Dayringer, Richard and Oler, David, *The Image of God and the Psychology of Religion*. New York: Haworth Pastoral Press. Pg.55-75.
- Leaving Las Vegas*. Dir. Mike Figgis. Perf. Nicholas Cage, Elisabeth Shue, Julian Sands, Richard Lewis and Valeria Golino. United Artists. 1995. Film.
- Lemmele, Anthony J Jr. *Black Masculinity and Sexual Politics*. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Lingard, Bob and Peter Douglas. *Men Engaging Feminisms: Pro-Feminism, Backlashes and Schooling*. Buckingham: Open University Press; 1999.
- Men in Black*. Dir. Barry Sonnenfeld. Perf. Tommy Jones, Will Smith, Vincent D'Onofrio, Linda Fiorentino and Rip Torn. Columbia Pictures. 1997. Film.
- McCall, Nathan. *Makes me Wanna Holler: a Young Black Man in America*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

- Mills, Martin and Bob Lingard. Rev. article. "Masculinity Politics, Myths and Boys' Schooling". *British Journal of Educational Studies*. Blackwell Publishing on behalf of the Society for Educational Studies. 45.3 (1997): 276-292. Web. 22 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3121861>>
- Morrison, Toni. *Song of Solomon*. Vintage International. Michigan, 2004.
- Mosse, George L. *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity*. Oxford University Press, New York. 1996.
- Murphy, Peter K. *Feminism and Masculinities: Oxford readings of Feminism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Murrow, David. *Why Men Hate Going to Church*. Thomas Nelson, Inc. Tennessee. 2005.
- Pizan, Christine De. *The Book of the City of Ladies*. Trans/Ed. Rosalind Brown-Grant. Penguin Classics. London, 2000.
- Rossi, Alice S. *The Feminist papers from Adams to Beauvoir*. University Press. New England, 1973
- Rottenberg, Dan. What should women do? *Broad Street Review*. 29July.2011. Web. 30 July. 2011.
<http://www.broadstreetreview.com/index.php/main/article/male_sex_abuse_and_female_naivete/>
- Seager, Joni. "Patriarchal vandalism: Militaries and the environment". Eds. Jael Miriam Silliman and Ynestra King (Eds.), 163-188
- Seidler, Victor J. *Unreasonable Men- Masculinity and Social Theory*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Shakespeare, William. *Macbeth*. Eds. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. USA: Washington Square Press, 1992.

- Silliman, Jael Miriam and Ynestra King (Eds.), *Dangerous intersections: Feminist perspectives on population, environment, and development*. USA: South End Press, 1999
- Smullens, Sarakay. Time for women to speak up. *Broad Street review*. 29 July. 2011. Web. 30 July. 2011.
<http://www.broadstreetreview.com/index.php/main/article/male_sex_abuse_and_the_ience_of_women>
- Staples, Robert. Black Masculinity: The Black Male's Role in American Society. *Feminism and Masculinities: Oxford readings of Feminism*. Ed. Peter K. Murphy. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.121-135
- Stinson, David W. "African American Male Adolescents, Schooling (and Mathematics): Deficiency, Rejection, and Achievement". *Review of Educational Research*. American Educational Research Association 76. 4 (2006): 477 506. Web. 22 Nov. 2010 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4124412>>
- Stoltenberg, John. "Toward Gender Justice". *Feminism and Masculinities: Oxford readings of Feminism*. Ed. Murphy, Peter K. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Swedish parents keep 2-year-old's gender secret. Published: 23 Jun 09 16:24 <<http://www.thelocal.se/20232/20090623/>>
- Sweetman, Caroline. *Men and Masculinity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- The Brave One*. Dir. Neil Jordan. Perf. Jody Foster, Terence Howard and Naveen Andrews. Warner Borthers. 2007. Film.
- The Matrix*. Dir. Andy and Larry Wachowski. Perf. Keanu Reeves, Lawrence Fishburne, Carrie-Anne Moss, Hugo Weaving and Joe Pantoliano. Warner Brothers. 1999. Film
- Tobler, Judy. "Beyond a Patriarchal God. Bringing Transcendent back to the Body". *In: Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*. No. 106, April. 2000 . 35-50

Walker, Alice. *In search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*. California: Harcourt, 2003.

Whitehead, Stephen M and Frank J. Barret. Eds. *The Masculinities Reader*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2001.

Whitehead, Stephen M and Frank J. Barret. The Sociology of Masculinity. *The Masculinities Reader*. Eds. Stephen M Whitehead and Frank J. Barret. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2001. 1-26

Wood, Katherine and Rachel Jewkes. "Violence, Rape and Sexual Coercion: Everyday Love in a South African township". *The Masculinities Reader*. Eds. Stephen M Whitehead and Frank J. Barret. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2001. 133-169

Woolf, Virginia. "A room of one's own". *Selected works of Virginia Woolf*. Hertfortshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2005. 561-634

_____. *Selected works of Virginia Woolf*. Hertfortshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2005