

# A STUDY OF GENDER EQUALITY IN SYLVIA PLATH'S POEM

P.PRIYANKA

I M.A ENGLISH

HOLY CROSS COLLEGE

This paper deals with the theme of Gender equality in Sylvia Plath's poems. It focuses on gender equality in terms of Sexual equality, state of equal access to resources and opportunities regardless of gender, economic participation and decision making, individuals opportunities that do not depend on others whether they are Male or female. Sylvia Plath portrays the need for gender equality in her poems like *Mad Girl's love song*, *Daddy*, *Mushroom*. Sylvia Plath (1932-1963), was an American poet, novelist and short story writer, American people are under the influence of "The American Dream" but Plath is disdainful and stands apart from The American Dream. This study focuses on Gender equality in Sylvia's poems, How Plath lost her equality in reveals complex nature and personality, self admiration and Narcissistic view. In the poem, Mad girl's love song the theme is Unrequited love, In Mushrooms the theme is Feminism, In poem Daddy theme is disgraceful expression of anger and frustrations. Most of her poems are based on mourning and depression. Her writings represent women's perspectives and views. Basically, her life is something mystical. The present study concentrates on how Plath deals with Gender equality in her poems.

Key words: Gender, Dominated, inferiority, isolated and equality.

Sylvia Plath was depressed from her childhood till her death. Her father Otto Plath and her mother Aurelia Schober both belongs to different communities. Sylvia's father was a German and her mother was a Jew. Sylvia was born in America. Most of her poems, carry or use many metaphors to describe her relationship with the people whom she hated. Sylvia started wrote poems from the age of eight and her works were published and popularly knew to all. She was not stable enough to take right a decisions in right. She struggles to reconcile her mental conflict. She committed suicide at the age of thirty. Finally, her children are victimized because of her wrong decision. Plath under went many stages of conflict. Her identity crisis, her longing for her father and her fear of ageing were some of her conflict. And she fails to sense the reality. Her poems are mostly confessional ones. Plath became the first person who won a posthumous Pulitzer prize.

Mad Girl's Love Song presents the theme of unrequited Unrequited love towards her former lover. Sylvia Plath's poem which names itself as a Mad girl's love song shares the large amount of true love which she had for her former lover. It is a song of despair and lost hope. While reading this poem readers close their eyes and vividly picture a woman with despair and lost love. "Mad Girls Love Song" typically represents the woman as a "mad girl" which she remains waiting for never come back love.

*I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead;*

*I lift my lids and all is born again.*

*( I think I made you up inside my head) .*

Love lost Lady starts a description of dead and darkness, feels an emptiness surrounds her. Suddenly when she lift her lids everything appears as if like a rebirth and the whole world being born right out in front of her, but the man she loved never appears. She feels heavily, from the bottom of her heart and that she might have made him up inside her mind and head deeply. She is a true soul and true mind awaiting for her long love. The speaker has not tolerated her lover never returning. The issue is that the women desires a loyal love and they would never forget it.

*I should have loved a thunderbird in stead;  
At least when spring comes they roar back again.*

A man left her alone; she waited for him but she knew that he would not come back. Sylvia uses the imagery "thunderbird" which is a legendary creature in North America registered in indigenous people, history, culture and tradition. Thunderbird is considered as a supernatural being of power and strength. She wishes she had loved the thunderbird, instead of loving him who never come back again to make her feel belonging. He fails to acknowledge or offer a word of promise of his love to Plath. He never returns to meet her even after promising to see again and love her. Man did not follow North American native culture and tradition. He has no power and strength to return and he fails in his promise.

Daddy is Sylvia's autobiographical poem and deals with woman's challenges and of a desire for a change in contemporary Society. Daddy portrays Sylvia's depression, her obscene language about her daddy, full of metaphors, figurative images, as a speaker she takes part of a Jew and victim. Often, she used German language to scold her father. She defines Otto Plath less like a God more like a vampire and Nazi. Till her thirty, she barely breathe as poor nor white. She pointed as her father is a symbol of destruction who limits her happiness and equality in contemporary society, she trained and lived upon a strict gender structure.

*For thirty years, poor and white,  
Barely daring to breathe or Achoo.  
Daddy, I have had to kill you  
You died before I had time-  
If I've killed one man, I've killed two.*

She was tortured at most by her father, Otto Plath. Sylvia compared her father with terrible statue one gray toe big as a Frisco Seal. She hates her father, Otto Plath is a professor of biology, a German. Sylvia wants to kill her Daddy but her daddy died before she could. She wants to resurrect his daddy and kill him, "Achu,du" I will do it, Kill you Daddy. The lack of inspiration and limitations of her father broken Plath's dreams. Otto Plath is a dominative of Male character. I've killed two, one is her father and another is her Husband, Hughes. Seven years you drank "My Blood" like a vampire. This poem is of Plath under suppression and victimization. She compare Otto Plath with Hitler, uses serial images like " Neat mustache", "Aryan eye, bright blue", " Panzer-man"- one who drives a tanker, "The Brute"- worst live creature of an animal, she used obscene language. Sylvia chooses to be a Jew rather than a German. "I may well be a Jew". Lexically, she refers to her father as Brutal and a man of less quality in good things. As a result she is under pair and brokenhearted.

*"Daddy, daddy, bastrad, I'm through".*

"Mushroom is a masterfully structured poem which is a fine example of the rise of progressive woman demanding women's rights. Sylvia merges several ideas into a single theme, the woman's right. 'we are shelved, we are tables' the view held by men in Society, women as collectively considered as domestic objects. 'we are edible' object which is used for other's sake. Mushroom represents an oppressed population who are mounting a quiet revolution.

Nobody sees us,  
Stops us, betrays us;

Sylvia points out 'Nobody sees us, stops us, betrays us; warns that the beliefs and values that had stood for so many years were going to be changed. "So many of us"- will be soon out from oppression we will "inherit the earth", by morning, they'll have the respect they deserve.

Our kind multiplies:  
We shall by morning  
Inherit the earth  
Out foot's in the door.

Sylvia Plath projects the pain and pain involved in the male dominated society. The poems are a steady expressions of her experience from childhood to death. She led a life under suppression. Her delicate mind suffer brutality and is constantly under depression. It is not her making or her mind's making. She is a victim of her father's fallacies and of her lover. She is intelligent enough to see that the society views women as marginal, objects of pleasure and machines of production. She is courageous to show that a male precluded society is the cause for gender bias and her poems are a protean call for the dawn of gender equality.

#### Reference

[www.poetryfoundation.org](http://www.poetryfoundation.org).

[https://genius.com>sylvia\\_plath](https://genius.com>sylvia_plath)

<https://we.quora.com>

<https://beamingnotes.com>