CHAPTER II
THE RATIONALE OF MURDER AND THE STATUS OF
IDEOLOGY BEFORE MURDER

This chapter focuses on the pre-murder facet of the protagonists’ lives, analyzing the ‘ideological’ cause of the murder in each of the novels under study. It explores such aspects as the physical and psychological conditions of the murderer-protagonists, the factors that impel them to commit murder, the rationale of their murders, premeditated or unpremeditated, the link between the murderer-protagonists and their ideology, the intensity of their ideology before murder and the kind of ideology of each of them propelling them to commit murder. It further elucidates that the murderer-protagonists’ ‘fear and hate’ of their victims force them to resort to murder in their attempt to liberate themselves.

Analysing the ideology of each of these murderer-protagonists, this chapter substantiates that Bigger Thomas’s racial ideology, Richards Rojack’s power ideology, Ezekiel Farragut’s familial ideology, Marjorie Adams’s gender ideology, Clyde Griffith’s American dream ideology based on material comforts, Humbert Humbert’s love ideology and Judas’s racialist ideology are instrumental in their murders of their victims. This chapter goes on to examine the murderer-protagonists’ obsession/un-obsession with their ideologies and probe into their pre-
criminal psychology in planning the execution of the murder in such an
intelligent manner as to hoodwink the law and the police.

Bigger Thomas of Richard Wright’s *Native Son* (1940) is prominent among the murderer-protagonists, who happen to murder their victims by accident, and who have the intention of murder in the subconscious. As a black youth, Bigger Thomas expresses his protest against the oppressive white-world through his two murders—the murder of Mary Dalton, his employer’s daughter, and the murder of Bessie, his girl. Bigger’s position as a poor, black youth from the Ghetto of Chicago, and a victim of the white racial oppression instill in him “fear” for the white, and therefore, he resorts to violence in order to overcome it.

Bigger’s murders of the two girls, Mary and Bessie, are the outcome of his terrified mind. From the very beginning of the novel, all his acts express his “fear and hate” for the white. The white’s exploitation and enslavement of the black has instilled in him fear and hate for them. Margolies comments that “the first section of *Native Son* is called “Fear” and traces all the different kinds of fear that determine Bigger Thomas’s actions”(104). Bigger fears and hates the white because he knows that they are responsible for his immobility and frustration. His fear has been the cause of all his actions. For instance, he is afraid of stealing from a white shopkeeper, Bum’s shop. He is terrified that his friends Jack, Gus and G.H. can read his heart and so he attacks them to prove his courage.
He fears working in a white man’s house, for he thinks that his contacts with the white may lead to his provocation and the subsequent violence. Consequently, when he is offered the job of chauffeur in Mr. Dalton’s house, he refuses to take up. Compelled by his mother, he later takes up the job unwillingly. His fear proves to be reasonable when he murders his employer’s daughter, Mary.

Before Bigger murders Mary, his mind is obsessed with fear and hate for the white. Bigger murders Mary because her actions have activated the fear and hate that are already embedded in his mind. Though she is kind and friendly to him, her enquiries about his studies, his family, his race and the trade unions frighten instead of comforting him. He fears that she will risk his job, and he regards all her overtures as efforts to humiliate him. In these circumstances he cannot but hate her. This becomes evident when he confesses to his lawyer, Max: “I hated her as soon as she spoke to me, as soon a I saw her” (326) and adds the reason for it: “She asked me a lot of questions. She acted and talked in a way that made me hate her. She made me feel like a dog. I was so mad I wanted to cry…” (324).

Bigger misunderstands all her philanthropic actions as she suspects an ill-motive behind them. He finds all her questions torturous. When Mary and her Communist lover, Jan Earlone, compel him to sit and drink with them in the black people’s restaurant, he feels frightened rather than
comforted. In this regard Keneth Kinnaman comments that Mary’s “parlour radicalism” and her “thoughtless efforts toward camaraderie with Bigger induce terror rather than trust” (*Emergence of Wright* 133). This fear in Bigger reaches its acme on seeing Mary’s mother when he helps Mary to reach her bedroom. His defence lawyer, Max, confirms this in his argument: “Fear and hate and guilt are the keynotes of this drama” (357). Margolies approves of this view saying that Bigger’s nature is “composed of dread and hate” (109). Robert A. Bone, endorsing Margolies’s view, says that each of Bigger’s violent acts is a means of reducing fear, for great fear automatically produces great violence in him. Houston, attributing Bigger’s murder to his fear, says, “the first characteristic of Bigger’s life which the murder reveals is his uncontrollable fear of whites” (75). This white-phobia hovers around him. When Bigger is in Mary’s room, he is seized with hysterical terror and he murders her.

A sense of deprivation resulting from his lack of identity and a feeling of alienation haunt Bigger’s mind before he murders Mary. Bigger feels that he has no identity among the Daltons as they fail to recognize him as an individual and treat him as a nonentity. Even the philanthropically inclined Mary Dalton and her communist lover, Jan Erlone, who show him warmth and love, fail to identify him as an individual as they make love in the car in his very presence, considering him a nonentity. Felger, analysing the causes of Bigger’s murder of Mary,
points out that Bigger’s lack of identity in the white society is the root cause of his murder of Mary (78). It is, therefore, evident that the emotions of fear, hate and shame along with his sense of deprivation and lack of identity constitute Bigger’s pre-murder psyche.

The white racial oppression, which instils ‘fear’ in Bigger and his race, is the ‘ideological’ cause of his murder. The white racial oppression manifests in two forms—Social oppression and Political oppression. It not only ostracises the black from the white but also denies them equality of rights. It reduces the black to mere nonentities and creates in them a sense of alienation and despair that forces them into violence.

Social oppression, the first and major form of the white racial oppression, characterizes the white’s segregation of the black and pushes the black to a dirty corner of the city, Ghetto, far away from the white belt. This social inequality results in the black’s misunderstanding of the white. As a social outcast, Bigger mistakes Mary’s kindness for mere pretence, and suspects all her acts of kindness. The absence of social cohesion between the black and the white makes them strangers and is responsible for Bigger’s murder of Mary. Bigger, explaining the reason for his misunderstanding of Mary’s philanthropy, tells his lawyer, Max:

Mr. Max, We’re all split up ... I didn’t know nothing about that woman. All I knew was that they kill us for women like her. We live apart ... white folks and black folks is strangers.
We don’t know what each other is thinking. May be she was trying to be kind; but she didn’t act like it. To me she looked and acted like all other white folks […]. (324-25)

Conscious of the chasm between the two worlds, Max accuses Mary’s father, Mr. Dalton, of being responsible for his own daughter’s murder by keeping the black away from the white: “You rent houses to Negroes in the Black Belt and you refuse to rent to them elsewhere. You kept Bigger Thomas in that forest. You kept the man who has murdered your daughter a stranger to her and you kept your daughter a stranger to him” (362).

The white racial oppression forces the black to live in the dirty corner of the city–Ghetto, rents them only rat-infested, unventilated and dilapidated old houses, and demands an exorbitant rent. It rents one-room tenements to the black people and creates lack of privacy for the members of the family. Bigger, complaining about the pathetic and unhygienic conditions in which the white force them to live, says: “They keep us bottled up here like wild animals”(233). The white social oppression, has thus nurtured in Bigger a sense of ‘fear’ and hate for the white oppressive power. All these compel him to frame his ‘racial ideology’ to liberate himself from the fetters of racial discrimination.

Political oppression, the second form of the white racial oppression causing Mary’s murder, suppresses the black through three kinds of
Denials to the black—denial of equality of rights and freedom, denial of higher education and, denial of protection and safety.

Denial of equality of rights and freedom to the black, the first and primary political oppression of the white, deprives the black of their basic rights. The oppressive white laws so much enslave the black in thought and action that they can neither think nor act on their own. In the trial scene, Bigger complains: “Well, they own everything. They choke you off the face of the earth. They like God [...]. They don’t even let you feel what you want to feel … They kill you before you die” (327). The white lawmaker’s framing of separate laws for the black—the Jim Crow Laws—helps the white punish the black unjustly without any enquiry or fair trial, by accusing them of theft and rape to keep them submissive.

The inequality of rights and partiality of judiciary creates in the black a sense of fear, hate, alienation and depression and so they dare not rebel against the white. In the words of Wright, “if a Negro rebels against rules and taboo, he is lynched and the reason for the lynching is usually called ‘rape’” (xii). This inequality of rights, which makes the black dispossessed and disinh erited of their land, sustains Bigger’s thirst for identity like that of Yank in The Hairy Ape. As a result, he attempts to establish his identity through violent acts like murder for he believes that through murder he can create “a new world for himself” (226). Max, addressing the white in the trial scene, highlights the white’s unjust
disinheritance of the black from their land: "we built a nation, mighty and feared. We poured and are still pouring our soul into it. But we have told them: 'This is a white man's country!' They are yet looking for a land whose tasks can call forth their deepest and best" (363). The white's assertion of their ownership of America regards them the rulers of the land and makers of law, and gives them tremendous power to realize other types of oppressions like denial of higher education and higher job, and denial of safety and security to the black.

Denial of higher education and professional education to the black, the second type of the white's political oppression, stems from the white's insistence on the inequality of rights. The white laws restrict the black to the primary education level only and thereby render them ineligible for higher jobs. Naturally the black people are destined to do menial jobs in the white's household. Bigger regretfully complains to his accomplice, Gus, about his inability to join the army or navy because of his black race, and Gus consoles him: "If you wasn't black and if you had some money and if they'd let you go to that aviation school, you could fly a plane" (20). Bigger, during his trial, furiously expresses his frustrated ambition to join army or navy: "I don't know, I wanted to do things. But everything I wanted to do I couldn't, I wanted to do what the white boys in school did. Some of 'em went to college. Some of 'em went to the army. But I couldn't go" (328). In this regard, Richard Wright comments:
The white neighbor decided to limit the amount of education his black neighbor could receive; decided to keep him off the police force and out of the local national guards; to segregate him residentially; to Jim Crow him in public places; to restrict his participation in professions and jobs; and to build up a vast, dense ideology of racial superiority that would justify any act of violence taken against him to defend white dominance.... (xii)

There emerges the fact that by denying higher education to the black, the white oppression restricts them from entering the police and administrative services.

The third form of the white's political oppression is the denial of safety and protection to the black. The white police neither give any protection to the lives of the black nor view the murder of a black man seriously. The crimes committed against the black are viewed slightly and no enquiry is conducted. For instance, when Bigger kills his girl, Bessie, her death does not create a stir at all. To quote the novelist, "White people never searched for Negroes who killed other Negroes ... white people felt that it was good when one Negro killed another; it meant that they had one Negro less to contend with. Crime for a Negro was only when he harmed whites, took white lives, or injured white property" (307). The denial of protection and safety to the lives of the black keeps them in constant fear,
and it is actually this fear in Bigger aroused by the white oppressive power that is responsible for his murder of Mary. It can be concluded that the white’s social oppression of ostracising the black, and political oppression of denial of equality of rights, higher education, higher posts, and safety and protection to the black are the major factors responsible for Bigger’s “fear” and the framing of his racial ideology, and the consequent murder of Mary.

Bigger does not plan the murder of Mary; he happens to kill her unintentionally and unwittingly, in his attempt to stop her drunken prattles, when Mary’s blind mother enters the room. The murder is then quite accidental and unpremeditated. He also does not scheme any method of escape beforehand. On the other hand, he pre-plans the murder of the black girl, Bessie, when he suspects that she may betray him to the police some day.

Bigger’s fear and hatred for the white resulting from the white racial oppression make him frame his racial ideology, which aims at the social, political and economic equality of all races. Bigger’s racial ideology is akin to that of the Marxist ideology of his creator, Richard Wright. In this regard, Kinnamon, cites Glicksberg’s words “Richard Wright is Bigger Thomas,” and further comments that Wright’s Communist ideology is Bigger’s ideology (Emergence of Wright 119). Richard Wright himself confesses it in his self explanatory essay, “How
‘Bigger’ Was Born”: “...my contact with the labor movement and its ideology made me see Bigger clearly and feel what he meant” (28). However, Bigger disagrees with Communism and rejects Marxism when his lawyer, Max, tries to console him with a vision of change through it, for he believes that the Marxist view “underplays race in favor of social class and is, for that reason, instinctively odd-sounding to the black man” (Felgar 93). Rejecting Marxism and Christianity, Bigger therefore frames his racial ideology that aims at equality of rights, and freedom of thought and action for the black. Having framed his ideology, he believes that murder is the only means to realise it.

Bigger is not obsessed with his racial ideology. His racial ideology, which has been dormant in his subconscious comes out to the surface and manifests itself through his act of murder, when he can no more control his “fear” for the white.

Stephen Richards Rojack of Norman Mailer’s An American Dream is the second of the protagonists who fear the power of their victims and murder them in order to emancipate themselves. Rojack, a war hero, Professor of Existential Psychology, author, television talk show host and ex-congressman, murders his shrewish and estranged wife, Deborah, for having made his life miserable through her violent and humiliating activities. He dreads her for her violence, shrewishness, murderous nature, wealth, and evil powers. He believes that she has got some magical, evil
"power to lay a curse" (29) and that he has been a victim of her curse. Rojack, substantiating the power of her curse, adds that once after he went out following a fight with her, he was given traffic tickets thrice in fifteen minutes. Besides Deborah’s evil power, Rojack fears her violence for she has once bitten his ear in a fight making a scar (31); so he expresses his fear for her: “I was afraid of her. She was not incapable of murdering me” (33). Gutman, attributing Deborah’s murder to Rojack’s fear, says, “Rojack faces his fear and dread and commits one of the most heinous of crimes” (107).

In addition to his fear for her, Rojack hates Deborah for her immorality, infidelity, arrogance and aggression, shrewishness, and abusive nature. Her lecherous sexual contacts with her young lovers, her lack of love for him and her belligerent nature have made their life a battlefield and forced him to lead an unhappy life. His realisation that he “was finally a failure” (15) in married life makes him depressed and drives him twice to the point of suicide. The emotions of fear, hate and dejection cause a psychic imbalance in him before he murders Deborah. Though he has been driven to the mental condition of seeking relief through suicide, he cleverly externalises it and murders her.

The major factors instrumental in Rojack’s formation of his ‘American dream ideology’ based on power and wealth, and the consequent murder of Deborah are her infidelity, insults, immorality,
violence and evil nature. Deborah’s disloyalty to her husband stems up from her nymphomania, which forces her often to take rum, flirt with her young lovers and accuse Rojack of being incapable of doing anything. Rojack painfully reveals her illicit relationship with one of her lovers, an old man: “he [the old man] ’d been banging my blessed Deborah five times a year, five times each of the last eight years, forty glorious bangeroos upon the unconscious horror of my back …” (17). Agonized by her infidelity, despite his love and care for her throughout her eight years of married life with him, Rojack woefully confesses:

I tell you in shame that for those eight years I could point with certainty to only five bona-fide confessed infidelities by Deborah; she had indeed announced each of them to me, each an accent, a transition, a concrete step in the descent of our marriage, a curtain to each act in a five-act play: but beyond this, in the great unknown, were anywhere from two hundred to precisely no infidelities… . (18)

Deborah’s constant humiliation of Rojack is the second major factor responsible for his ‘fear’ for her and the genesis of his ideology. She often hurts his feelings through her insults and humiliations in order to enslave him psychologically. She abuses him by calling him “a swine,” a “bloody whimperer” (30), and an “awful”, “contemptible-looking creature” (29). She calls his true love for his step-daughter pretentious,
ridicules his heroic acts in the war and rails at his looks saying that he looks “like some pedlar from the lower east side” (31). When Rojack confesses his descendence from pedlars, she attacks the whole class of pedlars as “poor materialistic grabby little people” (31). She humiliates and hurts him overtly saying, “I don’t love you any more at all” (34). She insults him by adopting the method of praising her young lovers. These insults and humiliations are her ploy to deprive Rojack of his freedom and power and he murders her to reclaim it.

Deborah’s violence is the third important factor that is responsible for his insecurity and ideological theory. Her aggression arising from her wealth, arrogance and dipsomania forces her often to drink and quarrel with her husband. Rojack comments on her aggressive nature: “Deborah was violent. I had a bad scar on my ear ... Deborah had once bitten it half-through in a fight” (31). On another occasion, when Deborah had become pregnant after three years of marriage, she drank a lot and quarrelled beyond limit that the baby “came brokenly to birth” (34) and she lost the chance of having a baby forever. The day of her murder bears classic evidence to her violence. When Rojack slaps on her face asking her to stop her description of her obscene sexual acts with her lovers, she charges at him like a bull with her head on his stomach. Afraid of her cantankerous and violent nature, Rojack murders her. Gutman’s words are pertinent here: “Deborah’s veiled violence and her need for mastery and
cruelty bring Rojack to a fever pitch, so that in the space of at most an hour and a half the moon guides him through a murder” (106).

Deborah’s devilish nature is the last important factor accountable for Rojack’s fear for her and formation of his ideology. He believes that Deborah is evil, for she herself confesses it to him: “I know that I am more good and more evil than anyone alive... I am evil if truth be told ... It’s just that evil has power” (43). Also Rojack believes that she is “the Devil’s daughter” (204) who taught him of “the long finger of God and the swish of the Devil”(41). He resents that his marriage to Deborah has been “a devil’s contract”(18). Gutman regards Kelley and his daughter Deborah as personifications of evil (122). Rojack’s disillusionment and desperation culminates in his American dream ideology in order to redeem his liberation and power from Deborah through murder. Rojack, like Bigger Thomas of Native Son, does not premeditate his murder of Deborah.

While Bigger Thomas is motivated by his racial ideology, Rojack is impelled by his ‘American dream ideology’ of power and material comforts. As a Professor of Existential Psychology, Rojack understands the importance of wealth and power in the materialistic world. To realize this, he marries Deborah Caughlin Mangaravidi Kelley, daughter of the fabulously wealthy and politically influential Barney Oswald Kelly, with a view to becoming a powerful politician. He confesses that her wealth
and power are the motive of his love for and marriage to Deborah: “I loved her the way a drum majorette loved the power of the band for the swell it gave to each little strut” (25). After his marriage to her, he feels strong and powerful and “with her beside” he is “one of the more active figures of the city” (25). But the moment he is separated from her, he feels that he has lost all his power because he believes that the power and stamina he got through his marriage to Deborah is only a gift and that “the gift was only up for a loan” (26). But his ambition of wielding power crumbles when their married life becomes a failure. Her withdrawal of freedom and power from him through her separation necessitates his regaining them from her through murder. Rojack’s American dream ideology of ‘power’ arising from his fear for Deborah’s power and his disappointment ignites his idea to employ murder as a weapon to realise it.

Rojack, as a war hero, believes that murder gives him not only “vast relief” and freedom but also the necessary strength and power to create a new life and a new world (15). Though he wishes Deborah to be dead, he does not plan her murder and therefore, he is not obsessed with the thought of murdering her. However, his obsession with his ‘power ideology’ promising him freedom, power and material comforts precedes his intention to commit a murder.
Like Bigger Thomas and Richards Rojack, Ezekiel Farragut of John Cheever’s *Falconer* accidentally murders his victim, impelled by his ‘familial ideology’. In his unintentional murder of his brother, Farragut is more akin to Rojack than to Bigger. Both Farragut and Rojack share some common qualities—both are college professors, Jews, homosexuals, victims of their shrewish wives, and accidental murderers of their relatives.

Farragut is deranged both mentally and physically before he murders his brother, Eben. While his homosexuality and casual philandering have been responsible for his physical derangement, his heroin-addiction has been responsible for his mental derangement. His addiction has affected both his mind and body and so once he was admitted to the rehabilitation centre in Colorado. Besides damaging his heart and making him impotent and homosexual, his addiction makes him excited and impulsive.

The immediate cause of Farragut’s murderous attack on his brother, Eben is the latter’s deliberate provocation by revealing the family secret about his birth—that their father wanted to kill Farragut when he was in his mother’s womb (198). But the ideological cause of his murder is his troubled relationship with his murderous brother, Eben, and the other members of his family, which drove him to drug addiction and made him conceive his familial ideology.
The "alcoholic, belligerent and self-righteous fraud," (198) Eben's hostility and cruelty, force him to attempt to kill Farragut on two occasions—once by encouraging him to swim in an area where there is a dangerous undertow; and on the other occasion, by pushing him out a window upon some spear-pointed fence-posts at a party in New York hotel. Eben's nefarious activities leave an indelible scar of fear and hatred for Eben, on Farragut's psyche. Eben's treachery and murderous nature make Farragut not only ponder over an ideal family but also frame his familial ideology. Consequently, when Eben provokes him, his sense of retribution and his fear for him that have been quiescent in his subconscious come out to the surface and express themselves in the form of murder.

Farragut's heroin addiction is the result of his mental depression caused by his unhappy relationship with his family. His father's dislike, his business-like mother's unconcern for him and his unfaithful wife's cruelty, have become constant sources of mental agony to him and as a result he takes shelter in the world of drugs. Farragut's drunken, cranky and never-do-well father, Mr.Farragut, spoiled him by taking him for fishing in the wilderness and neglecting him completely. When his father shirked his duty, Farragut, the principal male descendent of the Wentworths, is compelled to lead the Nanuet cotillion and this "thrill of living on a border principality" is "the origin of his opium eating"(59).
Besides Mr. Farragut's irresponsibility, his dislike for Farragut and Farragut's knowledge of his father's attempt to abort him when he was in his mother's womb are solely responsible for Farragut's heroin addiction: "Farragut's father, Farragut's own father, had wanted to have his life extinguished as he dwelt in his mother's womb, and how could he live happily with this knowledge without the support of those plants that draw their wisdom from the soil?" (58).

The comedown of his mother from the status of the wealthy heir of a Victorian mansion to the level of a gas-pumping woman on the main road, also affects Farragut's mind very much. He compares his business-like, unloving mother with the image of the ideal "mother" in the Degas painting and contemplates on the gap between the worlds of these two mothers: "Why had the universe encouraged this gap?... The opium eater knew better" (57). Farragut's comprehension of the gap between the actual and the ideal world and the position of his mother in it, make him dejected, and force him to seek the assistance of opium.

Farragut's unloving and cruel wife, Marcia is the major cause for his mental depression and drug addiction. Marcia's waywardness, which forces her to prefer her Italian lesbian lover, Sally Midland, to her husband, and her monstrosity, which attempts to kill him by slamming the door, knowing well that excitement of any sort would kill him, make Farragut totally dejected. Waldeland comments that Marcia's main
function in the novel is to serve as part of Farragut’s problem and that “a wife like her makes heroin addiction plausible” (138). Farragut’s disturbed relationship with the members of his family, resulting in his framing of his ‘familial ideology’ and drug-addiction, is the ideological cause of his murder of his monstrous brother, Eben.

Though Farragut’s assault of Eben is impulsive and unpremeditated, the embers of revenge and retribution have already been there in his subconscious since the day he understood that Eben had attempted twice to kill him. His thirst for revenge and his fear for Eben, that have been dormant in Farragut’s subconscious manifest themselves when Eben insults him, though Farragut claims innocence.

Unlike the other murderer-protagonists, Farragut does not have any ideology. While Bigger Thomas professes racial ideology and Richards Rojack, power ideology, Farragut, strictly speaking, does not profess any ideology. However, he believes in the ‘familial ideology’, which aims at a happy, problem-free and peaceful family life. Farragut’s bitter childhood experiences with the members of his family make him crave for an ideal home with mutual love, affection and care among the members. His mother’s indifference, his father’s irresponsibility, his brother’s inimical attitude and his wife’s callousness towards him make him long for an ideal domestic ambience where there is true love and happiness.
Farragut's familial ideology, resulting from his 'fear' for Eben and his disturbed relationship with the members of his family, is at the bottom of all the reasons that impel him to murder Eben. He believes that a man, who deprives his family of its peace and happiness through his cruelty and monstrosity is like a weed that should be destroyed for the sake of the family. Though Farragut has not been obsessed with the idea of murdering Eben, he has been obsessed with the thought of a peaceful family life. That is, while his subconscious is obsessed with the revenge motive arising from his fear for his murderous brother, his conscious mind is replete with his familial ideology. When he finds unhappiness and misery in Eben's family, he goes to its rescue in order to establish peace and happiness in it; but unfortunately, when Eben provokes his fear by revealing the secret about his birth, Farragut's suppressed fear explodes through his violent assault of Eben.

Marjorie Adams of Valerie Miner's Murder in the English Department, like Bigger Thomas, Richards Rojack and Ezekiel Farragut, happens to kill Professor Angus Murchie of California University accidentally, in her attempt to protect herself from his sexual assault. In her act of murder and its cause, Marjorie is closer to Richards Rojack of An American Dream than to the other two impulsive murderer-protagonists. She may be akin to both Rojack and Farragut in murdering her victim out of provocation. However, she is more like
Rojack than like Farragut in her being attacked by her victims. Unlike Farragut who murders his brother, Eben, even before the latter physically assaults him, Marjorie murders Angus Murchie only after he made his sexual assault. She is closer to Rojack, who murders his wife, Deborah, only when she physically assaults him. Just as Rojack attacks his wife in order to defend himself from her murderous assault, Marjorie also attacks Murchie to defend herself.

Marjorie Adams is a bold and courageous research student, who does a fascinating dissertation on “Power and love in the Novels of Irish Murdock”, under the guidance of the Feminist professor, Nan Weaver. She is tall and attractive “with her long, blonde hair as elegantly coifed as any daughter of Augustus Caesar” (4) and looks as if she were born in a silk blouse and velvet skirt. She is so courageous and intelligent that “Nan always felt more like Marjorie’s student than her thesis adviser” (4).

Being frank, outspoken and self-confident in her views, Marjorie boldly argues with her thesis adviser, Nan Weaver, overtly expressing her disapproval of Nan’s Sexual Harassment Campaign. Nan has great love and respect for Marjorie’s “old-fashioned integrity” and courage (20). Her witty arguments with her professors draw the attention of the sexist professor, Angus Murchie so much that he tries to lure her through the exhibition of his scholarship. She is so broad-minded and courageous she not only accepts Murchie’s invitation to his University office
Year's Eve but also visits him alone in order to discuss her research topic. Before the murder, Marjorie has been in a happy mood, enjoying her discussion with Murchie with laughter and fun. However, when he proves to be a fraud making sexual advances, she resorts to murder in order to defend herself. Marjorie is bold, outspoken, audacious and sociable before she murders Murchie.

The immediate cause for Marjorie Adams's murder of professor Angus Murchie may be his sexual assault on her and her “fear” of being raped. Nevertheless, the actual cause behind her murder is her feminist “gender ideology,” which is dormant in her. She is more feminist in her speech, behaviour and acts than most other women-students of the university. Her revolutionary nature and feminist ideology do not permit her to bear with any man attempting to molest a woman. It is in tune with that when she herself faces such a situation in a professor’s chamber, she gets wild and kills him.

Marjorie's meeting with professor Angus Murchie in his room at the University on the New Year's Eve is pre-planned. But her murder of Murchie is quite unpremeditated and accidental. Since she treats him as her friend and scholarly guide, and never considers him her enemy, she visits his chamber alone, bare handed at night. When she comes across an unexpected situation in Murchie's room, she resorts to murder in order to defend herself. In the trial scene, in her attempt to save her supervisor,
Nan Weaver from being sentenced, she shouts in the court: “I killed Angus Murchie... while he was trying to rape me” (145). Thus, Marjorie’s murder of Angus Murchie is an unplanned act of self-defence.

Even though Marjorie is a radical, interested in the welfare of women, she does not believe in fighting against men through any organised movement. She candidly disapproves of the feminist ideology and the Sexual Harassment Campaign of her thesis adviser, Nan Weaver and moves with the male professors of the University, like Professor Angus Murchie and Professor Matt, without any inhibition. Though she does not claim to have any ideology, she believes in her own ‘gender ideology,’ characteristic of gender equality and women’s right to protect themselves against sexual harassment. Despite her overt disapproval of Nan Weaver’s feminist ideology, Marjorie herself is an unprofessed feminist at heart. While Nan Weaver is an idealist working for the welfare of the women through her dogmatic Sexual Harassment Campaign, Marjorie Adams is a pragmatist in executing the canon of the feminist ideology through her acts of retaliation. Hence, Marjorie Adam’s gender ideology is nothing but her prototype, Nan Weaver’s feminist ideology. While Nan is a moderate, Marjorie is an un-proclaimed radical feminist, who believes in violence and murder to fight back sexual abuse. She is of the conviction that murder is the only weapon to realize her gender
ideology and therefore she ventures into the chamber of the sexist professor, Angus Murchie, on the New Year's Eve.

While the casual murderers happen to murder their victims by accident, the calculative murderers kill their victims casually after careful planning. Clyde Griffiths of Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* excels among the other calculative murderers in his hypocrisy, calculated planning and execution of his plot. Clyde Griffiths, the ambitious son of poor street-preaching parents, in his attempt to realize his 'American dream ideology' of material comforts and power through marriage to an aristocratic girl, Sondra, kills his impregnated beloved, Roberta Alden.

As a young, handsome and ambitious boy, Clyde Griffiths is obsessed with his dreams of a luxurious and carefree life. To realize his ambition, he joins as a bellhop in the luxurious hotel, Green Davidson and dresses up in order to lure the young and wealthy girls who visit the hotel. He is so "naturally selfish" (304) that he deserts his companions whenever his life is in peril—he deserts his bellhop friends after the car accident in Kansas and flees to Chicago, sends his impregnated beloved, Roberta, alone to a doctor to get her baby aborted so as to maintain the secrecy about his relationship with her, and later tries to forsake her by sending her to her parents' house at Biltz. He is very crafty, hypocritical and affected in his speech and action with others in order to realize his dreams. When he finds Roberta an obstacle in realizing his ambitions, he schemes
to contrive an accident and lures her to a lonely lake in Adirondacks to drown her. His ‘American dream ideology’ compels him to “find some method of severing this tie, even though it lacerated Roberta to the point of death” (401). After deciding the modus operandi, he takes Roberta to Gun Lodge at Big Bittern, gives a false address, as Clifford Golden and his wife, rents a rowing boat and takes her to a lonely, deserted spot to drown her.

Though Clyde Griffith’s ‘American dream ideology’ of acquiring wealth and power is the ideological cause of his murder of Roberta, there are certain other factors responsible for his framing of his materialistic ideology. They are his childhood poverty and suffering, humiliations and the sense of alienation in the wealthy society, and his temptations to and yearnings for the luxurious life he sees around him.

Clyde Griffith’s unhappy childhood is the major factor responsible for his framing of his American dream ideology. He has been a victim of the cruelty of poverty and suffering since his childhood. His position as a boy accompanying his street-preaching parents on their street-meetings at night, the grubby and mean life he has to live with them, the sordid atmosphere of the unpleasant rooms in which his dirt-poor family lives and its constant worry over food and shelter depresses him to the extent that he becomes “an unwilling participant in the street service conducted by his preacher father in connection with the itinerant Bible mission he
runs” (Mattheissen 192). In his adolescence too poverty continues to stare him in the face and he is ashamed of the shabby profession of his parents (22).

The abject poverty of Clyde’s family does not permit him either to receive good education and job, or to dress neatly like the other boys of his age. He painfully despises his own fate that has let him struggle for his survival: “What a wretched thing it was to be born poor and not to have any one to do anything for you and not be able to do so very much for yourself!” (27). As Avvaiyar, the Tamil sage-poetess of the Sangam age says in one of her poems that, “poverty in childhood is the cruellest of the cruellest things in life”, the cruelty of Clyde’s childhood indigence turns Clyde ambitious, to be wealthy and powerful and this is at the back of his American dream ideology.

Clyde’s poverty gives rise to his ideology and in turn to all his later acts—his jobs as an office boy in a drug store and a bellhop in a luxurious hotel, the Green Davidson, his employment in his wealthy uncle’s Collar Company, his falling in love with the poor farm girl, Roberta and his getting rid of her in order to marry the wealthy Sondra Finchley. Howe endorses this view: “The impoverishment of his family life and the instinctual deprivation of his youth leave him a prey to the values of the street and the hotels” (300).
Clyde’s humiliation in society because of his wretched life and his feeling of insignificance in society is another important factor for the genesis of his materialistic ideology. He has been an object of insult and humiliation since the day he accompanied his street-preaching parents, singing songs on the streets like a beggar—in Kansas, the coquette Hortense Briggs humiliates him by shifting her favour to another rich boy after learning about Clyde’s poverty, and in Lycurgus, the members of the affluent Lycurgus society like his uncle, Samuel Griffiths and his son Gilbert Griffiths humble him through their strict and authoritative instructions and warnings as to how he should behave, and make him feel “out of place and neglected” (246). Similarly, when he attends a dinner at his uncle’s house, he is left alone to think that he is “merely being permitted to look into a world to which he did not belong,” and as a result “he feels sad… lonely and depressed” (246). These feelings of despair and sense of alienation arising from his poverty force him to amass wealth and power and he forges his materialistic ideology.

The poverty-stricken Clyde’s temptations to the luxurious and carefree life of the Lycurgus high society and his dreams of becoming a member of it by marrying a wealthy industrialist’s daughter, Sondra Finchley, all cumulatively contribute to the framing of his materialistic ideology. The wealthy men as well as the luxurious buildings he happened to see since his boyhood have tempted the impoverished Clyde very
much. The tall and lavish buildings and the luxurious hotel, Green Davidson, in Kansas, and the luxurious mansions of Lycurgus tempt him so much that he longs for better days (Hussman, Jr. 127). Similarly, he is also tempted by the carefree life and power of the members of the aristocratic Lycurgus society like Sondra Finchley, the beautiful girl, in order to marry whom he murders Roberta, Bertine Cranston, and Gilbert Griffiths, his cousin. As Hussman Jr. comments, “Clyde had been ‘bewitched’ in his pursuit of ‘beauty, love and wealth,’ and that he was powerless to resist temptations” (131). It can be concluded that Clyde’s temptation for a luxurious life is the Hamartia that leads him to his Catastrophe—his framing of his American dream ideology and his attempts to realize it.

Clyde’s ambition to become wealthy and conspicuous in society is the fourth and the most important factor that impels him to frame his ideology. Hence his mother says that he has been “the most ambitious and hopeful” of all her children (798), and his uncle, Samuel Griffiths, endorses it saying that he is “very intelligent and ambitious” (177). His ambition generates in him the dream of becoming wealthy and enjoying a luxurious life by hook or crook. While working as a bellhop in Green Davidson, he dreams of realizing his ambition by having an affair with any one of the posh women who frequent the hotel in search of young boys like him. Again, he plans to realize his dreams through his wealthy
uncle, Samuel Griffiths of Lycurgus and succeeds in getting a job in his Shirt Company. Finally, when he meets the wealthy and beautiful Sondra Finchley at the dinner in his uncle’s house, he dreams of realizing his ambition by winning her hand in love, because, “Clyde is to imagine Sondra as a gateway to a paradise of wealth, position and comfort” (Pizer 248).

Clyde finds in Sondra “A clear path! A marvellous future!” (578); and he plans to realize his ideology through marriage to her. But on the way is “the ‘mountain’ of Roberta, who represents both an obstacle to wealth and a return to poverty” (Pizer 233). To fulfil his dreams and realize his ideology, Clyde plans to remove the ‘mountain’ of Roberta by drowning her in the lake. He believes that murder is the only means of realizing his ideology and therefore, he has been obsessed with the thought of getting rid of her secretly, in order to marry the wealthy Sondra and realize his ideology. Like the other murderer-protagonists, Clyde fears his victim, his impregnated beloved, Roberta, for her power to destroy his dreams of a luxurious life; therefore, he decides to kill her and free himself from her threat.

Clyde premeditates and pre-plans Roberta’s murder when he finds her an obstacle in realizing his American dream ideology through marriage to Sondra. When there are only two options left before him,— “Either he must marry Roberta voluntarily and discard his dreams of
affluence or he must abandon her and see his hopes die when she exposes his duplicity to his rich friends” (Gerber 139)—he resolves to realize his ambition by getting rid of her in such a way that her death appears like an accident. It is at this point that he reads an interesting news report about the mysterious drowning of a young man and a woman at Pass Lake in Massachusetts, and he plans the method of murdering Roberta along those lines.

While Clyde sacrifices his love for Roberta Alden for the sake of wealth and social position, Humbert Humbert of Vladimir Nabokov’s *Lolita*, sacrifices his life for the sake of his true and passionate love for a nymphet, Lolita. Humbert murders Clare Quilty for having spoiled his love life with Lolita by kidnapping her from him and forcing her to act in pornographic films. Through his murder of Quilty, Humbert not only avenges Quilty’s betrayal but also risks his life to land up in prison.

Humbert, “an exceptionally handsome male” and a “seductive cast of demeanour” (27) has been obsessed with nymphets since the time when his childhood-love, Annabel, died of typhus at an early age. When he meets the twelve-year-old Lolita, daughter of the widow, Charlotte Haze, he is infatuated with her for her resemblance to Annabel. His passion for Lolita becomes so intense that he marries her mother Charlotte, in order to have intimate relationship with Lolita. The
accidental death of Charlotte makes him happy for that clears the hurdle for him to live with Lolita

Humbert is so much obsessed with Lolita that he idealizes his love for her and compares it with Poe’s love and marriage to Virginia Clemm (Morton 67). Though he has been a sexual pervert, his love for Lolita transforms him from the physical to the spiritual level that he confesses to her: “I am not concerned with so-called ‘sex’ at all” (141). Therefore, her disappearance makes him so depressed and frustrated that he writes poems on her pouring out his own pathetic condition: “Dying, dying, Lolita Haze, / Of hate and remorse, I’m dying” (270). It makes him hysterical and so he seeks the company of a woman, Rita, to take care of his health and to comfort his grieved heart. But when he receives a letter from Lolita, he feels greatly relieved and rushes to her home, gives her ten times the amount she asked for. When he learns from Lolita that Clare Quilty is the person responsible for their separation, he boils with rage and sets out in search of Quilty with a heart full of anger and desire to wreak vengeance, and a gun loaded with bullets. But on meeting Quilty, he becomes calm and experiences intolerable bliss “to have him trapped, after those years of repentance and rage” (309). However, in spite of his alcoholic stimulation, he suppresses and conceals his emotions behind the masque of a complacent face in order to execute his murder-plan.
Humbert’s pervert but unalloyed idealistic love for Lolita is responsible for framing his ‘love ideology’ and the resultant murder of Clare Quilty. However, there are other factors too like his inherent murder instinct, his desire to avenge Quilty for the latter’s betrayal and his ‘fear’ for Quilty’s prospective threat to Lolita’s life that vanguard Humbert in the realization of his ideology through murder. His perversion turned spiritual love for Lolita makes him do everything for her sake—he marries her widowed-mother, Charlotte Haze, to be close to Lolita, teaches her tennis, allows her to skate on ice with boys, takes her to many places, admits her in a school and permits her to join dance and violin classes and does everything in his power to give her a happy time. The intensity of his love for her is so much that he feels dejected and depressed at her disappearance and goes mad in search of her from place to place, writing doleful songs expressing his love-lorn condition.

When Humbert meets her after two years, he implores her to go with him: “Life is very short ... Right now. Come just as you are. And we shall live happily ever after ... come to live with me, and die with me, and everything with me” (293). But Lolita politely refuses to oblige and desert her husband Richard Schillar; so he is totally shattered and feels that a life without her is impossible; but as an ardent lover, he accepts her decision hoping that she will have a prosperous future with her husband. But when he learns from her that the playwright, Clare Quilty is responsible for her
woeful life, he plans to kill Quilty and sacrifice his own life for Lolita’s sake. Morton endorses this view saying that Humbert’s “perverted but idealistic love” for Lolita forces him to take revenge on the equally perverted and lustful Quilty (79).

Humbert’s desire to wreak vengeance on Quilty for the latter’s betrayal in love is the ‘ideological cause’ of his murder of Quilty. When he learns that Quilty has not only abducted Lolita but also tortured her to share her bed with his friends and to act in pornographic films, Humbert sets out to avenge him. As Morton comments: “Humbert’s motive for murdering Quilty is simple: he wanted to avenge the loss of Lolita” (79). And Maddox endorses this view saying that Humbert’s “motives for murder are outrage and a desire for revenge” (70). Humbert’s inherent murder-instinct makes him wish to kill his first wife, Valeria when she deserted him for an old, Russian ex-colonel, Maximovich (32), and also forces him to plan the murder of his second wife, Charlotte Haze, either by drowning or poisoning her (89,93). His killer-instinct has thus spearheaded him in realizing his love ideology through the murder of the culprit, Quilty.

Like Clyde Griffiths of An American Tragedy, Humbert Humbert premeditates and pre-plans the murder of his victim. On learning about Quilty’s role in separating Lolita from him, Humbert decides to execute his murder plan, and so revisits Ramsdale, meets Quilty’s dentist uncle,
Dr. Quilty, collects Clare Quilty’s address from him, schemes the murder meticulously and goes to meet him in his mansion, Pavlor Manor, well equipped with a loaded gun. He feels that Quilty deserves to be murdered in cold blood for the injustice Quilty has done to him.

Humbert’s spiritual love for Lolita and his ‘love ideology’ that love is the most invaluable thing in the world convince him that one can sacrifice anything in life for the sake of true love. As Shakespeare says in his Sonnet No.116, “Love is not Love which alters when it alteration finds, / Or bends with the remover to remove” (2-3), Humbert believes that true love should not permit any villainous force to destroy it. Humbert’s past, painful love-experiences—the death of his childhood love, Annabel, and the desertion of his first wife, Valeria, for an old, Russian ex-colonel—teach him the value of true love and constitute his ‘love-ideology.’ Therefore, when he learns that Quilty is the villain responsible for spoiling his love life with Lolita, he decides to avenge his villainy through murder. He is not secretive about his murder plan and he goes in search of Quilty’s hideouts in order to execute it. Humbert differs from Clyde Griffiths, his counterpart in An American Tragedy, both in his murder motive and in not being secretive in his murder plan. Clyde Griffiths plans to murder his love for the sake of a prosperous future, whereas Humbert Humbert plans to murder his prosperous future for the sake of his “ideal” love.
While Clyde pre-plans the murder of Roberta, motivated by his American dream ideology, and Humbert Humbert schemes the murder of his rival, Clare Quilty, motivated by his love ideology, Judas alias Daniel Levy of Jack Higgins’s, *The President’s Daughter* (1997) plans the murder of Marie, daughter of the American President, motivated by his racialist ideology.

Judas’s Jewish fanaticism, the constant bomb attacks of the Muslim fundamentalists on the Jews and the death of his mother and married sister in the Hamas bombing of a Jerusalem bus station, turn him into a Jewish extremist. Driven both by his interest in the welfare of the Jewish nation and his thirst for revenge on the Muslim fundamentalists, he forms a secret army of Jewish extremists. In his attempt to liberate the Jewish nation, Israel, from the constant threat of the Arab countries like Iran, Iraq and Syria, Judas kidnaps Marie, daughter of Jake Cazalet, the American President, and uses her as a bargaining counter in forcing the American President to sign the *Nemesis*—a total destruction of nuclear research sites, power stations and Army and Navy headquarters in Iran, Iraq and Syria. Though the British operative, Sean Dillon and the FBI agent, Black Johnson foil his attempts to murder Marie, Judas murders Jackson, the Jailor in Wandsworth prison, Hakim, the Muslim terrorist and his two women.
Judas as a Colonel and war-hero, who served in the Vietnam War and in the Yom Kippur War, unites the Jewish extremists from all over the world and forms a secret army in order to liberate his Jewish nation from the constant threat of the Muslim terrorists. He plans and executes six murders in the course of the novel; but he is never excited while executing any of these murders. As a veteran war-hero, he is cool, rational, meticulous and un-impulsive in planning the murder of each of his enemies. He is so intelligent that he plans to kill all his opponents through his extremist agents called Maccabees. He is resolved in executing his murder-plan of Marie de Brissac, if her real father Jake Cazalet, the President of America, refuses to sign the Nemesis. Even in the last scene, when Sean Dillon and Blake Johnson come to rescue Marie, he is neither perplexed nor agitated but rather faces them boldly like a true colonel and dies in his mission.

Judas’s ‘fear’ for the Muslim terrorist power, which is responsible for the bombing attacks on the Jews, and the death of his mother and married sister, is the motivating factor in the framing of his racialist ideology. Judas is a patriot, who served as a Colonel in the two great Wars, and so he wants to protect his Jewish race from the constant threat of the Muslim terrorists by founding a free Jewish land, Israel. He tells his captive, Dillon, about the troubles faced by the Jews: “We live on the edge. Our settlers in the north never know when they’re going to come
under attack, Hamas constantly wages bombing campaigns. Scud missiles in the Gulf War showed our vulnerability. It can’t go on” (86). He says that the Jews are victimized throughout the world: “Even in Britain there are Muslims who call for the annihilation of Jews. Syria, Iran, and Iraq will never be happy until we are crushed... They have numerous training camps for terrorists” (86-87). Consequently Judas’s concern for his race forces him to become a racial chauvinist; so he forms a secret terrorist army of the Jewish extremists, the Maccabees, to liberate his nation.

As a veteran Colonel and leader of the Maccabees, Judas knows well that he cannot wage a direct war on the strong Muslim countries and so he plans to wage a proxy war against them through the U.S.A. by kidnapping the President’s daughter, Marie and using her as a bargaining counter to get the Nemesis signed. He plans the murder of each of his victims including the jailor in Wandsworth prison, the Muslim terrorist Hakim, his two wives and their two caretakers, and executes them successfully.

Like the other calculative murderer-protagonists, Clyde Griffiths and Humbert Humbert, Judas also frames his racial ideology, which aims at constituting an independent Jewish nation, free from the constant threats of attack by the Arab countries. Judas’s racial ideology stemming up from his patriotism and racial fanaticism is instrumental in forming his secret army of Jewish extremists for the sake of a free Jewish land.
Justifying his acts of kidnap and murder, Judas tells his captive Sean Dillon: “Well, you know we’re Israelis, but we’re patriotic Israelis willing to go to any length to preserve the integrity of our country” (84).

Judas’s obsession with his ideology is so strong that he is always preoccupied with the thought of wreaking vengeance on his offenders. He strongly believes that murder is the only means of achieving his goal, his ideology, and therefore he plans to accomplish it through murder.

Being an efficient leader of the Jewish extremists, Judas schemes the execution of his murders well in advance. He is a master-criminal who anticipates the dangers from the detectives through Jackson, the Jailor in Wandsworth prison, in Dermot Riley’s case, and therefore he kills the jailor. He knows that, if he leads the Jewish extremist army in his real name, he will be easily caught. So he changes his name to ‘Judas’ and conceals his identity from his hostages Marie and Dillon. Though he is cautious and meticulous, he is unable to execute his murder plan successfully.

In conclusion, this chapter has analysed the two categories of murderer-protagonists, the calculative and accidental murderer-protagonists, and their physical and mental conditions before committing the murder. It further examined in detail the reasons for their murder of their victims, the intensity of their ideologies which impel them to commit
murder, the relationship between their ideologies and their murder, their conviction in their ideologies and their pre-criminal psychology.

After a detailed analysis of the novels, the chapter establishes the view that only the protagonists’ ‘fear’ for the ‘power’ of their victims compels them to frame their ideologies. Bigger fears his victim, Mary, the representative of his white oppressive power; Richards Rojack fears the evil power of his victim, his wife, Deborah; Ezekiel Farragut fears the murderous power of his victim, his own brother, Eben; Marjorie Adams fears the seductive sexual power of her assailant-turned victim, professor Angus Murchie; Clyde Griffiths fears his victim, his pregnant beloved, Roberta Alden’s power to shatter his dreams; Humbert Humbert fears his victim, Clare Quilty for his prospective threat to the happy and peaceful life of his beloved, Lolita; and Judas fears his victims, the Muslim terrorists, for their destructive power. It is evident that all these murderer-protagonists frame their ideologies—racial, materialistic, American dream, gender, familial and love—as a result of their ‘fear’ for the destructive ‘power’ of their victims.