Chapter VI

Conclusion

Sharon Pollock had been one of the boldest playwrights who took the psychological, social and even some historic issues with such courage and integrity. She studied understood the details of all her works before sketching the lines and putting life to their characters. Her characters seemed to be natural victim of the circumstances. This is the reason that she got the huge applause from her readers and audience as the sympathy and catharsis created during the presentation of plots were well absorbed by them.

The Canadian drama struggled for achieving, legitimizing and universalizing its own identity in 60s and 70s but things started falling to the mainstream and Canada started getting its recognition in 80s and 90s saw the economic issues with the greater political and artistic impact, making the Canadian theatre ‘survive’ more than ‘thrive’.

However the boom of mega-musical contributed to the renewed vigor, confidence and inner variety and more importantly ‘pluralism’ of Canadian theatre. The contribution of Sharon Pollock’s works in the form of playwright, actor,
director and producer has helped in providing new heights to the Canadian theatres; each season has seen the growing success of her plays.

She has also written six plays for children, several television and radio scripts, and award-winning dramas. She received the 1980 Nellie ACRA award for best radio drama (*Sweet Land of Liberty*); the 1981 Golden Sheaf award for the television film *The Person’s Case*; and the 1982 Governor General's award for *Blood Relations*, about Lizzie Borden, the acquitted axe murderer. In Theatre Calgary's 1981 production of the play, Pollock played the role of Miss Lizzie. Her next plays - *Walsh* (1974), *The Komagata Maru Incident* (1978) and *One Tiger to a Hill* (1981) -which have been produced in every major theatre centre in Canada, earned her a reputation as a playwright of conscience. *Generations* (1981), *Blood Relations* and *Doc* (1984, Governor General's Award) are less concerned with social issues and more with domestic conflict. *Doc* is loosely based on Pollock’s own family background; like her other plays, it is brutally honest, and painfully telling. Her play *Whiskey Six Cadenza*, a prison drama, was shortlisted for (but did not win) the 1987 Governor General's Awards, and in January 1988 she was awarded the Canada-Australia Literary Prize. Pollock returned to Calgary in 1988, which remains her home base. She founded the Garry theatre in Calgary (1992-97) to produce populist plays for the community. Her play, *Saucy Jack*, which considers the story of ‘Jack the Ripper’ from a woman’s point of view, was opened
at the Garry Theatre in Calgary under her direction in 1993. *Death in the Family* also opened at the Garry Theatre in 1993 (Dir. Rick McNairy), with Pollock playing the part of Renee Harvard.

In 1989 she appeared in her monologue, *Getting it Straight* at the international women's festival in Winnipeg (Dir. Rick McNairy). The most autobiographical of her works, *Eme* (‘me’) has escaped the confines of a mental institution and reflects on the disastrous state of the society and environment, under the grandstand at the Calgary stampede. In 1993 *Fair Liberty's Call*, another play, which scrutinizes the conflicted history of the loyalists in the Maritimes after the American war of ‘independence’, premiered at the Stratford festival (Dir. Guy Sprung).

Her contribution to the Canadian Cinema and theatre is immense and varied and has fetched accolades for good quality works also with a specific message in each work. She was not Didactic but she composed the literature with a purpose for the society and environment. She tried to showcase the issues and problems in a very smooth and natural way, well crafted and apt with the script.

pursue their talents and ambitions. In 2005 she appeared as ‘Shipman’ in the University of Alberta Studio Theatre Production of *Moving Pictures*, which traces the fraught career of feminist filmmaker Nell Shipman. In *Kalona Talk*, (2006) she sets a controversial Inuit trial in Edmonton, and in *Man Out of Joint,* (downstage performance society, Calgary 2007) she demonstrates the ways in which the political response to the September 11 disaster has taken away the rights and freedoms of Canadians, and questions the responsibilities of Canadians in respect to the incarceration of Omar Khadr at Guantanamo bay.

She also occasionally directs the plays of others, including Harold Pinter’s *Betrayal* for theatre junction in 1999. She has taught at the University of Alberta, led the playwrights' colony at the Banff centre for the arts (1977-80), and was playwright in residence at Alberta theatre projects (1977-79) and the national arts centre (1981-82). She was artistic director at theatre Calgary (1984) and theatre New Brunswick (1988). She has also served as chair of the advisory arts panel for the Canada council and was a member of the advisory committee for the national theatre school of Canada (1979-80).

She played the role of Martha in the Calgary's downstage production of *habitat* by Judith Thompson in 2008. In March 2011, at the age of 75, she acted and sang in the one-woman play, *Marg Szkaluba (Pissy's wife)* by Ron chambers at the ironwood stage and grill in Calgary, a reincarnation of the Garry theatre.
Produced by a new young company, verb theatre, and directed by Jamie duns don, it tells the story of a woman who has survived an abusive marriage, a subject that resonates with Pollock. Also in 2011, she acted as dramaturge for the ballet *Ghosts of Violence*, conceived by the Atlantic ballet company as a response to violence against women.

Sharon Pollock’s writing is very much helpful to the psychologists also to understand the reasons of some mal-behaviors in the individuals. Sharon Pollock’s writing is intelligent, provocative, and innovative, and she continues to experiment with structure, to explore controversial issues, and to care passionately about the Canadian theatre.

We the human beings display different behavioral patterns, when experience different environments. Different nature and behavior are observed when they grow in separate and different surrounding. “The nature of two twins get absolutely different when one grows in urban and other develop in rural area” says Dr. Sarita Jagawat, a renowned and very experienced psychologist of Fortis Jaipur.

To substantiate and confirm the objective further an interview was conducted to understand the reasons and causes of changes in human behavior when put under various conditions. The questionnaire used for finding out the
various reasons of typical human behavior, dependent on various terms and conditions is as follows:

Q1 Are the environmental variables responsible for different form of child’s behavior?

Ans. Personality is a product of basically heredity and environment and the interplay of both. It’s not that a single factor controls the behavioral pattern or personality types but several other factors too affect the development of personality. The nature of two twins get absolutely different when one grows in urban and other develop in rural area, although the twins develop through one same cell only but if the product grows in different environment, the different personality is resulted depending upon the experienced conditions, environment and upbringing.

Q2 Which are the important variables responsible for the various behavioral patterns?

Ans. Heredity, environment and the interplay of two. Experiences and the different people involved during the upbringing of a child also contribute to the thinking pattern, behavioral pattern and type of responses one gets from the surrounding.

Q3 What is the impact of separation of parents on children?
Ans. The children get hugely affected with the separation of parents. The way a child takes the external world (reflexes) is affected. Since the degree of “Contact – Comfort” changes, his emotional responses gets altered. The memories, general thinking, reflective thinking and hypothetical thinking all get affected. Activities like hatching, breast-feeding and connection towards umbilical cord plays significant role in the development of one’s life and personality. While mother remains the emotional reason of a all-time and unconditional support, the father gives the strength to a safe and secure surrounding. Both the parents are important being the pillars of emotional and physical strength to the surrounding and environment.

Tackling of various issues gets simpler if a child has the confidence of both the parents with him, otherwise the rebellious nature, the disbelief and mistrust can be observed. The degree of comfort zone and emotional bonding gets affected; the biasness of decisions takes place. This is more observed in female children being more sensitive and emotional as compared to the male children.

Q 4 Which traits or characteristics result due to the unhealthy childhood?

Ans. Unhealthy childhood may lead to fear, aggression and emotional anxieties. The problems related to mental and physical self may also occur. The
psychological reactions like depression, rebellious nature and various phobias and several other psychosomatic issues can also occur.

Q 5 How to detect these symptoms and traits?
Ans. The behavioral patterns are observed, personality is analyzed after certain malfunctions and characteristics are noted.

Q6 What are the controlling measures of such problems?
Ans. There are two ways of dealing such problems, through pharmacy and through non-pharmacy way. The issues like depression which happens due to the unfulfilled feelings, can be treated with the help of some pharmaceutical drugs while the non-pharmacy way can be useful by adopting certain therapies related to behavior, family, group, cognitive or through psychoanalysis of the abnormal behavioral pattern. One should avoid suppressing the feelings, excessive tolerance in order to avoid self or mental torture. The conduct disorders can be regulated if a close watch is kept on the changing behavioral patterns. Lack of understanding the conversation adds to the problem.
Q7 Suppose a child develops to a submissive or subdued adult then what can be the probable reasons?

Ans. The reasons may vary depending upon the situations and life experiences but usually this condition is called as OCD which is Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, a minor term associated with Catharsis. The reasons may be any among the following as if he is never appreciated by father or mother for his achievements or tasks, he may have any one parent like ‘Hitler’ or continuous nagging can be one of the reasons ...when people feel to share their problems or emotions or ‘excessive dependency’, lack of decision making skills or sometime the patient enjoys the attention showered due to sympathy and agony.

Q8 Tell us the basic strategy to handle all the above quoted reasons of mal-behavior patterns.

Ans. Parents have to wisely spot the reasons for the behavioral problems. Socializing is very important tool which can help in regulating the behavior patterns, instead of using social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter, encourage your child to have a face to face connectivity with friends, relatives and well-wishers. Make them Self-Sufficient and till the kids grow mature and not able to differentiate between wrong or right, just guide them as elder friends or if required, ‘Get Firm’ for their better future.
Q9 Explain the degree of firmness…that a parent can adopt to discipline one’s child.

Ans. Firmness includes a particular level of discipline, strict decisions as per the situations and behavioral developments. Discipline is very important for a better life, children may have their reactions but ‘don’t react to their reactions’ reacting to their reactions would be a mistake, if the parents are firm the desired results can be derived. The firmness, discipline and certain rules and regulations all three can be regulated for a particular ‘conditioning’ as per the behavioral issue. The firmness should not be confused with harshness, a parent has to remember that the kind-firmness works better, aggression should be avoided and the parents should never feel helpless subconsciously. Condition the way you want to alter the behavior of your child or patient.

Q10 The productive activities or behavioral patterns that you suggest to impact a growing child for a positive development.

Ans. Desires and interests should be understood and evaluated properly. Children should be encouraged to socialize and communicate with friends, relatives, neighbors and well-wishers. Celebrations of achievements and special dates should encourage the feeling of togetherness and mutual trust and respect. Take the call and initiative must be taken. Break the guilt apprehensions and complexes. If you
want to change the environment, you can just be assured that results and relationships do not suffer.

Sharon Pollock who was herself a battered wife and did not have a healthy childhood, was harboring certain hidden feelings and emotions in her heart. The life of Sharon was devoid of happy and satisfying experiences. Through Lizzie Bordon, her protagonist in *Blood Relations* she got the opportunity to mirror all the frustrations and complains with the surrounding. As in the above interview with the expert psychologist Dr. Savita I have tried to prove that the surrounding environment and the life’s experience that one face in his life are majorly responsible for the behavioral patterns.

Lizzie, the main character in *Blood Relations* is depicted as a passionate Victorian spinster who was longing for love in her life. She had lost her mother and she hated her step-mother, ‘don’t forget everyone hates a wicked step-mother’ a character who was repressed, unemployable and alone in the world who did not have the security of family in her life. The chain of actions move in a way that she finally kills her father with an axe very brutally with forty whacks and after realizing what she had done, she gave forty one whacks to her step-mother too. For Lizzie the axe became a love object, to Lizzie which symbolized to the freedom from her troubles. The culture in America again reflected power, patriarchy, sexuality and love in the surroundings which brought the unrest, dissatisfaction,
rebellion and boredom in the society. People lacked the mutual respect and trust in each other’s relationships. The presence of all these issues have affected the characterization in the scripts of theatre plays and the true picture which was present in the society ruled the theatres too, and the play like *Blood Relations* were super success. Lizzie Bordon is the mouthpiece of Sharon to express the agony, frustration and all fantasies of killing her own husband. The circumstances that she faced in her life which were not supportive and made her to rebel against her husband were created in the play *Blood Relations* where the intensity of the frustrations and pain had lead to the killing of the parents by Lizzie. The behavioral patterns develop due to the experienced surrounding, people in contact and the created circumstances around the characters. The outcome of the actions seems very justifying with the depicted reasons around the characters as happened in *Blood Relations* that the audience fail to hate the characters for such barbaric actions even.

The story of *Doc* also revolves around a very famous doctor Eve who dedicated his whole life for the community service, but completely ignored his home, his wife and her lovely estranged daughter Catherine. The circumstances lead to the death of her frustrated wife who drank herself to death. The loneliness and want of love were among the main causes. It is a memory play when the daughter comes back to the town on the eve of ceremonious honoring her
physician father and the revival of the past takes place when the father and daughter unleashes a kaleidoscope of memories. The trouble with authority or the troubled relationships have been one of the significant themes of Sharon Pollock’s works. The troubled relationships lead the murder of parents in *Blood Relations* by Lizzie while the conflict in the relationships in *Doc* lead to the death of the doctor’s wife and the separation of the daughter. The degree of intensity of *emotions* had different impacts in *Doc* and *Blood Relations*. The circumstances play a contributive role in deciding the behavioral patterns of human beings, also the psychological aspects regulates the intensity of the degree of actions. The suicide of Doctors’ mother, the over-workaholic nature of father and the death of mother due to alcoholism lead to the development of an insecure daughter who suffered from the conflicted relationships. Catherine is depicted as an abandoned child who was neglected by her narcissistic parents, again a victim of circumstances.

*Walsh* and *Fair Liberty’s Call* shifts the experiments of Sharon Pollock towards the official and professional grounds. *Walsh* is a drama about the disillusionment of a man who was betrayed by the government mode of actions. Sharon Pollock came under the national attention due to this drama as it raised the issue of Sitting Bull, chief of the Hunkpapa Sioux, and James A. Walsh, Superintendent of the NWMP, two officials of great dignity and honor. The drama
was considered prominent due to its passionate presentation of the racial and cultural division in the country. The sequence of events was fresh and was capable to arouse the troubling thoughts about Canada’s treatment of aboriginal people and about its relations with the United States. Walsh the main character was forced to realize the ugly reality. He was forced to admit that he was serving a government that based its Indian policies on recommendations from the field only and he realized that he was a simple puppet and the Sioux are the Pawns and there is no sense carrying out the task further. The circumstances forces him to take a tough decision and he feels the helplessness, agony and pain which further intensifies his pathos. Circumstances control the behavioral patterns of human being, it’s just not the heredity or the environment but the interplay of both which plays a crucial role in deciding the typical shades of nature and temperament. Through *Fair Liberty’s Call* the exploration of family tensions and professional conflicts are intermixed and presented in a very subtle way. The play centers on the Roberts family during the Revolutionary war. It depicts how the father of the family keeps shifting his loyalties to the English Crown and the rebels depending upon the offered gains and benefits. The eldest son of the family fights with the loyalist and when he dies in the battlefield his younger sister takes his place attired in the form of a man. The process of regendering and taking new responsibility brings new challenges to
Emily. Sharon Pollock has finely presented how the female characters fight against the oppressive forces or restrictions to gain her own identity.

Thus to sum up the study and the observations derived from the Sharon Pollock’s plays, the characters of her plays provide a great source for studying the psychoanalytical angles through various dimensions and its proved that the behavioral patterns of the human beings are dependent on heredity and environment both. The interplay of both the factors immensely impacts the nature and temperament of individuals. The actions, behavior or the nature of human beings, which forms the personality of a human being largely dependent on the experienced situations, circumstances and surrounding individuals. Individuals are the victim of the circumstances and experiences, if they can be regulated, the actions and resultant reactions can also be altered or controlled up to a certain degree. The ‘Self’ is the centre of all personality, it is a reason for changes and the dynamism in the personality of the individuals. Jung developed a psychology of totality in his book *Psychology and alchemy* in 1944 and based the concept of Psychology on ‘Self’. This is the focal point of personality around which all other para-systems are related. The Equilibrium, Unity and the Stability in a personality are achieved with the proper balance of Self and other related issues. The Personality, behavior and nature of an individual depends on many factors as discussed before. The experts stress that the Heridity, Experience and the
Environment are the related significant systems which affect the total outcome of any personality. The behavioral patterns are the outcomes of the heredity, Environment or the interplay of the two factors.

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