Sharon Pollock studied and traced the new discoveries in the famous “Twin-Murder” case and thus Blood Relations was authored. It is considered as the one of her best works as the depiction of psychological state of the main character Lizzy Bordon lead the audience and reader believe that the result was the outcome of the circumstances. Lizzy is able to fetch the sympathy of the viewers and audience and made them understood as the trapped victim of the circumstances. In Walsh, The Komagatu Maru and One Tiger to a Hill, Sharon Pollock has employed the device of “Game” for heightening the impact of action. This device of Game is interwoven in Blood Relations in a natural way and seems to be the natural part of the play. Dream thesis is again device for which Sharon Pollock is famous for. The play shows the dreamy facts and avoid realism. There are various reference of in-out of present and past progressions. Apart from Lizzy Bordon, the actress and Emma are the three main characters of Blood Relations, while the others like her father, mother Harry, Dr. Patrick etc gives a misty and hallucination feature to the play. These are the ghosts of Lizzy’s memory. The randomness of the present and past increases the ambiguity of the play.
The play Blood Relations is based on an actual incident of a very famous axe-murder incident happened in the city. Sharon Pollock studied the details and built the script on historical evidences. The legal case lasted for fourteen days and created a national sensation. The opinion about Lizzie varied from guilt to innocent. Lizzie and Emma hired the most outstanding and the most expensive lawyers of the city. The lawyers presented the case in a very passionate and persuasive way. Lizzie did not even testify her trials and direct testimony but she said that she was innocent and she wanted her counsel to speak for her. In the play her part is played by her actress friend from Boston. She herself essayed the role of the maid Bridget and as an observer who directed the play of Lizzie. The framework presented the game device also when Lizzy ask her maid to play as Lizzie and both of them tried to bring back the situation happened around ten years back. The play strongly presents the case of Lizzy Bordon and the whole framework helps her to prove her innocence, Sharon Pollock has presented the facts and fiction through her protagonists’ angles and the viewers are assumed as the witness to the whole series of incidents responsible for the murder. The truth is taken out and Lizzy Bordon is acquitted, she is able to get the absolute sympathy of the audience, her lawyers were also successful in establishing her as a innocent character trapped under circumstances. Lizzy was a character who did not get love from her parents, her step-mother treated her unwanted and her own father shunned
her of the family unit, being under his wife’s influence. The frustration, dejection, loneliness and pain were the main features of Lizzie’s action. She was not at all remorseful even after twin-murders of her step-mother and father. The pain and agony felt by her in due to the partial behavior of her mother, the hurt received through her father later heightened the rebel into her. She was craving for love and care and nobody gave respect and due love to her. The feeling of dejection increased the rebellious attitude and finally she is shown as a trapped victim who does not get afraid even to kill her own parents.

The play Blood Relations is relevant even today for various issues, mainly for today’s life pattern in family units and secondly the increase in ‘Self-True’ or ‘Self-thought’ attitude. These days due to the change in living style, change in the technology around us, change in the family structures and the way the menace Stress’ has quietly crept into our societies, the inter-personal relationships have suffered a big blow. Many people spent their life in brooding real and imagined justices and injustices. The suspicion has crept in, which has stolen the respect even from the daughter father or son-mother relationships. The change in the behavioral patterns lead to the change in the personalities of the individuals.

Lack of communication and mutual respect with each other further increase the problem of ‘happy society’. The characteristics of personality displays the the reactions of high level of aspirations, intolerance and impatience. The craving for
praise and recognition is quite common to human behavior these days. Individuals are not able to adjust with each other, they cannot respect the views of their peer or even siblings sometimes. Blood Relations forces us to think on the circumstances which create the reasons for such heinous crimes as the justified acts. The society is passing through a change where a transition is happening in life-style, mindset, technology and behavior patterns. The basic moral values which were expected to be followed earlier around twenty- thirty years back seem to be difficult to follow in present scenario. The break-up of the family units into smaller and nuclear versions provide less scope for communication and healthy bonding in the relationships. The individuals fail to find a stable all-time support in their lives. Desire of love, attention and care is expected in the offsprings of the family where the struggle in relationship is observed. The tussle and chronic fights within the domestic environment leads to the insecurity and suspicion about the future and the societal environment. Lizzie Bordon also became the victim of the environment, she was not able to find a conducive environment in her own family. The bonds of love and care for which and individual crave for which a family stands for. The feeling of togetherness was absolutely missing in the family of Lizzie. Mutual disrespect and suspicion leads to the anxiety and rebellious attitude of the individuals. The relationships should be respected and should be nurtured with love and togetherness. Lizzie did not even feel remorseful about her crime as she
felt she was justified in her acts. The feelings of happiness, well-being or sunny optimism have a strong force to change the environment. The disorder in behavior exist when these factors go missing along with lack of humour. There can be a rapid shift in thinking pattern, acting pattern, the delusions, and hallucinations become the common features. Apprehensions and anxiety are common. Psychological experts suggest that all such issues may lead to faulty chemical brain chemistry. Manic reactions may occur in trying to escape from a lot of activities and reasons. Sometimes the people fight such stress with more socializing, drinking, gossiping meetings or duties. Lizzie Bordon, written decade back is still relevant as the society is changing with a fast speed, had she given the due love and respect in her own family, the rebellious attitude might have not strengthened. Science has proved that the psychological disorders even leads to some diseases also like gastric, respiratory hypertension, skin-disease or the cardio-vascular diseases.

Psychological experts suggest that the highly driven individuals, those who easily feel the stress, they react to any kind of threat with the displaying hostility and extreme anxiety. The psycho-somatic disorders and the psychophysiologic disorders are very common. The faulty behavioral patterns lead to some peculiar traits which make a anti-social or rebel-personality just like Lizzie Bordon. Some
of the traits are irresponsible, immoral, impulsive, unrealistic, anxious and disappointing behavior.

In Blood Relations, Lizzie Bordon did not even regret for killing her own parents. One of the most confusing and surprising disorder is that in which an individual who otherwise seem to be normal, lack in conscience development and fail to develop any feeling of warmth or loyalty to other family member. Society is in a transition stage. Latest technology, skilled craftsmen, engineers or professionals, updated sea of information, under the touch command of a key, have brought a revolution in the world. Engineers and managers of today have immense potential and capabilities which are well supported with the customized set of skills. The tremendous advances of modern science and technology have made this time as “Platinum Age” and with this comes many problems and threats which make this age as an age of cut throat competition, which further leads to unmanageable stress and anxiety. The psychological consequences on the thought and behavior become increasingly complicated. Almost in all the sections of our society whether at personal or professional front, we see a rapid change and modification in the established customs, traditions and values.

Today two major ideologies – communism and democracy are responsible for the global unrest, conflict and changes in the mindset of our professionals. People are adopting a set of some basic life skills that are essential in climbing the
“success ladder” with much faster pace. Any individual technical or non technical professional requires an appropriate communication skills, negotiation skills, conflict resolution, personal thinking, persuasive skills and decision making capabilities etc which are considered as essential life skills for surviving today. Now we all formulate certain meaningful life plans to achieve success, stability and peace in our lives but the failure in getting our targeted goals, leads to serious disorders and difficulties. One is reminded of Sharon Pollock characters, like Lizzie Blood Relations is the product and victim of the materialistic bourgeois social conventionality of her day that gives no breathing space either to individuality or eccentricity. Such individuals appear to drift through life with little or no sense of direction and usually experience a sense of dissatisfaction, aimlessness and being lost.

Failure to develop the various competencies to counter the routine problems of life lead to the exhibit of poor grace, weak personality and incompetent soft skills. Just have a look on various competencies any professional should be aware about

**Intellectual Competency** - Creative thinking, decision making, Conflict resolution etc.

**Emotional Competency** - Appropriate intensity of feelings of love Fear, Guilt, Anger and hatred etc.
Social Competency - Healthy interpersonal relationship with Kins, friends and colleagues etc.

A balanced equipping of these general competencies helps in promoting and maintaining a healthy and productive work environment. The word “Psychology” has been derived from the Greek word psyche meaning breath, spirit, soul and the Greek word logia means the study of something. Research has proved that human behavior, experiences, nature, beliefs and conflicts between conscious views of reality and unconscious thoughts can result in the contribution of some particular traits. The professionals living under highly stressed conditions with a constant pressure to achieve the business targets, ultimately crackdown and irritation, aimlessness, frustration and anxiety replaces the motivation, confidence refined mannerism and persuasive skills. For a power professional, stability comes with a control on breath, spirit and soul, apart from holding a good position in the organization. But when the balance is lost, self-direction is also lost. Self direction requires decision making and suitable action on time, it is important that the individual develop an adequate system of values for guiding his behavior.

A professional can adapt to the situation if he is able to identify the reason of “behavioral shift“ and evaluate the degree of threat it poses, corrective measures
can be taken if one is able to watch one’s psychology, “Behavioral Shift” inhibits the focus on goals and there creeps the irritation and aimlessness and this affects the total communication which results in alteration of the soft skills. Emotional unstability and lacking to cope the work culture leads to further frustration. Effective communication skills, negotiation tactics and team playing ,and decision making suffers .Observing ,Identifying and Evaluating the whole process of “behavioral shift” makes an individual to locate the possible factors. The ability to monitor our emotional tone is very essential to achieve the ‘harmony’ in our inner sense. This harmony is exhibited with a balanced result of perfect communication skills, appropriate negotiation strategies and suitable Decision making skills give birth to a co-operative team player and a dynamic individual. Presence of productive soft skills in the professionals make them good human beings who can contribute to the amazing growth of the organization.

Deep commitment and sense of belongingness are observed in the leaders having the perfect soft skills, and this is only possible when an absolute balance of Psyche is maintained. So watch your psychology to have refined life skills in order to have progress and peace in the professional life.
In *Blood Relations*, the dream technique is applied by Sharon Pollock through Miss Lizzy’s hypnotic account of her dream of the mask and the scene which heightens the impact of climax with her father’s axe-murder of the birds; the actress visualizes the horrible imagining of murder. In the second act Lizzie Bordon requests her sister to join her in preserving or saving loss of their inheritance, which was a symbol of independence for her. This scene justifies the significance of taking a decision between suicide or murder. Out of the two choices, ‘murder’ got over the struggle.

Miss Lizzy’s climactic bit of stage directing is evident in the Actress’s lines: “I want to die...I want to die, but something inside won’t let me… Inside something says no.” (*Blood Relations*). After shutting her eyes, the Actress opens them to say “I can do anything,” and from that point, murder is no longer fantastical. Lizzy is depicted to undergo mental turmoil and struggle about taking her tough decision of murdering her own parents, but the author presents the chain of incidents and thinking pattern in such a way that the readers and the viewers flow with the concept and are forced to pay sympathy for her heinous crime.

The ending does not simply return us to 1902; the two players return with the unexpected and profoundly troubling recognitions that they both arrive at from having played the game. The actress learns not only that her friends could have
hacked two people to death, but- in the last line of the play that she herself could kill. Miss Lizzy, having just maneuvered her alter-ego through a serious of seemingly free choices, having just made someone else act out her life, is suddenly face to face with her elder sister and has horrifying moment of self-estrangement, in which she sees herself as the someone else, and her sister as the manipulator, “your hand working my mouth, me saying all the things you felt like saying, me doing all the felt like doing.” Two protagonists, two recognitions, cross each other. The actress can imagine killing to be the free woman she is now. Lizzie must ask herself: Am I, was I, free? Was I a puppet? A strange and haunting conclusion is drawn. The audience too is forced in these final moments to look back over the whole play with fresh eyes.

The ending makes the play a more dangerous confrontation and moves it away from being simply a sermon against the subjection of women, which is what the 1892 scenes would amount to if played by themselves, as indeed they were in the first version of the play, titled My Name is Lisbeth (produced in 1976). One’s response can then be quite comfortable: “look what an independent, spirited woman was driven to in 1892.”

Surround these events with the ‘game’ and you overlay their relatively acceptable message with disquieting insights into the mystery and ambiguity of personal identity: where do we draw the boundary between ‘me’ and ‘not-me’, on
the near or far side of murder, on the near or far side of another person? In this
case, the feminism of the play has a flavor of Pirandello. Being a woman is
being the other in somebody else’s perceptions.

Sharon Pollock is an extraordinary writer with the didactic style without
even declaring her didactism. Blood Relations is applauded for its strength of
expression. The smooth dialogue, connecting scenes and justified context further
enhances the script. The double plot in the play makes it denser to express the
relevance of every object and product is being searched for revelation in 1902.
The presentation of poetic passages into the main structure of the play was new as
it was never employed in her earlier plays. The induction of animals, poison, birds
and Eyes, re-occur throughout the script. The play is loaded with numerous
metaphors of naturalism like coffee, hatchet, staircase, money and newspaper.

The play *Blood Relations* is the presentation of struggle between the inner
conscious and the rebellious power. It is depicted as an equivocal victory. The
personality of Lizzie is presented as a strong shade where the larger force won over
her inner conscious. The oppressive force is not longer an identifiable institution
or a consciously-undertaken program; the myth that sustains it needs no apologist.
Lizzy Bordon struggles to get freedom from the patriarchial system, She gets wild
and mad to achieve her free will. The father is a fascinating study of man who is
not even aware of an impermeable barrier in his mind between his affection for his
daughter and the assumptions on which he bases his actions. Sharon Pollock has shifted the accent without even affecting the struggle of Lizzy.

The montage-structure, characteristic of much of her work, is further developed in this play. The juxtaposition of 1892 and 1902 scenes has a compelling inner logic. The play’s rhythm is an exacting challenge to performers. Act I has steadily-accelerating rhythm must successfully fuse with the gradually intensifying stillness of Act II.

*One Tiger to a Hill*, the second play in the volume, seems to be the least successful of Sharon Pollock’s published plays. Although, like most of her plays, it is based on real events, in this case the famous riots in the British Columbia Penitentiary and at Attica Prison are depicted, it is curiously detached from reality, its characters and situations are too close to the clichés of television melodrama. The play unfolds as if narrated by a character much like *Walsh*, a lawyer whose faith in the system he serves is shaken to its roots by what he discovers when he find himself inside the Pen as a mediator between hostages and prison authorities. But his part in the action is so peripheral that it will not bear the weight of the anguish, he informs us he is suffering. Like many things in the play, the rehabilitation work which is we are told is held in contempt by the prison security staff, and the evil of solitary confinement which we do not get to hear about in any detail until near the end- it has to be taken on faith.
The most severe problem in the play is that the jarring clash between the political and the personal aspects of the play confuses rather than illuminates. The political message, conveyed by the rapid montage of scenes with the hostage-takers and with the prison authorities, carries depressing sense of hopelessness about changing the system, or even heading off a violent end to the crisis. But the violent end, in which two people are killed, arises out of pure soap opera. Has Dede, the classification officer, allowed Tommy, the ex-contract killer to make love to her? When Tommy makes himself an easy target for Hanzuk, the guard, is he doing it to save Dede, whom he intended to use as a shield, or is he throwing his life away in despair over Dede’s eleventh-hour confession that she does not love him? Does Hanzuk shot Dede because he used to stand outside her office when Tommy was with her, seething with sexual hang-ups? All these possibilities are raised, quite insistently, and are left up in the air; yet no other reading of the climatic events, particularly the death of Dede, is offered.

This sexual triangle imposes the stock motivations of melodrama into a play that apparently intended to say something about the inhumanity of the prison system, particularly the arbitrary power and absence of due process pointed to by a character that does a lot of editorializing. In this play the personal and public aspects do not reinforce or resonate with each other, as they do in the other two plays in the volume. It is a confused and unfocused play, which has never worked
on stage, except when Sharon Pollock herself directed a workshop production at the National Arts Centre. Perhaps she directed the play she intended to write.

*Generations*, the third play in the volume, registers a further stage in a gradual shift of accent in Pollock’s works from big issues to the characters on whom (and within whom) these issues have their impact. It is not at all a matter of dropping her concern with large social issues—certainly in *Generations* the impact of government policy on the survival of the family farm on the prairies is big enough. It is a matter of almost a Chekhovian approach letting the texture of people’s lives speaks indirectly about the forces affecting them.

The dialogue has a refreshingly unpretentious ring to it. Much more is said sub-textually in this play than is the case with her previous work to 1980, even *Blood Relations*, where this kind of textured writing first appears (and is appropriately called ‘painting the background’).

For instance, the opening sequence, and exchange between Old Eddy Nurlin and his grandson David, has a marvelous off-hand kind of humor and accomplishes a considerable task of exposition at the same time. It conveys the strong sense of family, the sense of changing value over three generations, the strong bond between Old Eddy and David, on which the plot hinges, and concise and very vivid thumbnail sketches of the major characters and what Old Eddy thinks of them by way of pungent comments on their drinking habits.
The play focuses on two brothers, David and Young Eddy, and on the contrast between young Eddy’s leaving the farm to become a lawyer, and David’s apparently fatalistic acceptance of the burden of being the third generation of Nurlins to run the place. To David’s fiancé, Eddy seems a free person and David a person who will never have the chance to be what he wants. But the play is about inheritance, about how you can inherit an obligation that slowly ripens into a vocation, and about the family farm as not just a way of growing food but as a way of preserving a sense of a life spanning generations, indeed as a human construct that is bigger than the individual and so permits him to hold his own against the vastness of the prairie landscape. It is a difficult theme to dramatize, as the acceptance is fundamentally inarticulate, a product of time not of purposive action.

The play comes close to succeeding, although Sharon Pollock notes that none of the productions of the play has successfully met the enormous and may be impossible task if imposes on a designer. The plays calls for the most detailed farm-kitchen realism yet, at the same time for the most abstract and mythic rendering of the prairie landscape. When the naturalistic dialogue reaches toward the mythic level, there is a similar clashing of gears. Still, even though the play is not completely successfully, it does strike out into new territory. This is particularly evident in the climax. David is under the kind of pressure that Sharon Pollock always puts her protagonists under. His integrity and personal dignity are
under attack from a number of directions—his brother, his finance, the faceless government representatives—and he finally erupts into the kind of irrevocable act we have seen in her previous plays. What do you do after you have burnt the place down? But here the accent is entirely different. A thunderstorm douses the fire, Old Eddy gives David a ‘licking’ and tells him not to do that again. So the big moment is a throw-away. The stress is on the texture of life before the crisis and on how life is resumed afterwards. David emerges not change—but confirmed in what he knew already but could not articulate.

Sharon Pollock’s radio play, *Intensive Care*, broadcast on CBC Radio in June 1983, is her most recently produced work. It addresses the issue on euthanasia, yet goes beyond the limits of the issue. It explores the territory opened up by Blood Relations, the disquieting revelations at the boundaries of personal identity. In it, a nurse, who has made what seemed to her the same and reasonable decision to pull the plug on a brain-dead patient, is horrified to discover that she has breached the boundaries that until then had restrained a fellow-nurse, who kills a hydrocephalic child because it would not have much of a life anyway, and attempts to take the life of an elderly man simply because he has a pain in the ass. The play ends with protagonist insisting with mounting anxiety that “there is a difference between her and me.”
An overview of Sharon Pollock’s work rectifies the impression often conveyed in reviews that she is a didactic playwright, whose characters are merely mouthpieces for social criticism. It is a conception framed with some justification on the basis of Walsh, and like many another journalistic ready-made, it clings to life. But now it is clear that this stereotype has become increasingly ill-fitting. The grain of truth in it is her steady attention to the impact of public issues, and public myths, on individual’s lives. John Palmer’s marvelous tirade, “Henrik Ibsen on the necessity of Producing Norwegian Drama” (CTR, 1977), implied that there was no reason why Canada could not produce a playwright of Ibsen’s stature, as long as it undertook not actively to prevent such an occurrence. When Canada’s answer to Ibsen emerges, it will be someone like Sharon Pollock, with her long-haul commitment to the discipline, with her experimentation, and expansion of the boundaries of her dramatic universe, and quite possibly with her practice of working in more than one performance medium.

The play Blood Relations, in contrast to Pollock’s previous work, was initiated from an interest in the dramatic possibilities of the story rather than an issue. She had written an earlier version in 1975 entitled My name is Lisbeth, as a naturalistic exercise reflecting her hobby interest in violent crime. The crime in this case is the famous axe murders of 1982 in which a New England spinster was charged and acquitted of the murder of her father and step-mother; although the
crime was never solved, many writers have since received the evidence on the matter of Lizzie’s guilt. Pollock claims she was dissatisfied with her first play (in which Lizzie does commit the murders) because she lost interest in the ‘who done it’ question. What attracted her more was the ambiguity that is now an inherent part of the Lizzie Borden myth. The re-structuring of the play into its present form (developed at a 1977 workshop at the playwright’s colony in Banff) transforms basically the same events of *My Name is Lisbeth* into a context that both exploits the ambiguity and introduces what Pollock has casually referred to as “a lot of women’s lib numbers,” adding: “In a way I found myself using an historical situation for a metaphor for a much more contemporary women’s theme” (Ashwell, D2). The difference from the other historically based plays is *Blood Relations* metaphorical rather than casual focus on the present, for which the vehicle is organically theatrical.

The new structure comprises a play-within-the play performed in 1902, ten years after the murders. The performances are Miss Lizzie Borden herself, although she plays the role of Bridget the maid and her friend the unnamed Actress in the role of Lizzie. In this ‘dream thesis’ Enactment of the two days leading to the murders, the other participant’s emerge in flash-back as required. The 1902 time frame permits the portrayal of Miss Lizzie’s emotional relationship with the Actress, mostly made manifest in her ‘painting in the background’ from time to
time as the performance game proceeds. This allows Miss Lizzie the role of
director, as it were, when she is not playing Bridget. This outer play is dramatically
a more sophisticated development of the various presentational narrating devices
Pollock hitherto attempted; in this case the Actress, like Ev Chalmers in One Tiger
to a Hill, is the participating outsider in the process of discovering answers to
important questions, but the Actress is more personally involved and in her case
performance is her best method of expression.

Since the ‘affair’ is based on the Actress’s own fascination with the
ambiguity, Miss Lizzie herself has no way of directly responding to her friend’s
inevitable question, “did you?”, and so suggests the game. Ironically, the Actress,
who starts out tentatively playing Lizzie under Miss Lizzie’s guidance, by the
second act has taken over the part so completely and convincingly that she has
forgotten her friend in the intensity of her own performance. Indeed she seems to
have forgotten that is performance and so far a time she has become Lizzie Borden,
or her own idea of her. When she recovers herself she is able to conclude, “Lizzie,
you did.” Finally Miss Lizzie refuses to acknowledge the actress’ version, even
though she helped her friend to discover it. Instead she calmly answers with the
literal truth of what she and the audience were on the verge of witnessing, saying
“I didn’t… you did” (10).
For Miss Lizzie to admit to any final self-recognition in her friend’s performance would be to disturb her own carefully preserved present-day identity as the ambiguous Miss Lizzie Borden—particularly since the Actress’s depiction explores the people and events of ten years ago in terms of the threatened violation then of Lizzie’s sense of self. For example, Actress/Lizzie says to Mr. Borden”, “I’m supposed to be a mirror. I’m supposed to reflect what you want to see, but everyone wants something different. If no one looks in the mirror, I’m not even there, I don’t exist!” (39). In their piquantly co-operative effort, the substance of this idea is picked up and elaborated a little later by Miss Lizzie in one of her coaching speeches about a dream of seeing herself on a carousel wearing a mask with no eyes behind it. Eyes are also on Miss Lizzie’s link to the bright eyes of love, she sees in her pet birds that her father kills with an axe, this in a fit of anger and guilt that concerns his transfer of Lizzie’s cherished farm to the use of his wife’s hateful brother. Ironically this is the same father whom Lizzie also deeply loves and who loves her when she is “good”. Actress Lizzie creates a divided person: the strong rebellious self at war with the vulnerable little girl self.

Through Blood Relations playful structure, the historical situation becomes ‘a metaphor for a more contemporary women’s theme’. The contemporary theme is the identity question that interpenetrates the outer and inner play by means of the romantic relationship played out between the two women in the process of the
performance: one is inviting intimacy while the other is trying to respond. The climax of the performance and its aftermath, noted above, has the additional and perhaps more important effect of revealing the feminist politic of the play. This is to say, in the playwright’s own comment, that “all of us capable of murder given the right situation” (Wallace and Zimmerman, 121-2). In the context of the play as a whole, this is a feminist point. The ‘right circumstances’ that support the Actress’s interpretation of psychological violation are shaped by Pollock from the historical Lizzie Borden’s life. She is a spinster who has no freedom of choice beyond whatever the oppressive conventions of her social class would allow in 1892: marriage or dutiful daughterhood. Ironically what probably saved her from the noose, as the voice of the defense in Blood Relations makes clear, is the reversed sexism of disbelief that a ‘gentlewoman’ who is “a recipient of the fullest amenities our society can bestow upon it most fortunate members” could be “capable of such an act” (36). By in effect reversing that point on the audience as well as the Actress, Pollock is forcing the realization that feminist questions have been asked without insisting on absolute answers, questions that have as much to do with the audience as with Lizzie Borden.

In this play Sharon Pollock has most successfully achieved her aim to move the audience emotionally and yet distance it intellectually through what begins and concludes as a Brechtian performance (Bessai, “Theatre” 6). Formally and
philosophically Pollock has virtually created an anti-documentary play’ she has moved from a critical corrective to history (for example in Walsh and The Komagata Maru Incident.) to an implicit critique of documentary drama’s basic assumption that the truth can be demonstrably discovered in an investigatory dramatic structure. What remains in Blood Relations is documentary’s presentational strategy of interaction between investigation and reconstruction. In this case, however, the reconstruction itself is wittily suspected.

The questions about women’s dependence and independence initiated in Blood Relations continue in the plays to follow. Women are still basically portrayed through their connections with men, but their personal perspectives are more individually articulated that before Blood Relations; there are those who have reasons to confirm to the dominant male version of themselves and those who struggle against it. In Whiskey Six Cadenza and Doc, the male characters that are central to the drama are largely presented through their relationships with women, that is, in a dramatic way rather than in the structural relationship demanded by the issues of the earlier plays. As the imagination begins to free itself from documentation in Pollock’s work a sign in evidence throughout her earlier writing with mixed results- she becomes more introspective about human relations, continuing to strive for the unusual stage approach in a manner that combines old method and themes with new.
In Pollock’s next play, *Generations*, questions rose in *Blood Relations* on matters of dependence and identity are put directly into a modern context where, unlike Lizzie, one is free to choose. The main theme of the play (the only naturalistic stage work to date) is the tie of the land as it affects the three generations of Nurlin farmers from old Eddie, the pioneer, to his grandson David who is expected to carry on the family tradition and shows every indication of wanting to do so. The woman’s question enters through David’s girl friend bonnie, a local school teacher who is infected with rather undefined aspirations for a different way of life. If *Blood Relations* deals with the condition of female oppression, then *Generations* refers to its prevention. When Bonnie talks about fear of losing ‘herself’ (although it is not too clear to her or the audience who that self is), all she has to do is walk away, which she does, in the belief that “this country uses people up and wears them out and throws them away!” and that for her, if she leaves, “There’s worse things than (being) lonely” (170,189).

*She walks* away, in effect, from the traditional life of the exploited and desperate farm women deplored by so many writers of prairie fictional realism from F. P. Grove and Sinclair Ross to Gwen Ringwood and Margaret Laurence. Pollock, however, also provides a twist to that prairie stereotype in the character of Margaret Nurlin, David’s mother. She actually like her life on the farm and has chosen it freely: when her own family lost everything to the Depression, she was
glad to marry Alfred and “be part of something again” (189). Even though this also means that she is apt to acquiesce to the men’s decision (the current question is her eldest son’s request for the same of a section of land to finance his new practice), she is still a more solidly articulated character than the rather nebulous Bonnie whose dividedness is realized perhaps more prescriptively than dramatically in the play. White Bonnie urges the name questions she asks of herself on David in his circumstance as the son who is expected to stay, his relationship to his grandfather and the land itself seems more relevant than his relationship to her. However, the point is only implicitly ironic.

In the second and more ambitious of her Alberta plays, *Whiskey Six Cadenza*, Pollock has better succeeded in the dramatic integration of her women characters in the male dominated world of its setting. Once again she has distanced herself from the present by examining a controversial era from the Canadian past, this time prohibition as it affects the small Crow’s nest Pass mining town of Blair more in 1919 and 1920. But in this case she shows no direct political concern to correct the distortions of history as with *Walsh* or *The Komagata Maru Incident* nor is she ostensibly trying to free the story form the past in order; to make it a present-day experience for the audience as; in *Blood Relations*. While the same general public themes of earlier work for present particularly how authoritarian regulation destroys freedom of choice and self-responsibility, this in its prohibition
setting serves the fictional circumstances rather than an overt didacticism. Although the work was initially drawn from a documentary base (Brennan, H1), the playwright has made her polemics the function of plot and character. Whiskey Six Cadenza is a haunting balladic fable of a curious and ultimately tragic love triangle that strives to retain its sense of pastness rather than insisting on a modern expose of that past.

Johnny Farely, a naïve young man whose father is a miner and whose mother is strict temperance, falls in love with an ‘incandescent’ young woman, Leah, whose protector in the guise of foster-father is Mr. Big, the local runner (and whose six-cylinder McLaughlin car, good for bootlegging getaways, gives the play its title). Originally conceived as a musical, the play retains something of that quality in its unobtrusive memory structure and its impressionist interweaving of musical and visual image; these both complement individual scenes and compositely create a pattern of the conflicting “multiple realities” that fatefully dominate the lives of the characters.

The ugliest of these are the shocking working conditions in the mines. Also, in these drab working lives, prohibition with its regulation of two percent beer makes even the most obvious avenue temporary escape difficult. The lively, often comic action of the play has to do with the clumsy efforts of bill Windsor, of the Alberta prohibition police, to catch Mr. Big in his nefarious dealings in the Alberta
Hotel. On the personal side is the apparent freedom of romantic reality: between Will, Johnny’s older brother, and Dolly and, as the play develops, between Johnny and Leah. Johnny, at the express bidding of his mother, had sought to leave Blair more and the mines behind, but now he has been forced to return for lack of work elsewhere. He alienates his mother by going to work for Mr. Big; to Mrs. Farely, liquor’s danger to the soul is far worse than the mine’s damage to the body. Further, there are nasty rumors about Mr. Big’s ambiguous relationship to his ‘chosen daughter’ Leah.

In the centre of it all is the larger-than-life character of the self-named Mr. Big himself. He is a man of generous and loving nature: to his wife, Mama George, to Jonny, and above all to Leah whom he rescued from the streets at the age of eleven, “‘like God descending’ to take his chosen up into Heaven in a fiery chariot.” Mr. Big’s characteristic speech is ripe with grandiloquent Bible belt rhetoric, but his is the evangelism of free choice, making him the most valuable critic of prohibition, despite the inherent contradiction that it makes him a profitable living. He likes to denigrate government for its denial of the right of individual choice, insisting that “it’s only when individuals choose and suffer the consequences that humanity can progress.” Persuasive through this position might be in contrast to the sanctimonious thinking of Mrs. Farely, the deeper ramifications of Mr. Big’s philosophy gradually show their dark and ironic side in
his personal life; he translates everything that flatters his own sense of power, over mundane human restraints into transcendent terms. At first Johnny is enthralled by his refreshing individually, but more wary of his mentor’s proud boast that as “a colossus bestriding my world” he has “mastered” the conflicting “multiple realities of the universe” especially when Leah seems the embodiment of that supposed omniscience.

Both the public and personal dimensions of Whiskey Six Cadenza turn on the theme of freedom of choice exemplified in the actions of Mr. Big. On the personal level of crush are his relationships to the women in his family and therein lies the essential drama of the play.

The play concludes with Johnny lamenting looking back from a later time and, like Ev Chalmers in One Tiger to a Hall, wondering which were the lies and which the truth. Indeed, although Mr. Big personally becomes the victim of his own philosophy, its opposite extreme is no more attractive for it, either in Mrs. Farely or Bill Windsor. However, in Whiskey Six Cadenza, the polarities of argument about the public jurisdiction of choice dissolve into the half –hidden complexities of sadly destructive personal relationship.

Personal relations are the continued subject of Doc, we do not relate the people in vacuum, instead we approach with certain expectations and associations acquired from past experiences. Psychologists explore two models of interpersonal
relationships. One is fair exchange model and the other is transactional analysis model. According to this model the purpose of interpersonal relationships is the mutual satisfaction of needs. This is also called as Exchange Theory or Equity Theory. Transactional model advocates that the relationships are best understood as a combination of inner ego stages and external transactions. Berne and Harris hold that most of our relationships consist of game–type transactions that prevent the more desirable experience of intimacy. In *Doc* Ev is an aging doctor whose partially estranged daughter, Catherine, returns for a brief visit to the small Maritime city of her youth coincidentally on eve of the dedication of a new hospital in his name. Through the play’s recollection of that life form inside the family, Ev’s successful dedication to community health seems almost entirely at the expense of his wife, Bob, and through her, his daughter Katie. Whereas in *Whiskey Six Cadenza* dramatic obliquity serves the virtually politically polarized, emerging head on, totally reminiscent of T.S.’s confrontations with the audience in *The Komagata Maru* Incident. Bob wants to return to nursing after Katie’s birth; Ev would find this professionally awkward. Bob dislikes the social round of a doctor’s wife; Ev is too busy with his patients to spare here enough time to compensate. Each is deaf to the other’s point of view and in something hinting at a feminist perspective represented in the older Katie (Now Catherine) the pattern of confrontation is set to towards the inevitable disintegration of home life.
Not since *Blood Relations*, with its dramatically motivated linkage of the past to a fictional presents, has Pollock devised so complex a structure for the dramatic handling of narrative point of view. In a further step from the retrospective time frame, *Doc* also rejects chronology: the past occurs in a multidimensional refraction from the present with fragmented memory images arising association ally from the minds of the two present-time characters, Ev and Catherine, who are both remembering and commenting on the family past. Catherine watches and reacts to her own on-stage younger self caught between a professionally pre-occupied father and an alcoholic mother. There is also a mediating memory character, Oscar, Ev’s best friend and temperamental opposite. Ev, perhaps because a less introspective and divided person than his daughter, plays his own younger self.

The memory images that alternately fade and resurge throughout the play are more often heated accusatory moments than the fully articulated dramatized recollections of earlier plays. Here the years collapse into a swirl of dominant images of either words or actions. Dramatic progression is deliberately buried in the kaleidoscopic patterns of recurring character motifs within the scenes or fragments of scenes. This is facilitated by the presence of all the characters on stage throughout (the time montage, like *The Komagata Maru’s* cinematic fragmentation, of location, controlled by lighting), making the physical setting of
the house (like *One Tiger*s prison) symbolic as much as representational of failed communication.

The general intent of the method is to engage the audience along with the present-time characters, in the painful and difficult experience of remembering. This works up to a point, but the unrelieved confrontational matter and tone tend to polarize rather than to integrate the character motifs of the play. Catherine’s contemporary response to her younger self relieves this to some degree (as do some scenes with the gentle Oscar). While she is shown still sharing Katie’s personal guilt and fears about her mother and herself, she is also able to bring her adult feminine perspective to Ev’s adamant response to Bob’s need to continue her career and also Bob’s reticence about taking matters into her own hands.

The strong female perspective on Ev, while seldom defeating his professional sense of purpose, has much to do with the way, the audience is forced to view him. On the one hand, as far as his wife is concerned (and possibly his daughter) he should be supplying answers to what he does not ever recognize as questions. In the feminine politic of the play this makes him out as an insensitive autocrat without insight or humanity concerning the problems that conventional social attitudes impose on individuals women. On the other hand, as a physician he is impressively committed to the suffering poor with an approach to patients that is entirely personal. This makes him a dedicated humanitarian with a domestic blind
spot that is never fully accounted for; this also puts him on the defensive throughout the whole course of the play.

The deepest irony, with which the play concludes, is not that Bob inevitably took her own life or that Katie/Catherine became estranged, but that Ev can finally wonder if his whole career of personal involvement with the well-being of his patients is finally worth it. Given his own present state of health, he is now face to face with the creeping impersonality of high-tech developments in medicine that he, in his various crusades for facilities and expertise, helped to promote. In his profession he did ask the right questions and sought the right answers, but he has lived to see that profession transcend the personal approach he had always brought to his practice. This is what has taken up his life.

As a play, although interesting in what it attempts through its complex dramatic structure, *Doc* is only partially satisfactory. It fails as a feminist play in its under-development of the character of Catherine (as *Generations* did earlier in the case of Bonnie); it refuses to be a social issue play, except peripherally in the matter of Ev’s humanitarian commitment, vivid though his accounts may be. There is not right or wrong side in *Doc*, although its confrontational tone within its domestic milieu leads one to except there should be. But this play does demonstrate Pollock’s ever-increasing capacity to master the complications of her stage craft as the means of widening the range of dramatic subject. It would be a
mistake to impose categorical restrictions on her achievements. At some future
time *Doc* may well seem the mark of a transitional phase in Sharon Pollock’s
eoüvre (as does *The Komagata Maru Incident* from this present), showing,
perhaps, the playwright in the process of a further move toward the exploration of
the personal intricacies of social and familial responsibility.