The present thesis The Confessional Poetry of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton: A Psycho-analytical Study is an eclectic approach which converges on the aspects of psychoanalysis, philosophy and poetry. It becomes distinguished because of the in-depth analysis done by it, of the different aspects of the confessional poetry of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton. The thesis is divided into six chapters. Each chapter analyzes the confessional poetry of these two poets in different light.

Chapter One is an introductory chapter which commences with the discussion of the characteristics and development of confessional poetry. Later on, it discusses the works of major confessional poets like Robert Lowell, W.D.Snodgrass, Theodore Roethke, John Berryman, Allen Ginsberg including an introduction of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton’s life.

Chapter Two is an analysis of the Existential philosophy and its application on the lives and poetry of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton. Their search for freedom and individual identity, the angst, anguish and suffering because of the frustrations in life are brought about in the limelight.

Chapter Three discusses various myths used as Psychological Images in the poetry of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton. The myth of Electra’s love for her father, the myth of the vastness of the Colossus statue, the myth of the Narcissus’ self-love and the re-birth of Lazarus, have been used as images in their poetry.
Chapter Four is a discussion of the narcissistic obsession and other Freudian complexes like paranoia, Oedipus and Electra complex. Plath and Sexton were the cases of schizophrenic, schizoid and paranoid all rolled in their single self. Their mental illness, neurotic perversions and complexes are represented in their poetry and are analyzed in this chapter.

Chapter Five introduces the drives of Eros and Thanatos. Along with their discussion, their representation in the various poems of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton is also discussed.

Chapter Six is the concluding chapter which sums up and restates the major findings in the selected poems of these two poets and the conclusions drawn from the preceding chapters. In short, it is a modest attempt to establish the fact that all dilemmas, angst, and frustrations led these poets towards the search for an authentic selfhood.