CHAPTER II

GENDER AND THE ARTIST

2.1.0 Sexual politics in speculations on artistic creativity is primarily centered on the question - who the god of creation is - male or female? Since it is too obvious that there are female as well as male artists as 'sexual' entities, the polemics has moved from the original consideration of concrete instances to the realm of abstraction. Here one can find the beginning of ambiguity between sex and gender, in other words, the androgyny. As far as the development of the artist-hero or heroine is concerned, gender is an important object of self-realization towards a sexual 'role' or 'being' which is a pre-requisite for a corresponding artistic or textual identity. One can also notice that when this feature of individuation becomes self-conscious, the hero and the heroine take an oppositional stand so as to polemically contravene the opposite sex.

2.2.0 The phallocentric writers describe/prescribe the artist-hero to be feminine, while the gynocentric writers claim the artist-heroine to be masculine. And, as a few
other critics prefer, if the ambiguity of gender achieves a right balance as androgyne, it is yet another version of the authentic artist. The male and female artist-novels, by apparently complementing these diverse claims, seem to readily authenticate them, though a careful reading of these texts might reveal things deeper than what are merely polemical.

2.2.1 The prominent among the phallocentric writers who claim that a genuine artist is a male but with feminine traits are Edgar Allan Poe, William Faulkner and James Joyce, to name a few. Through the Biblical analogy of God's creation in his poetics, Poe strongly suggests that the creator/artist is a man. Similarly, Faulkner is said to be favoring the male artist when he dismisses his female characters as sterile in artistic field. But James Joyce's archetypal creation of Stephen Dedalus as a male creator establishes the fact that the artist is primarily a detached superior intellect who is thus, feminine in his gender-attributes. Consequently, almost all the Bildungsroman and Künstlerroman critics claim that the artist-hero is always feminine in impulse through which he should fulfil the requirements of achieving an inner-directed spiritual and artistic development.
2.2.2 Countering this polemics, the gynecentric critics state that a legitimate artist is a female who asserts her individuality through masculine traits. Susan Gubar in her reading of "The Blank Page" establishes, first, that the female artist is superior to a Pygmalion, and then that a female's 'lack' is a source of redemption for her artistic achievement. The female artist is also masculine in her gender-traits, as Linda Huf claims. Similarly, John Quinn presents us a few real artists who are females but all masculine in impulse. Further, Rachel Blau DuPlessis claims that such a gender-reversal is purposed to break the male generic expectation of the female texts.

2.2.3 But taking a humanistic stand, Barbara Warren upholds the Coleridgean and Woolfian position of androgyny as the proper version of the fully human and fully creative self. Perhaps, the concept of androgyny has already been there deeply associated with the idea of the artist as doppelgänger. But the feminists like Toril Moi, Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar think that, since the concept of balance is apolitical, the female writer should favor a greater portion of the feminine in the artist-heroine in order to deconstruct the tradition of duality, thereby assaulting the cultural creations of the conventional images of woman.
2.3.0 These three versions of gender-identity of the artist are to be found in the various protagonists of the texts under study. However, apart from being merely a static quality, gender-acquisition influences the artist's consciousness so much so that, it, as we shall see later, determines even the nature of the artist's creation. But, gender, to begin with, is realized in the male artist's childhood (actual or metaphoric) in the form of femininity. On the other hand, true to the claim made by the female critics, the artist-heroine begins as masculine in her artistic development.

2.3.1.1 The femininity of the artist-hero is revealed in various ways. It can be a fear of audience as in the case of the narrator-protagonist of The Sacred Fount and the hero in Martin Eden. The preoccupation of James's protagonist to pry into the causes and effects of depletion is considered to be a "hide-and-seek" (SF:31). Afraid, shy, lonely, unsociable, startled, retraced and even humiliated by his audience, he often feels like running away from them. Confronted with "poor Brisses" within as well as outside him, he submits himself to Mrs. Brissenden: "I'm not particularly brave" (SF: 209). Barbara Rasmussen who notices the frequent occurrence of the epithet 'poor', in James's Washington Square (1881), thinks that it refers to "femininity as lack" in the sexual have/ have-not dyad of
the protagonist (Rasmussen 1989). According to Maurice Beebe, James's own position, identical with the protagonist of The Sacred Fount as an 'observer' in contrast to his French master Balzac's position of active creator, can itself be considered a feature of femininity (Beebe 1964:197). But in contrast to the hero in Martin Eden, one could say that James's hero is considerably active in his detachment. For, Martin's fear of the audience amounts even to morbidity:

He was surrounded by the unknown, apprehensive of what might happen, ignorant of what he should do, aware that he walked and bore himself awkwardly, fearful that every attribute and power of him was similarly afflicted (ME: 2)

Being young, inarticulate, inadequate, frightened, inexperienced and quiet, Martin Eden finds himself incapable of facing the sophisticated society due to his own painful self-consciousness. It can be surmised from the experiences of Martin Eden and James's protagonist that a male artist's femininity is reflected not only in his inability to impress or win a girl but also in his fear of the Great Father, the society.

2.3.1.2 The male artist's femininity is sometimes seen in the diminutiveness of his physique, world-view or practicality. For instance, almost all the chief male
characters in *Winesburg, Ohio* are stunted in physical stature. Correspondingly, George Willard is described to be "afraid of dreams" (WO:11) and one who "never asserted himself" if a scene forced itself upon him (WO:257). Similarly, being a product of a culture suspicious of middle class weaknesses, Amory Blaine of *This Side of Paradise* is criticized for being the Slicker type of the junior college and not a "Big Man" (TSP:39). Amory "possessed neither courage, perseverance, nor self-respect" (TSP:20-21).

Typically, Amory does not like girls in the daytime. Eugene Witla of *The "Genius"* is even "afraid of girls" (TG:13), while George Willard is often rebuked by his elders for acting like a gawky girl and keeping himself too much indoors. This is to suggest that they fail in practical life. A character like Eugene Witla who is moody, shy, sensitive, weak, boyish and incapable of playing politics, is bound to find it difficult to cope with the business-world and its officialdom. It is interesting to note that the artist-protagonists sometimes seek sanction and excuse in the name of the American art spirit which is said to be "young and raw and crude" (TG:226). However none of these artist-heroes seems to entertain their femininity as something positive or desirable.
2.3.1.3 Yet another group of artist-heroes exhibit their femininity through their weakness in sexual power. The men in *Mosquitoes*, for example, "are not masculine and lusty enough ... women [are] too masculine to conceive, [while] men too feminine to beget" (M:210). In Fidelman of Malamud's artist-novel, the correspondence between the two weaknesses - sexual and artistic - works havoc until he emerges successful in the end. But, for the time being, he often fails miserably in subduing the women sexually. A desperate Esmeralda complains to him: "'... if a man is an artist I figured he must know about life .... So far all I've learned is you're like everybody else, shivering in your drawers'" (PF:121). Fidelman is described as a failed painter, art student, apprentice, son, a bachelor and one who is short and skinny. As John Earl Bassett remarks, Faulkner's hero is surrounded by feminine and weak characters who can be regarded as Gordon's own extended selves (Bassett 1980:54). Gordon, too, typically represents the male paradigm of artist as feminine. In the words of Karen Ramsay Johnson, 

Gordon, the sculptor in *Mosquitoes*, is no exception to any of these generalizations. Both his sculpture and his fondness for poetic images and reveries indicate his sensitivity, and his introversion, self-centeredness, and abstractedness at times reach monumental proportions (Johnson 1989:2).
In short, James's narrator-protagonist's struggle for acceptance, Martin Eden's fear of rejection, Eugene Witle's inability in business, George Willard's narrow world-view, Amory Blaine's vagaries of bourgeois youth, Gordon's continuous silences and absences, and Arthur Fidelman's unsuccessful sexual/artistic life, have all this aspect of femininity common to them.

2.3.2.1 On the other hand, true to the claim made by the female critics, the artist-heroines in female texts begin their development with masculine characteristics. One of the visible marks of the heroine's masculinity is her tomboy temperament. For instance, Avis Dobell of *The Story of Avis*, "had climbed into ... the highest tree in all the orchard, principally because aunt Chloe said it was unladylike to climb" (SA: 30). In *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*, Mick Kelly walks about in "her khaki shorts ... swaggering like a cowboy" (HLH: 164). Resorting to the most outward sign of rebellion against the cultural stigmas on women, Mick Kelly defends her transvestism to her conventional sisters:

I wear shorts because I don't want to wear your old hand-me-downs. I don't want to be like either of you .... That's why I wear shorts (HLH: 184).

Both Avis Dobell and Mick Kelly, in their own ways rebel against the time-honored convention of female effacement.
2.3.2.2 There are also heroines who reveal their masculinity through an assertion of sexual power. Edna Pontellier of *The Awakening* is depicted as a daring and reckless individual who makes her own sexual choices. At the same time she remains "far from yielding to the impulse" of 'love' (TA: 112). Similarly, Esther Greenwood of *The Bell Jar* dares to question patriarchy's discriminating insistence on female virginity. Growing revengeful on her boyfriend, Buddy Willard's hypocrisy, she goes to Marco to find out what love-making is. But even then, when Marco begins to call her a "slut" repeatedly, she fists her fingers together and smashes them at his nose (BJ: 122). In her suicide-attempts or in swimming apace with males, Esther, like Edna, always seeks to assert her being as "Iam Iam Iam" (BJ: 178, 274). By making a sexual choice outside marriage, both the heroines seem to question also the societal expectations of woman in the role of a wife/mother. In this sense, Mrs. Pontellier was not a mother-woman. The mother-women ... idolized their children, worshiped their husbands, and esteemed it a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals and grow wings as ministering angels (TA: 8).

Both of them, in a sense, seem to oppose the male arrogance of subjugating the woman to an object-position in sexual relations.
2.3.2.3 A few other artist-heroines belie the social expectations of them by rejecting the feminine images imposed on them. This is very true of Thea Kronborg of *The Song of the Lark*, who proudly declares, "'I'm not a baby!'" (SL: 374). She is not a lark or any bird. As Cather herself remarks, "The title of the book is unfortunate .... Her song was not of the skylark order ..." (Cather 1937:v).

The reader of *The Story of Avis* is also similarly warned:

So lightly do we dispose of the instincts of the young thing .... We pat the sleeping lion at our feet as if it were a spaniel, offering milk and sugar to the creature that would feed on flesh and blood (SA: 34).

In a sense, Olivia May of *A Woman of Genius* proves herself to be quite a 'lioness' in the episodes of her striking and slapping the males who are antagonistic to her. Every instance of self-assertion makes her feel that she has "struck again on the structure of tradition" (WG: 80). She refuses herself to be a female chattel, or to allow "poverty and heartbreak as essential accompaniments of [artistic] Gift" (WG: 6). In an urgency to reject such adverse images, some of them even dismiss the idea of childhood from their development. Thea Kronborg, for instance, "... never had what you might call any real childhood" (SL: 384). In the case of Alabama Beggs of *Save Me the Waltz*, "childhood [has] become more of a concept than the child" (SW: 5). Alabama
is in fact the strongest of the Beggs girls who "think [that] they can do anything and get away with it" (SW:3). Masculinity of the artist-heroine is therefore identifiable with her assertiveness, daring sexual choices, physical puissance, transvestism and subversions of conventional feminine images.

2.4.0 However, the femininity of the male and the masculinity of the female constitute only a part of their on-going development of gender-identity. In fact, the masculinity of the male artist and the femininity of the artist-heroine are usually left unnoticed in the generic discussions. But these gender traits are important factors that help the hero and the heroine to attain a specific gender-sexual identity. Its various strategies and textual intentions are worth discussing, for, as it appears to be, if the male's masculinity (son) implies a potential fatherliness, the female's femininity (daughter) connotes an imminent motherliness.

2.4.1.1 The masculinity of the artist-hero is reflected in his physical superiority over women, by which the weaker sex should be impressed. Jack London's hero, Martin Eden, captures his woman's attention by many a scar on his body. His "masculine neck" and "masculine ... gaze" are evidences for Ruth Morse that "he was no gentle lamb" (ME: 16).
Similarly, Amory Blaine of *This Side of Paradise* has "two pairs of masculine feet" by which Isabelle is specially attracted (TSP: 67). He is destined to be "the eternal hero" or "the Big Man with Goggles" (TSP: 34,288), and having decided to be one of the gods of the class, he indulges in fights with boys, and is proud of himself even when he is badly beaten. While Martin Eden rises in woman's estimation by reaching a position equal with university professors, what impresses the women around Amory is his superior "imagination" (TST: 155). Both Martin and Amory assert their masculinity by their artistic power as much as by their physical prowess.

2.4.1.2 Some of the artist-heroes reveal their masculinity by directly confronting and conquering the female sex. Gordon of *Mosquitoes*, with his hard body, thick muscles, curly hair and masculine voice is repeatedly described as "remote and arrogant" towards every one, especially the women. He reminds one of the Joyce of the *Finnegans Wake* who is said to have taken revenge, through the artistic work, against the world which, he thought, had always wronged him (Edel 1982:79): "Gordon's hawk's face brooded above them, remote and insufferable with arrogance" (M: 28). While these artist-heroes depend on the traditional means, somewhat pervasive in the literary heritage, for their
emasculaton, Fidelman of Malamud's artist-novel, being born in a culture sophisticated by Freudian learning, resorts to new methods to become a strong masculine personality. Through psychoanalysis, Fidelman purges himself of "his unconscious desires" for his mother and sister (PF: 132) and learns to move rather closely in the company of men, acquainting himself with the male language. He thus acquires the ability to differentiate between "the masculine principle" and the "obviously feminine" (PF: 196). Thereafter even when he goes to a female he knows that it is "good for the morale" (PF: 179). Both these artist-heroes seem to be firmly grappling with their own sexual power in order to realize their masculine personality.

2.4.1.3 Another important aspect to be noticed in the process is the presence of the woman factor which helps the gender and sexual empowerment of the artist-hero. The masculinity of James's protagonist in The Sacred Fount can be discerned in his love for Mrs. Server all along his endeavor to know the secrets of sexual desire. If he is crazy, he is also brave, for even though he seems to have been overcome by Mrs. Briss in arguments, he refuses to give in. In his words, "it wasn't really that I hadn't three times her method" (SF: 249). Similarly in The "Genius", Angela Blue looks at Eugene Witla "yearningly" (TG: 90), for whatever weaknesses he might have, she knows that he is
"still a promising beginner" (TG: 137). Engene succeeds in impressing women by his wild artistic soul combined with his financial independence, his practical sense and his ability to take note of things outside himself. As the narrator of Winesburg, Ohio says, "it wasn't the youth, it was the woman ... that saved the old man" (WO: 2,5). For, in his adventure to possess Louise, George Willard feels that he is "acting" (WO: 50), and the thought that Belle Carpenter would surrender herself to him makes "him half drunk with the sense of masculine power" (Wo: 224). Thus whether it is through his artifice in trapping his interlocutors, his manly wounds, competitive spirit, arrogance or subduing one's femininity, the artist-hero almost always wants to impress the woman.

2.4.2.1 In the case of the artist-heroines, also, their femininity has not been usually included even in the feminist discussions of female Künstlerromane. As an important aspect of gender acquisition, the feminine traits of the female artist deserve special attention. Apparently these qualities make the heroine feel inferior to the male world around her. Avis Dobell of The Story of Avis feels "timid as a hare" to creep up to Philip Ostrander for his help (SA:121). Such a woman is not appreciated by the author, as she censures the conventional 'true woman' who is
ready to "shrink from the rough contact of the world" and to merge her life "in that of her husband" (Phelps 1985:269). Even Edna Pontellier of The Awakening, with all her determination to make individual choice of her sexual partners, is still a "child" lacking in persistence, and tending to be jealous and obedient. Hence, she has to be cautioned: "The bird that would soar above the level plain of tradition and prejudice must have strong wings" (TA: 89). Similarly Esther Greenwood of The Bell Jar feels that she is confined in a jar "as a doll in a doll's house" (BJ:134). Mick Kelly of The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter realizes that "no boy wanted to prom with a girl so much taller than him" and therefore wants to stunt the rest of her growth by smoking cigarettes (HLH: 253). She tries out her hair, puts on lipstick and adorns herself with the ordinary woman-wears -- teddies, silk stockings, brassiers, skirt and blouse.

2.4.2.2 Femininity of the artist-heroine is at times claimed to be a mark of her innocence and a childlike purity, which is not spoiled by her masculine traits. Thea Kronborg of The Song of the Lark is meek with a body which is milky and delicate like a flower. In Save Me the Waltz, Alabama Beggs is "a baby" who ardently wishes not to lose her "spiritual chastity belt" (SW:109). Even the tomboy Mick Kelly likes to be "the Kid" (HLH:160). Esther Greenwood of The Bell Jar possesses a "virgin stomach"
(BJ:248) and she feels pure and sweet as a new baby every time she takes a hot bath. She feels "the way a baby tastes its mother" when she takes the hot milk from the hospital nurse (BJ:226). By asserting the childlike innocence of the artist-heroines the narrators of these female texts seem to highlight the sexual status of the heroines as daughters.

2.4.2.3 However the femininity of the heroine makes her at times feel uncomfortable with herself. Physical wounds and similar infirmities reflect this dimension of her femininity. Avis Dobell of The Story of Avis, who is described as a bud and a soul, suffers an accident, bruises and an attack of diphtheria. What disconcerts Olivia May in A Woman of Genius are her wounds of a few illnesses, bodily torments, a severe neuralgia and the termination of expectancy. Thea Kronborg of the The Song of the Lark falls ill with pneumonia, and later with a sore throat. The incision and infection on the foot of the heroine in Save Me the Waltz would stop her from practicing ballet for a considerable time. Mick Kelly in The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter is rendered weak not only by an acute poverty but also by typhoid, pneumonia, a broken leg and an infected foot. Similarly, Sylvia Plath's heroine is continually afflicted with various inadequacies.
2.4.2.4 At the same time, femininity is not always something that is deplored by the female artist, unless it means a weakness obstructing the realization of her artistic ambition. She seems to take pride in being feminine as it perhaps guarantees her identity of being a woman even when she becomes a fulfilled personality. This is suggested in the words of Olvia May in *A Woman of Genius*: "I was flushed with success, I had spread the crest of my femininity, I was prepared to be adorable, enchanting" (WG:463). Moreover, she is not ashamed of her "habit of living inwardly" (WG:105). Similarly, Alabama Beggs of *Save Me the Waltz* takes pride in her being a daughter so that she could achieve "the attributes of femininity, seeking respite in their mother" (SW:5). Talking on this intention, Willa Cather states "that femininity without purpose or function is not only undesirable but dangerous" (Bailey 1982:398). The femininity of the artist-heroine shows itself through such weaknesses as submissiveness, physical wounds and innocence. But she, unlike the male artist, does not reject the femininity of being a daughter of a mother, though she is apprehensive of the traditional feminine traits that confine her to a position inferior to the male.

2.5.0 So, the masculinity and femininity of the artist (hero/heroine) tend to give way to a more enriched and perfected form of gender-identity. The fatherliness of the
artist-hero and the motherliness of the artist-heroine appear to be the final design of his/her gender-acquisition. However, these impulses of fatherliness and motherliness are not to be taken for granted as suggesting 'almost the same things'. Instead, the vital differences between these two positions are to be carefully looked into.

2.5.1.1 The trait of fatherliness in the artist-hero is revealed through a variety of his attitudes. The first and foremost is his longing to protect the woman. Mrs. Briss in The Sacred Fount discovers the intention of the artist-hero: "'How you are protecting her[Mrs. Server]!'", though James's observer-artist attempts to disguise his actual desire behind the seemingly genuine wish "to protect the innocent" (SF:60-61). Such is the intention, Martin Eden thinks, in becoming stronger than the weak and pale women. Ruth Morse is "a pale gold flower upon a slender stem. No. She was a spirit, a divinity, a goddess" (ME:4). Such a being has to be protected by man; for, he thinks, "she could feel love for man. Well, he was a man. And why could he not be the man?" (ME:91-92). To protect the woman appears to be the primary impulse in the fatherly orientation of the male artist.

2.5.1.2 However, the artist-hero's fatherliness does not seem to include any liking for protecting the children or
for leading a family life. The narrator-protagonist in *The Sacred Fount* is prepared to protect Mrs. Server only because she has lost all her three children and has no much money. Eugene Witla of *The "Genius"* has "no yearnings of parenthood" (TG:124) and "never expressed a desire for a child" (TG:560). Scott Fitzgerald's artist-hero who has had institutional education rejects marriage itself in a philosophical gesture:

> Opposed [to a spiritually married man] is the man who, being spiritually unmarried, continually seeks for new systems that will control or counteract human nature .... He is a part of progress - the spiritually married is not (TSP: 293; emphasis added).

The two families in *Mosquitoes* - Jenny's and Pete's - are presented as having only discordant notes and antagonism among its members. Gordon's fatherliness is not a trait qualified by any yearning for parenthood. In the *Pictures of Fidelman*, the hero is quite eager to protect the woman he is attracted to, but his promise "to marry her once he had finished the painting" (PF:138) is never attended to in the text even when he becomes a successful artist. His disregard for the nobility of married life is also apparent as the women he loves at different times - Annamaria, Teresa, Esmeralda, Marghereta, etc. - are all either married ones or mere prostitutes.
2.5.1.3 This means that the pleasure the artist-hero seeks through his fatherliness is exclusively his own as it consists in desiring (rather than protecting) the woman of his choice. In fact, the search for the truth of the sexual desire and depletion in *The Sacred Fount* betrays often the hero's own desire for Mrs. Server. That his interests are ultimately personal and narcissistic is seen in his unqualified concern for "my theory", "my person" and "my wisdom". When the hero in *Martin Eden* says, "I will be the man. I will make myself the man" (ME: 91-92), one could see that without his desire for Ruth Morse, such an ambition of his is totally irrelevant. For as is suggested in the indignant words of the artist-protagonist of *The "Genius"* - "I want to get free in some way, either by divorce, or a quiet separation, and go my way ... I want my freedom ..." (TG:644) - the narcissistic heroes always search for their personal pleasure through the women they choose. George Willard of *Winesburg, Ohio* is guided by "lust and night and women" (WO:225). The desire of the hero of *This Side of Paradise* to possess woman necessitates a skirmish with his own generation of men, for to him, "personality, charm, magnetism [and] poise" which together mean "the power of dominating all contemporary males" is also equivalent to "the gift of fascinating all women" (TSP:20). The fatherliness of Arthur Fidelman does not seem to go beyond a
certain obsession with the thoughts of possessing or transporting a female. The absence of any desire for children or family, and a simultaneous desire to protect and possess the woman for one's own pleasure render the gender-trait of fatherliness in the artist-hero a unique feature.

2.5.2.1 It is in the context of these diverse aspects of fatherliness in the artist-hero, one is to view the distinctive characteristics of the motherliness of an artist-heroine. The primary aspect of the heroine's motherliness is her desire to protect all in danger, unlike the male desire oriented towards protecting/possessing the woman alone. Avis Dobell of The Story of Avis is said to be possessing like a Mater Dolorosa, a "rich maternal voice", a "maternal side", "tenderness", "courage and consideration" and "an impulse of protection" (SA:178). Avis's impulse to protect encompasses not only her child but even her husband. For, a woman in her motherliness does not want to exclude even the male sex. Upon Edna Pontellier's relationship with Robert Lebrun in The Awkening, Pat Shaw remarks that Robert "may deserve Edna's maternal patience, but he does not justify her sexual passion" (Shaw 1990:65). In this sense Olivia May in A Woman of Genius is "glad to have been femininely use" to a destitute who is a male (WG:323). She is rather proud in being able to forgive the wrong-doer and to go on loving him without bitterness. It is in this kind
of motherliness the woman seems to be taking her happiness. From this perspective, Zelda Fitzgerald would not personally encourage a mere "hard work, intellectual pessimism and loneliness" at the cost of that from which "a woman gets more happiness" (cited in Tavernier-Courbin 1979:26). An artist-heroine's motherly orientation extends itself to all in need of her.

2.5.2.2 Unlike a male artist, an artist-heroine expresses her motherly attitude also through her desire for home, and love for actual children. In *The Awakening*, for instance, Edna does not forsake her actual children in the name of her vocation, but bears a candid longing for them in a spirit of larger inclusiveness:

She was fond of her children in an uneven impulsive way. She would sometimes gather them passionately to her heart; she would sometimes forget them .... Feeling secure regarding their happiness and welfare, she did not miss them except with an occasional intense longing (TA:20, emphasis added).

Thea Kronborg in *The Song of the Lark* often takes her youngest brother "on her lap ... [to tug and pull] him about, getting as much fun as she could under her encumbrance" (SL:327). Her geniality persuades her to accept the pupils of Professor Wunsch who has been too severe with them. For Thea is "always helpless before homely sentiment" (SL:345). Similarly Mick Kelly in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* is
eager to take care of her very young brothers, Ralph and Buffer. To save her extremely poor family, she is even ready to stop going to school and go instead to work, for "she loved all of the family" (HLH:456). This phenomenon of gender sophistication in this tomboy is described by Linda Huf as a *rite de passage* into adult femininity* (Huf 1983:122). In *Save Me the Waltz*, Alabama's love for her daughter is expressed in her encouragement for Bonnie to know the worth of dance and hardwork. In turn the mother is idealized by the daughter. "'My mother is the most beautiful lady in the world'" (SW:161). Home and children appear to be the major factors in the motherliness of the artist-heroine.

2.5.2.3 However, an important feature of the motherly impulse of the heroine is her fear for biological motherhood. This fear which Susan Gubar calls as "matrophobia" is in fact an existential hindrance for the woman whose ambition is to become a female artist the pleasure of which Gubar calls "matrisexuality" (Gubar 1983:39). Avis Dobell of *The Story of Avis* firmly believes that a biologically determined motherliness is an "acquired ... impulse" which has "to be learned like any other unexpected lesson" (SA:184,151). In this sense, the motherliness of the heroine, as Ellen West remarks, is an
"action ... to forsake home ... [in order] to live among the poorest of the poor" (cited in Chesler 1972:7). Or, as Carter Heyward puts it, it is "both an appreciation of the individual as fundamentally creative, and an awareness of the social dimension of all creativity" (cited in Yates 1983:63). Thus the social dimension of her desire necessitates her to grow anxious about a biological and delimiting motherhood. In this context, Otis B. Wheeler seems to be right when he comments that what Edna rejects from her life is only the "angel and chicken imagery" of motherhood "as nothing more than a biological trap" (Wheeler 1975:123,126). For this cause Mary Austin's heroine dismisses the typical masculine as well as the typical feminine as showing no particular desirability in a woman of genius. She thinks that "it is a great mistake to suppose that assertiveness is the only mannish trait taken on by successful women, nor is pliability the only feminine mark they lose" (WG:439). Though Esther Greenwood is oppressed by celibacy as the great issue of the cultural prescription of the time, she always imagines herself "reaching out for ... [her] first little squirming child" (BJ:74). But when she witnesses the male doctors sewing up the cuts of the woman after delivery, she ardently wishes to know if there are other ways to have babies. She rejects the biological motherhood also because children become a responsibility of
the woman alone while their father will be free to play a hypocrite. However the artist-heroine's motherliness is still distinguishable from the male artist's fatherliness in her being desirous of a home, children, and all those who are in trouble.

2.6.0 Adult femininity (motherliness) and adult masculinity (fatherliness) of the fictional artists are fully revealed through a polemic of negation which can be noticed at the 'zenith' of gender-acquisition. The possession of the distinct gender-identity is then qualified in one sex by one's negating the opposite sex of his/her artistic creativity and intellectual supremacy. But both the artist-hero and the artist-heroine resort to a number of strategies in effecting this polemical intention.

2.6.1.1 One important manner in which the male artist dismisses the female is to consider her of an inferior physique, an inferior intellect or an inferior creator. While the hero in Martin Eden has "all that was essentially masculine", Ruth Morse has got only a "feminine eye" and "knew little of the world of men" (ME:8). While she lacks the easy largeness of Martin, his virility seems to impinge upon her. Having reached the masculine ideal of physique and intellect Martin could see every physical and mental trait in her "as a feminine weakness, such as afflicted all
women and the best of women" (ME:284). In *The Sacred Fount*, Mrs. Briss is defeated in every argument by the male narrator-artist's seeing, knowing and talking too much by which he could always "let her off!" (SF:113). The male who has the advantage of "three times her method" (SF:249) is "more and more of a comfort to feel her imprisoned in her inability really to explain her being there" (SF:202). Going one step further, the male artist also denounces the female sex as inferior in creativity. The novelist Fairchild in *Mosquitoes* voices this typical bias:

A woman conceives: does she care afterward whose seed it was? .... Of course the father can look at it occasionally. But in art, a man can create without any assistance at all: what he does is his (M:265).

In the male consciousness, the woman is deprived of a body, mind and a creative spirit equal to man.

2.6.1.2 In the male polemics, the female is not only dismissed, but her existence itself is interpreted to be impossible outside the male domain. In *The "Genius"*, the woman who is impressed by the male artist's vivid interest in life and his selective power feels that he is destined to be a notable personality whereas she has "no life of her own - nothing outside him and his good fortune" (TG:233). It shall be remembered that Dreiser himself believed that genius
is inherent and even hereditary and, therefore by suggestion, a male prerogative (Riggio 1977:135). In Winesburg, Ohio, the woman who is frightened by her defeats and loneliness has to be loved and possessed by man. This attitude is represented in Anderson's own words:

'The male desires not be beautiful, but to create beauty. No woman can be beautiful without the help of the male. We create their beauty, fertilize it, feed it' (cited in Klein 1977:50).

Scott Fitzgerald too, who "saw himself in the role of Pygmalion" (Person, Jr. 1986:443), makes Rosalind submit herself to the superior person of Amory Blaine: "' ... I'll do what you want. We're you - not me .... I'm not ... [God's possession], I'm yours. Amory, I belong to you!' " (TSP:201-202). Similarly, in Pictures of Fidelman, the artist-hero audaciously proclaims that "he would paint her, whether she permitted or not, posed or not--she was his to paint" (PF:54). The woman is thus captured as his handiwork. The only female artist in the novel is Annamaria Oliovino who becomes but Fidelman's pittrice and who works on her canvas only feverishly. But Fidelman often nails the woman to her cross and learns to change the sex of a form to its opposite.

2.6.1.3 But when the woman cannot be confined by the male artist, she is dismissed by him as a contemptuous and
disgraceful being. The "Genius", for example, regards such women as harlots and strumpets. George Willard in Winesburg, Ohio is exhorted to be filled with "hatred and contempt so that ...[he] will be a superior being" (WO:46). One woman-character in This Side of Paradise admits that she is "The wretchedest thing" (TSP:254). Eleanor, another female in the novel who, according to Tavernier-Courbin represents Scott's much wronged wife Zelda (Tavernier-Courbin 1979:26), confesses that she has "got a crazy streak", almost hereditary, from her mother (TSP:257). In Mosquitoes women are described as "merely articulated genital organs" (M:201). To Gordon, she is only a "virginal breastless torso of a girl, headless, armless, legless in marble temporarily caught and hushed" (M:15). This is the male artist's feminine ideal--no legs to leave him, no arms to enclose him and no head to talk against him. John Earl Bassett thinks that Gordon's views perfectly agree with "Faulkner's own explicit statements" on sex-art relationship and those that suggest his "anti-feminism" (Bassett 1980:62). To George Willard in Winesburg, Ohio, woman is a "rotten" thing, "a living dead thing" or a mere "trick" (WO:136). Thus whenever a woman appears not to be grappled and conquered, she is described by the male artist in a language most vile and vulgar. He feels then that the woman factor can totally be subdued. At this point of gender-
consciousness, the male artist rejects the woman as inferior to him in all aspects, tries to confine her within his artistic frame-work or even dismisses her in the most debased and sordid terms.

2.6.2.1 The female artists also play the same game when they become highly self-conscious of their gender-identity. One of their strategies is to wound the male characters so as to present them as physically inferior to them. The wounding of the male, as Blanche H. Gelfant remarks, is a self-conscious activity revealing a feminist bias in the text (Gelfant 1984:78). In The Awakening, Edna does not find anything heroic in the scar on the wrist of Alceé Arobin; instead the "sight of a wound or scar always agitates and sickens" her (TA:82). Even though she endeavors to sexually select her man, she always tries to evade "the impression that she had in a susceptible moment yielded to his [heroic] influence" (TA:84). In A Woman of Genius, the male is wounded in such a way that it necessitates, in the words of the heroine, "his need of me, which had in it something of the absolute quality of a child's need of its mother" (WG:460). Most of the male characters in The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter are presented as physically or mentally incapacitated in some manner. Harry Minowitz is a sissy, as it is easy to hurt his feelings.
John Singer and his friend Spiros Antonapoulos are both deaf and mute. Jake Blount is a drunkard, while Biff Brannon is impotent, and Doctor Copeland is too old and withered to launch the Black revolution he dreams of. Similarly, in *The Bell Jar*, the artist-heroine is presented as tall and strong, while Constantin is short, and Cal has to pant heavily like a chicken looking at Esther Greenwood swimming quite easily. She is not sorry but feels a great relief to know that Buddy Willard has caught TB. Her boyfriend is also cowed when she diggs out his car from the snowed road while Buddy has to stand by as an idle onlooker.

2.6.2.2 The female artist's sleight of hand not only makes the male physically inferior, but renders herself a superior being which does not invite the male protection any more. Edna Pontellier of *The Awakening* has, of course, learned to assert her freedom and independence by buying a house of her own with her paintings; for, she has decided "to put away her husband's bounty ... [and] never again to belong to another than herself" (TA:86). Hereafter Edna will be trained only by the women like Mademoiselle Reisz whose intention is to make her a courageous, and self-assertive woman-artist. Among the Cliff-Dwellers of Grand Canyon, the scene of Thea Kronborg's awakening, it is "their women [who] were their artists" (SL:397). Willa Cather herself has claimed that *The Song of the Lark* is written as "the reverse
of Wilde's story", *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Cather 1937:vi). In this context, mention shall be made of Tavernier-Courbin's defence of Zelda Fitzgerald that she "is absolutely not imitative of Scott. Her style is ... more lush and intellectual than his" (Tavernier-Courbin 1979:39). Likewise, in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*, the smoldering speakers Doctor Copeland and Jake Blount as well as the silverware engraver, John Singer, fail miserably, while the females, Mick and Portia, seem to carry themselves sane through the decayed, sick world.

2.6.2.3 In their gender-consciousness the females are viewed independently creative, while the males are looked down upon as inferior in artistic growth and creativity. In *The Story of Avis* Philip Ostrander like Stephen Dedalus of *A Portrait of the Artist* thinks that "he would be transfigured ... [and] weakness and timidity and inexperience would fall from him in that magic moment" (Joyce 1977:221). Avis laughs at such a moment for Philip who supposedly awaits "a transfiguration like a hero in a novel, in which his weaknesses were sublimated and his faults idealized" (SA:234). Similarly Olivia May in *A Woman of Genius* scoffs at "a man's life written by a man, in which he justified himself of unfaithfulness" (WG:129). But according to her, the male artist's soul has to be "fed visibly upon her
bodily perfection" (WG:325). In The Song of the Lark, Theodore Thomas, the conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra has to be "awakened by two voices, by two women" (SL:474). Among the male teachers of Cather's artist-heroine, some are drunkards, one has lost his eye and yet another has no issues. David Knight in Save Me the Waltz is a lieutenant-turned-physics teacher-turned artist who craves for fame indulging in wasteful parties and drinks, but his "picture of a boat was wrong" (SW:68). Hence for Alabama, "Men ... never seem to become the things they do, like women, but belong to their own philosophic interpretations of their actions" (SW:117). But, as the narrator of The Story of Avis claims, a female's artistic apprenticeship is of superior kind:

We have been told that it takes three generations to make a gentleman ... it will take as much, or more, to make a WOMAN .... the heiress ... on the maternal side ... a creature forever more of nerve than muscle, and therefore trained ... by mothers of her fibre and by physicians of her own sex ... (SA:246).

Parallel to the male antagonism, the females in their gender consciousness resort to various strategies of depriving the male of his physical superiority and intellectual and artistic achievement. And she claims for herself the supremacy in physique, an independent living and above all, a unique creativity. It may however be noticed in this
context that the male polemics of negating the female of her creative ability has the sanction of the age-old tradition and hence is done almost unconsciously and without anticipating any resistance from the reader--male or female. On the other hand, the female combat of slighting the male creativity is of, comparatively, recent origin and is done almost always in a self-conscious deliberateness.

2.7.0 As against the contrary claims of the androcentric and gynocentric critics regarding the right form of the gender of the artist, an objective reading of the artist-novels has exposed the masculinity of the artist-hero against the generic claim of his feminine character, and the femininity of the artist-heroine against the formal expectation of her masculine temper. The claim in favor of androgynty is rather self-explanatory in this context as it results from the situation of the hero being feminine and the heroine masculine. The 'climactic' point of gender development, however, is fatherliness for the artist-hero which implies the attitude of exclusiveness, having no desire for children or family but a longing to impress and possess a woman under the excuse of protection. The female artist achieves the 'zenith' of gender-acquisition in motherliness which is characterized by an inclusiveness, with a desire for children, family and, in fact, for all those in trouble. This aspect of difference between the
male artist and the female artist may have its authentication, as Susan Winnett showed, in the difference between the sexuality of man which is 'act'-oriented, and the female sexuality which seeks to 'continue' through child-bearing, childbirth, feeding and nurturing. However, the textual authentication for the differing gender positions in the male and the female is supported by a polemical self-consciousness in which the artist-hero/-heroine contravenes the opposite sex against her/his creative ability.