

**THE EFFECTS OF CULTURALLY
CONSTRUCTED GENDER ROLES ON
INDIVIDUALS: THE CASE OF
MASCULINITY IN THE PLAYS OF
ARTHUR MILLER, TENNESSEE
WILLIAMS, AND SAM SHEPARD**

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by
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For My Family Who Encouraged Me in All My Decisions

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The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTS OF CULTURALLY CONSTRUCTED GENDER ROLES ON INDIVIDUALS: THE CASE OF MASCULINITY IN THE PLAYS OF ARTHUR MILLER, TENNESSEE WILLIAMS, AND SAM SHEPARD

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This thesis focuses on gender identity and gender roles as culturally constructed entities. The fact that gender is not something innate will be discussed in this thesis in relation to theories of different scholars. It will be suggested that people are channeled into different categories of gender, such as masculinity and femininity, through the impositions of their societies despite the fact that they have both masculine and feminine traits within them.

As gender identity is a cultural construction, it is not possible to define a fixed gender identity or a stable masculine perception because every society's perception of masculinity changes. The thesis focuses on the American society's perception of masculinity in the twentieth century. In this thesis, the relationship between masculinity and money earning will be examined through Death of a Salesman while the link between sexual competence, control over the family and masculinity will be analyzed through A View from the Bridge.

The thesis will focus on the relationship between physical power, aggressiveness and American masculinity in the last part. The instrumental usage of

violence to maintain masculinity will be analyzed through A Streetcar Named Desire while the relationship between physical power and masculinity is examined through The Late Henry Moss.

Key words:

Gender, Gender Identity, Masculinity, Femininity, American Masculinity

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KISA ÖZET

TOPLUM TARAFINDAN OLUŞTURULMUŞ CİNSİYET ROLLERİNİN BİREYLER ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ: ARTHUR MİLLER, TENNESSEE WILLIAMS VE SAM SHEPARD'IN OYUNLARINDAKİ ERKEKLİK OLGUSU

İlknur ÇELİK

Bu tezde cinsel kimliğin ve cinsiyet rollerinin toplum tarafından oluşturulmuş nitelikler olduğunun üzerinde durulacaktır. Farklı akademisyenlerin teorilerine dayanarak cinsel kimliğin doğuştan gelen bir özellik olmadığı savunulacaktır. Bütün insanlar aynı özelliklere sahip olarak doğarsalar da toplumlarının dayatmaları sonucunda insanların nasıl erkek ya da kadın olarak farklı cinsel kimliklere yönlendirildikleri incelenecektir .

Cinsel kimlik toplum tarafından oluşturulduğu için belirli bir cinsel kimliği ya da değişmeyen bir erkeklığı tanımlamak imkansızdır. Çünkü her toplumun erkeklilik olgusu birbirinden farklıdır. Bu tezde 20. yüzyılda Amerikan toplumunda hakim olan erkeklilik olgusu üzerinde durulacaktır. Bu tezde, erkeklilik olgusu ve para kazanma arasındaki ilişki Death of a Salesman adlı eser vasıtasıyla incelenecektir. Aile üzerindeki hakimiyet, cinsel güç ve erkeklilik arasındaki ilişkiyi göstermek için ise A View from the Bridge adlı oyun analiz edilecektir.

Son kısımda ise fiziksel güç, agresiflik ve erkeklik arasındaki ilişki üzerinde durulacaktır. Erkekliđi korumak ve yeniden kazanmak için şiddetin erkekler tarafından nasıl işlevsel bir şekilde kullanıldığını göstermek amacıyla A Streetcar Named Desire adlı eser analiz edilecektir. Erkeklik olgusu ve fiziksel güç arasındaki bağlantıyı sergilemek için ise The Late Henry Moss adlı eser incelenektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler:

Cinsiyet, Cinsel Kimlik, Erkeklik, Kadınlık, Amerika'daki Erkeklik

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CHAPTER I

Introduction and the General Overview

In his essay, “The Organizational Construction of Hegemonic Masculinity: The Case of the US. Navy”, Frank J. Barrett writes: “Sex refers to the biological categories ‘male’ and ‘female’. But gender is a social organizing principle, a human invention like language, that organizes life in culturally patterned ways” (78). Barrett points out the fact that sex and gender are not the same because while sex is something innate, gender is constructed by culture and society. Human beings bring with themselves their sex as male and female from birth. Yet they do not aware of gender categories at this point. Then they take on certain gender identities as masculine and feminine through cultural expectations and imposed social roles.

Similar to Barrett, Freud contends with the idea that gender is culturally constructed. Freud believes in the acquisition of gender through social interactions and personal experiences. It is expressed in the Psychology of Gender that Freud “pointed to the distinction between sex and gender, and contended that they are not the same, that gender is not predetermined, but is shaped by one’s experiences in the world” (Eagly *et al*, 164). That is to say, gender is not something innate in Freudian theory. Instead, Freud perceives gender as something “made and not inborn” (Eagly *et al*, 147). Though Freud insists that physical differences between males and females have an effect on their behaviors; he claims that such differences between the behavior of males and females are constructed through experiences and observations of the individuals, as Michael Kimmel expresses in The Gendered Society: “Freud believed that the anatomical differences between males and females

led them toward different personalities, that sex did determine temperament. However, he did not believe that such differences were programmed into males and females at birth” (TGS 72). Yet Freud puts forward that there is a relationship between one’s gender identity, sexuality and body. According to Freud, gender is developed in relation to the existence or “absence of penis” (Eagly *et al*, 151). Boys become masculine by identifying with father thanks to the fear of castration. It is because mother does not have phallus which makes boys perceive her as castrated. Similarly girls identify with mother and become feminine because they are similar to the mother in that they do not have penis. Whereas Freud puts forward: “[...] men and women are both masculine and feminine, passive and active, and inherently bisexual in orientation [...]” (Eagly *et al*, 149). That is to say, one has two parts as masculine and feminine. Yet one is forced to suppress one of these parts thanks to the social impositions and interactions with family members as Freud claims that gender is constructed by interactions with one’s family and society. Michael Kimmel also asserts that according to Freud, the gender identity of individuals is acquired and shaped through the interactions with family members and the society (TGS 72).

Michael Kimmel, just like Freud, argues that both culture and individual experience are important in the formation of gender identity. He, however, puts power at the center of his argument. He claims that power is the thing which creates gender differences (Kimmel, TGS 99). It is because Kimmel stresses that gender identity is based on the inequality between men and women. He advocates:

Gender is not simply a system of classification, by which biological males and biological females are sorted, separated, and socialized into equivalent sex roles. Gender also expresses the universal inequality

between women and men. When we speak about gender we also speak about hierarchy, power, and inequality, not simply difference. (TGS 1)

He defines gender as “not a ‘thing’ one possesses, but a set of activities that one *does*” (TGS 113). That is to say, Kimmel suggests that gender is not something that one has at birth. Instead, he claims that gender and gender roles are constructed by culture and society, as he indicates in these sentences: “We are constantly ‘doing’ gender, performing the activities and exhibiting the traits that are prescribed for us” (TGS107). Kimmel supports sex role theory in a way because he points out that gender identity is learnt through socialization in sex role theory. He argues: “According to sex role theory, we acquire our gender identity through socialization, and afterwards, we are socialized to behave in masculine and feminine ways” (TGS106). Similarly, Kimmel puts forward that gender is constructed in relation to the interactions with other people and socially-imposed models as implied in these sentences: “Construction of gender is *relational* - we understand what it means to be a man or a woman in relation to the dominant models as well as to one another” (TGS 91).

Kimmel claims that society and cultural expectations shape one’s gender identity, as seen in these sentences: “Biology provides the raw materials, while society and history provide the context, the instruction manual, that we follow to construct our identities” (TGS 94). However, Kimmel expresses that individual experience also contributes to the formation of gender identity because one’s gender identity is not only coerced but also voluntarily chosen (TGS 94). Yet Kimmel puts forward that institutions within the society and all kind of interactions impose on individuals certain rules and traits that are thought to be composing appropriate

gender identity because he claims that “we become gendered selves in a gendered society” (TGS 16). Such rules and expectations maintain their power over the formation of gender identity because individuals help them be alive not only by conforming but also by adding to them, as Kimmel indicates in these sentences: “In saying that we ‘do’ gender we are saying that gender is not only something that is done to us. We create and re-create our own gendered identities within the contexts of our interactions with others and within institutions we inhabit” (TGS 111).

Chodorow, Stephanie Rigger, Simon De Beauvoir, and Rosalind Minsky share similar ideas with Freud and Kimmel about the formation of gender advocating that gender is not something innate. Stephanie Rigger claims that gender differences stem from cultural expectations and impositions rather than biology as seen in these sentences: “Gender identity, one’s sense of oneself as male or female, is not bound to biology” (23). He puts forward that many behaviors which are perceived as appropriate gender identity can stem from power or status in reality. According to Rigger, gender is not something natural because gender is related to things which one “does” rather than one “have” (21). Just like Rigger, Simon De Beauvoir emphasizes that gender is something made, as she advocates that one does not bring her gender identity from birth, but learns her gender identity (Devine 73). Similarly, Minsky points out the importance of socialization in the formation of gender. Minsky makes use of psychoanalytic theory to show gender is a cultural construction. She expresses that according to psychoanalytic theory, people innately have both feminine and masculine parts in their nature. They, however, suppress “unacceptable half of their identity and sexuality to conform to the cultural expectations” (Minsky 64). While Chodorow contend with the idea that gender is not something natural, he suggests

that gender is learnt through modeling. He puts forward that gender is a cultural construction which is acquired by combining the expectations and impositions of society with personal experiences rather than something innate, as also expressed in The Psychology of Gender: “We understand gender to be both individual and social, but always both. Chodorow also moves us toward understanding gender in its complexity as both cultural and personal” (Eagly *et al*, 159).

That identification and modeling are important elements in the formation of gender identity is also stressed in The Psychology of Gender (Eagly *et al*, 102). It is expressed in this book that parents have an important role in the development of gender because “parents play an active role in setting the course of their children’s gender development by structuring, channeling, modeling, labeling, and reacting evaluatively to gender linked conduct” (Eagly *et al*, 106). Beside parents; plays, television, cartoons and commercials act as other instruments for developing gender identity (Eagly *et al*, 109). Parents buy toys for their children depending on their children’s sex. As a result, they reinforce gender identity because they “stereotypically stock their sons’ rooms with educational materials, machines, vehicles, and sports equipment, and their daughters’ rooms with baby dolls, doll houses, domestic items, and floral furnishing” (Eagly *et al*, 102). It is possible to detect social and parental influences in plays because plays act as a means of imposing gender identity (Eagly *et al*, 106). Furthermore, certain stereotypes are imposed on children through television and cartoons because “boys are shown as dominant, assertive, and athletic, whereas girls are portrayed as subservient, affectionate, and domestic” in these things (Eagly *et al*, 109). In addition to parents and plays, school helps to develop the gender identity. Children are channeled into

appropriate gender identities in school through socialization. Schools shape the gender identity of children in cooperation with parents and media. Yet the effect of schools on the gender identity is not direct. Instead, schools help children develop appropriate gender identity through “a process of negotiation, rejection, acceptance and ambivalence” (Haywood and Ghail 80). Furthermore, teachers reinforce children’s gender identity by criticizing or praising them on the basis of appropriate gender roles (Eagly *et al*, 110). Moreover, teachers play an important role shaping the gender identity of children through their effect on children’s choice of toys and playmates (Eagly *et al*, 310).

Gender identity is basically divided into two categories as masculinity and femininity. Femininity is about the ways of being a woman and performing the expected roles of a woman. Femininity is very important to understanding masculinity because masculinity is defined in relation to femininity, as Arthur Brittan advocates: “Masculinity, therefore, does not exist in isolation from femininity - it will always be an expression of the current image of men has of themselves in relation to women” (52). Masculinity is simply defined as “ways of being and becoming man in a given culture” (Haywood and Ghail 154). Yet it can be claimed that the definition of masculinity evolves around anti-femininity. Kimmel expresses that masculinity is about what one is not rather than what one is, that is to say, masculinity means not to be a woman (Barrett 96). Kimmel suggests that manhood is defined in relation to others such as racial or sexual minorities, however, woman is the most important other of man in the definition of manhood (MAH 267). Kimmel makes use of Freudian theory to show that a man must prove that he is not like a woman to be accepted as masculine. He claims that boys reject mother and identify with father to

show they are different from their mother in order to prove their masculinity (2001 274). Kimmel points out men feel that they must get other men's approval to prove their masculinity. According to Kimmel, father is the first man whose approval is necessary for a man to be masculine (MAH 275). Kimmel emphasizes that the fear of being emasculated by other men lies at the heart of masculinity (MAH 277). Therefore, the effect of other men in the development of masculinity is very great. That is to say, masculinity is not an individual experience. One should prove his masculinity to others, to men, to women and to himself. Kimmel discusses that there is not only one kind of masculinity, and masculinities are cultural constructions. He advocates that masculinity is dynamic and historical rather than static and timeless. It is because masculinities are subject to change depending on one's relationships with himself or with other people (MAH 266-267).

Stephen Whitehead, Frank J. Barrett, E.P. Archetti, and Connell share similar ideas with Kimmel about masculinity. Archetti expresses that masculinity is not something "fixed" or "universal" (Archetti 113). It is because there are differences among men from different cultures. For example, Mexican men are different from Masai warriors or from Israel's men. There are more differences among men from different cultures and time than the differences between men and women from the same culture (Haywood and Ghail 92). Similarly, Stephen Whitehead and Frank J. Barrett claim that there are different masculine identities because the perception of masculinity changes from culture to culture. According to Whitehead and Barrett, masculinities "change over time, over space, and, not at least, during the lives of men themselves" (8). As a result, as Barrett emphasizes, there are multiple and even contradictory masculine identities (80). According to Whitehead and Barrett,

masculinity is formed by the expectations and impositions of society about the male behavior because culture rather than biology forms masculinities (16). They claim that hormones do not produce differences in the behaviors of males and females. For instance, while it is claimed that the level of testosterone affects aggression, it is also revealed that aggression itself causes testosterone to increase (Whitehead and Barrett 16). Moreover, though aggression and violence are associated with males and masculinity, there are males who are not aggressive and violent while there are women who are aggressive and violent. That is to say, masculinity includes behaviors and performances which are prescribed by a specific culture within a specific time. Yet there is a sense of anti-femininity at the center of masculinity because masculinity is the opposite form of femininity, as Whitehead and Barrett advocates: “Masculinities are those behaviors and practices, existing in specific cultural and organizational locations, which are commonly associated with males and thus culturally defined as not feminine” (15). While Whitehead and Barrett define masculinity as a set of male behavior or performance, they emphasize the fact that masculinities are actually discourses rather than realities. They put forward that “masculinities exist as discourses - dominant and subordinated ways of thinking, talking and acting as males, and as such provide the very means by which males ‘become’ men” (21). Whitehead and Barrett point out that masculinities are discourses which reinforce masculine power and privilege and through masculine power and discourse, the male domination and privilege are validated (17). As a result, gender roles generally promote male domination and interests because they are defined by patriarchal societies. Yet some scholars such as Eagly claim that biology has an effect on the privileged gender roles. Eagly puts forward that

“physical sex differences, particularly women’s capacity for reproduction and men’s size and strength, in interaction with the demands of socioeconomic systems and local ecologies” produce male-advantaged gender roles (272).

Unlike Eagly, R.W. Connell and Lynne Segal contend with the idea of Whitehead and Barrett especially in that masculine discourse is a way of validating male power and privilege. Furthermore, Segal and Connell claim that biology is also used to reinforce the privilege of men. For instance, Connell claims that permitting men to have promiscuous sexuality is not due to their sexual desire but due to their power (22). Yet the power of men is manipulated by finding biological excuses for men’s privileged position in the society. Connell stresses that while masculinity is developed in opposition to femininity, he points out that it is a mistake to perceive masculinity simply as the opposite of femininity. Connell suggests that “there are many different types of gender identity [...] and different expressions of masculinity within and between different cultures” (Haywood and Ghail 9). Connell maintains there are different definitions of masculinity such as “essentialist”, “positivist” and “normative”. In Essentialist definition, one feature is picked up and manhood is defined around this feature. That is to say, an arbitrarily chosen feature forms the core of masculinity in essentialist definition (Connell 31). Positivist definition of masculinity, on the other hand, tries to find facts in order to give a basic definition of masculinity. In other words, positivist definition of masculinity tries to express “what men actually are” (Connell 31). As for normative definition of masculinity, it is a prescriptive form of masculinity because it defines masculinity on the basis of what men should be (Connell 32).

While the traits of masculinity change from one culture to another or from one time to another, there are traditional masculine roles which form the basis of masculinity, as Whitehead and Barrett advocate: “[...] despite the evident multiplicity of masculine expression, traditional masculinities and associated values still prevail in most cultural settings” (7). According to Whitehead and Barrett, men try to prove their masculinity in the public world rather than private world by acting in a dominant way, suppressing their emotions and using violence as a means of self-expression. In addition to these values, there are other certain values which are associated with manhood. For instance, strength, toughness, reason, and competitiveness are traits associated with masculinity while sensitivity, dependence, tenderness, emotion and weakness are traits associated with femininity (Komarovskiy 157-158). According to the traditional ideal of masculinity, men should be aggressive, assertive, decisive and independent which are anti-feminine traits. Furthermore, such traits enable men to be more powerful and dominant in the society (Komarovskiy 127). Power is one of the most important traits of manhood. Therefore, men make use of violence in order to maintain their power. Furthermore, men apply violence in order to regain their power. Stephanie Rigger expresses that men apply violence when they lose their power and control over women (151). The usage of violence is more widespread among men who cannot support their families adequately. Similarly, men who have lower economic and social statuses than their wives tend to apply violence. It is because “violence becomes the 'ultimate resource' that backs up feelings of entitlement to dominance if superiority in other resources is absent” (Rigger 151). In addition to using violence as a means of sustaining dominance, men perceive violence as a rite for proving their masculinity. As a result,

violence is often perceived as “the single most evident marker of manhood” (MacInness 278). Just like MacInness, Kimmel points out that violence has been used as a way of validating one’s masculinity in the eyes of others. Moreover, he advocates that “masculinity is still often advocated with the capacity for violence” (TGS 277). Therefore, participation in a war and the desire to fight are important traits of masculinity (Kimmel, TGS 274).

Rape is one of the most important forms of male violence which is used to maintain and regain power over women. Men usually perceive rape as a means of retaliation or revenge (Kimmel, TGS 281). Kimmel expresses that rape is an act more related to power and dominance than passion or lust. Kimmel points out that “rape is a crime that combines sex and violence, that makes sex the weapon in an act of violence” (TGS 280). Therefore, rape is another important concept in validating one’s masculinity because it combines two important traits of masculinity. Just like violence, sex is another important issue for masculinity. In the traditional ideal of masculinity, men should be sexually active, powerful and experienced. It is also expressed by Mirra Komarovsky that men should act as a teacher and should be in command of the sexual relationship (77). It is because men perceive sexual relationships as a way of affirming their masculinity (Ghail 75). That is why men worry about their sexual performance, as Whitehead and Barrett point out: “Men often experience anxiety about sexual performance, feelings of shame and embarrassment at the thought of sexual incompetence and humiliation at the prospect of appearing unmanly” (19). Therefore, manhood and boasting about sexuality go hand in hand (Ghail 70). Lynne Segal points out that men have power over women because of their dominance in sexual relationships, and they owe their dominance to

the fact that they have phallus. He advocates: “It is the phallus which creates the seemingly ineluctable bond between ‘male sexuality’ and power” (103). It is because men play active role in heterosexual relationships by being the penetrating partner. That is why masculine discourse devalues homosexuality and lesbianism in which both partners can be active and passive. It is because such kinds of relationships threaten male dominance and power.

Unemployment is another important issue which threatens masculinity. Men feel that they are not masculine enough when they do not have a job or when they cannot support their family because they think they do not have the most important trait of manhood, which is to have a wage (Komarovsky 81). It is because having a wage and being able to support one’s family form the basis of the traditional masculine identity (Komarovsky 81). Kimmel expresses that the primary characteristic of a man is to be “the bread winner” of the family (TGS 123). That is to say, to become a man is equated with becoming a worker (Haywood and Ghail 22). Therefore, work is the most important thing through which men prove their masculinity not only to public world but also to themselves, as Willard Gaylin, a psychiatrist, expresses:

(N)othing is more important to a man’s pride, self-respect, status and manhood than work. Nothing. Sexual impotence, like sudden loss of ambulation or physical strength, may shatter his self-confidence. But [...] pride is built on work and achievement, and the success that arrives from that work. (Kimmel, TGS 184)

The traits which form the basis of traditional masculinity are also important for the perception of masculinity in American society despite the fact that the

masculine ideal of American society has been subjected to changes from time to time. For instance, while family life, self-discipline and morality were important elements of 19th century American manhood, “consumption, leisure and immediate gratification” became more important in the 20th century as a result of capitalism (Osgerby 3). Durwood Ball expresses that moderation was an important aspect of American masculinity in the nineteenth century (99). According to Ball, 19th century American male was “self-made, sexually restrained, strong-willed and moral- all of which added up to ‘strong character’” (99). Yet a new dimension, physical strength, was added to manhood by the 1880s and 1890s (Ball 99). After this dimension was added to American masculinity, passion and physically strong bodies along with sexual desire and power started to gain importance in terms of American manhood (Ball 99). As a result, it was thought that men should be aggressive, ambitious, competitive and tough. During 1920s and 1930s, however, “consumerist desire” and “self- gratification” formed the basis of American masculinity (Osgerby 39). As a result, a different model of masculinity, which ignores family and domesticity, started to take the place of the traditional model of masculinity, which gives importance to “the bread winner” role of men (Osgerby 39). Yet the Victorian ideal of self-discipline and morality still sustained its importance for American masculinity which led to appearance of two contradictory forms of masculinity in America during the 19th and early twentieth century (Ball 99). While manhood formed around morality and hard work was still a dominant form of masculinity in America, there was another model of masculinity which was rooted in hedonism (Osgerby 56). “The bread winner” role, however, again became important in terms of American masculinity after 1930s.

Though there were different and even contradictory models of masculinity in the 19th and early twentieth century, still there is a dominant model of American masculinity. The masculine ideal of twentieth century is formed around traditional ideals of manhood. Clyde Griffen puts forward that this model of American manhood overcomes other models of masculinity in the twentieth century by stabilizing contradictory elements of these models:

[...] the twentieth,-century definition of masculinity was, most obviously by comparison with multiple alternative conceptions at mid-century, a compromise or at least a balancing act which brought together apparently contradictory elements: domestic masculinity and the preoccupation with virility. (203)

Griffen argues that physical strength and sports were important in terms of twentieth century manhood in America (199). Yet a man must be a good father and husband. He must take care of his family especially by directing his children to competitive sports because a man must have an athletic body, and must engage in sports. It is because sports are a way of affirming one's masculinity in America, as Ghail points out: "Sports is a means of establishing identity for a man. It is a way of providing a model for American manhood" (106). But work is above all of these traits, that is to say, a man must be able to support his family financially (Griffen 198). It is because masculinity is validated through money, possession, and wealth in America, especially in the twentieth century. In addition to wealth and possession; fight, military service and war are important elements for the American masculinity (Ghail 28-29). It is because a man must control and dominate his environment in order to prove his masculinity (Flaudi 11). A man must destroy and crush everything on his

way because he must be “the master of his universe” (Flaudi 14). Therefore, according to American masculinity, a man must make use of violence, war and fight to dominate his environment. This perception of masculinity in America shows that American masculinity supports the Darwinian ideal of “the survival of the fittest”.

In this thesis, the effects of culturally constructed gender roles, particularly masculine gender roles, on individuals will be discussed. In order to show the effects of masculine gender roles on individuals, four modern American plays will be analyzed in terms of the relationship between the 20th century American masculinity and the characters appearing in these plays. The first chapter includes Introduction and the General Overview of the thesis. In this chapter, the fact that gender roles are cultural construction will be discussed, some masculine traits will be expressed. Then some characteristics of masculinity will be examined.

In the second chapter, Death of the Salesman, a play by Arthur Miller, will be analyzed in order to show the relationship between the perception of American society of manhood and the main male characters of the play. All of the three main male characters in Death of a Salesman, Willy, Biff, and Happy, have the same perception of manhood which is that manhood and possession or wealth go hand in hand. They, especially Willy, think that a man should earn money, and he should always be on the rise to be respected by the society and by his family. It is because he perceives money and possession as keys to success, and essentials of maleness. As a result, when he starts to fail in business, he experiences psychological problems because he thinks that he is not masculine enough. Willy idolizes Ben because he is materially successful. Willy tries to regain his masculinity and respect by committing suicide at the end of the play. It is because he thinks that the insurance policy will

give money to his family after his death. That is to say, in Willy's eye, money generates respect and determines social status which is an important element of masculinity. It can be claimed that Willy presents the society's perception of manhood because a man must provide for his family to be respected as suggested through Willy's character. In addition to the issue of earning money, other issues related to masculinity such as fighting, bodybuilding and sports are also presented in this play.

In the third chapter, A View from the Bridge, another play by Arthur Miller, will be analyzed in order to show the relationship between dominance, trustworthiness, social respect and masculinity. In this chapter, the importance of male dominance and control over the family in terms of masculinity will be expressed by showing the loss of masculinity in relation to the loss of control over the family. At the beginning of the play, Eddie, the main male character, is masculine enough because he provides for his family and he is a trustworthy person. Eddie is a manual worker who has physical strength. He likes bowling and fighting. He has control over Catherine. Yet later in the play, his masculinity is challenged by his wife and Catherine. It is because Catherine falls in love with Rodolpho who is not a good choice in the eyes of Eddie. Eddie thinks that Rodolpho is not masculine enough because he likes music and dancing. Furthermore, he does not act like a man in the eyes of Eddie who represents the society's perception of masculinity. Let alone this issue, Rodolpho poses a threat to Eddie's own masculinity despite the fact that Eddie seems unaware of this fact. Rodolpho's effeminate behaviors make Eddie fear because Rodolpho's effeminacy may cause Eddie lose his own masculine control. Eddie's oppressed effeminacy and homosexual desire may come into surface because

of Rodolpho, which will lead Eddie's total loss of masculinity because homosexual desire and effeminacy are important issues in Eddie's society. As another issue, Rodolpho causes Eddie lose his masculinity because Eddie loses his control over Catherine because of Rodolpho. Catherine does not obey Eddie, and she marries to Rodolpho which shows that Eddie loses his control over his family. Moreover, Eddie cannot dominate his wife any more as she acts as if she is his enemy. She debates with Eddie since she thinks Eddie is in love with Catherine. Furthermore, the fact that Eddie is not sexually active and not aggressive makes him lose his power over his wife. When Eddie fails to dominate Catherine, he informs against Rodolpho and Marco which makes him lose his respect totally. In order to regain his respect and masculinity, he tries to make use of violence by killing Marco. Yet Marco kills him, and the play ends with Eddie's total loss of masculinity and social respect.

In the fourth and fifth chapters, the relationship between violence and masculinity along with the relationship between physical strength and masculinity will be discussed. The fact that men make use of violence in order to maintain or regain their power will be shown in this part. In the fourth chapter, the relationship between violence and American manhood will be shown through analyzing a play by Tennessee Williams, A Streetcar Named Desire. In this play, the importance of violence, especially the sexual violence, in terms of masculinity is examined. It is because this play reflects the fact that violence is used by males not only to maintain masculinity but also to regain it. This play is important for understanding the American ideal of "the survival of the fittest" in terms of masculinity because the main male character of this play, Stanley, conforms to this ideal. Stanley has the characteristics of a man who is masculine enough to dominate his environment. He is

physically powerful. He has a strong body with muscles. He is loyal to his friends. He likes bowling, poker and alcohol. He is sexually aggressive; therefore, he has power over his wife. Yet when Blanche, his wife's sister, arrives, he feels that his masculinity is challenged. It is because Blanche humiliates him. Blanche challenges his masculinity by emphasizing the fact that he is not rich enough. Stella, his wife, starts to disobey him after Blanche arrives. Stanley tries to maintain his masculinity by resorting to violence. He crushes things and beats Stella. Then he rapes Blanche to regain his masculinity. He achieves his aim by destroying Blanche. At the end of the play, Stanley has power over his family again through his aggressiveness and use of violence.

In the fifth chapter, The Late Henry Moss, a play by Sam Shepard, will be analyzed to show the relationship between physical strength and masculinity. In this chapter, the fact that a man should control his environment, particularly his family, in order to be masculine enough will be shown. In this play, the necessity of physical power in terms of masculinity is shown because violence is used as a means of maintaining masculinity in this play. In The Late Henry Moss, Henry, the male character whose masculinity is questioned, dominates his wife by beating her. Despite the fact that he cannot earn too much to be accepted as masculine, he maintains his masculinity by using violence because he is physically more powerful than her. After Henry kills his wife, he finds another girlfriend, Conchalla. Yet Henry cannot dominate Conchalla because she is a powerful woman. Furthermore, Henry is not physically strong enough to resort violence to have control over her. Therefore, he loses his masculinity because of the fact that he cannot have power over Conchalla.

Previous chapters will be summarized in the last chapter, the chapter on The Late Henry Moss, because Shepard deals with similar issues related to masculinity just like Miller and Williams. Therefore, this chapter will also be the concluding chapter of the thesis.

CHAPTER II

Loss of Masculinity: The Relationship between Manhood and Earning Money in Death of a Salesman

In his article, “Strength and Weakness in Arthur Miller”, Tom F. Driver argues: “It is hardly possible to read Miller without being impressed with his desire to see and report life realistically” (46). Driver is right in that Miller’s works reflect the socio-cultural context of their time just like the Death of a Salesman which depicts American society’s perception of masculinity in the twentieth century. Death of a Salesman is a play about a family on the verge of dispersion thanks to the dilemmas of Willy, the father of the family. Willy feels impotent because he cannot live up to masculine ideals of his society. As he cannot support his family, he feels less masculine which shows that being a man is equated with earning money in the twentieth century America. In addition to the issue of money earning, this play deals with other issues which form the basis of American masculinity such as bodybuilding, physical strength, violence, morality, and sports. In this chapter, in addition to the relationship between money earning and masculinity, the effects of American society’s masculine ideals on the individuals will be analyzed in order to show the effects of culturally structured gender roles on individuals, especially on men.

Erving Hoffman points out that the dominant model of twentieth century American masculinity is “a young, married, white, urban, northern, heterosexual, Protestant father of college education, fully employed, of good complexion, weight and height, and a recent record in sports” (Kimmel, TGS 271). Goffman emphasizes

that every American man has this perception of manhood in the twentieth century, and they feel it necessary to have these characteristics to prove their masculinity. Goffman advocates: “Any male who fails to qualify in any of these ways is likely to view himself [...] as unworthy, incomplete, and inferior” (Kimmel, TGS 271). Death of a Salesman depicts the life of three American males who feel inferior and incomplete because they cannot fulfill these masculine ideals properly. As a result, they experience dilemmas and crises, as David Savran argues:

[...] Miller’s dramaturgy remains strictly teleological, moving toward a future that has already happened, a periphery that is always a disclosure of the past. In so doing, it discovers continuity between past and present, the traumas of youth and the crises of manhood. (31)

As Savran points out, Miller presents characters stuck in the past because of their dilemmas as well as the expectations imposed on them by their society and family. Savran suggests that while both Willy and Biff present “the fantasy of self-made man”, Biff represents “the individual wrestling with his dilemma” (31). That’s why he tries to build an independent life away from his family. Although he is aware of the problem to some extent, he still cannot overcome it because the masculine ideals are imposed on him by his society, especially by his father. Therefore, he experiences crises because he cannot live up to these ideals. While Biff is good at sports and has a strong body, he is not fully employed and cannot earn money. As for Willy, he is a white, heterosexual man, but he cannot fulfill “the bread winner” role because he cannot earn enough money. Happy, on the other hand, has a stable job. Yet he still does not feel masculine enough because there are other men above him.

As a result, not only Biff and Willy but also Happy experience dilemmas because they feel less masculine.

Similar to Savran, Kimmel suggests that Miller's characters experience dilemmas. Yet Kimmel enlarges the issue and claims that one of the basic reasons of their dilemmas is that they cannot satisfy their emotional needs (TGS 184). Kimmel puts forward that American men experience a dilemma because while they feel it necessary to work harder and harder, they cannot fulfill their emotional needs. Kimmel claims that male characters in Death of a Salesman are good examples of this dilemma. Kimmel gives the speeches of Biff and Happy about work as an example in which both Biff and Happy express the impossibility to satisfy one's emotional needs through work and money:

Biff: Well, I spent six or seven years after high school trying to work myself up. Shipping clerk, salesman, business of one kind or another... To suffer fifty weeks of the year for the sake of two-week vacation, when all you really desire is to be outdoors, with your shirt off. And always to get ahead of the next fella. And still-that's how you build a future.

(Arthur Miller, Death of A Salesman, 1976 22, cited by Kimmel, TGS 185)

Happy answers Biff expressing his ideas about his own future:

All I can do now is wait for the merchandise manager to die. And suppose I get to be merchandise manager? He's a good friend of mine, and he just built a terrific estate on Long Island. And he lived there about two months and sold it, and now he's building another one. He cannot enjoy it once it's finished. And I know that's just what I would do I don't

know what the hell I am working' for. (Arthur Miller, Death of A Salesman, 1976 22, cited by Kimmel, TGS 185)

Kimmel emphasizes that the speeches of Biff and Happy prove that American men cannot become happy though they fulfill the masculine ideal of their society by working. While they prefer to spend more time with their family, they still continue to work harder and harder because money and work are the most important issues for American masculinity, as Kimmel suggests: "We measure masculinity by the size of a man's paycheck" (TGS 185).

While all of the three main male characters in Death of a Salesman, Willy, Biff, and Happy, cannot be happy through money and work, they still have the same perception of manhood in which masculinity and possession go hand in hand. They, especially Willy, think that a man should earn money, and he should always be on the rise to be respected by society and by his family. This is because Willy perceives money and possession as keys to success for a man, as Willy reveals in this sentence: "But it's more than ten years now and he has yet to make thirty-five dollars a week" (Miller, DOS 16). Willy asks Biff whether he makes any money to understand whether Biff is successful or not. Willy's approach to manhood and money stems from the dominant idea in his society which is that manhood depends upon possession, as expressed by Flaudi: "To be a man increasingly meant being over on the rise [...] American manhood became less and less about an inner sense of self, and more and more about a possession that needed" (11). Willy experiences psychological problems because he thinks he is not a good man as he cannot earn money any more. Furthermore, he perceives himself as unsuccessful because he does not support his family adequately which makes him feel less manly due to the fact

that masculinity is associated with being employed in his society. The fact that being employed forms the basis of American masculinity in the twentieth century is expressed by Greenbaum in these sentences: “Since work is bound to masculinity, by failing to perform, or "close" a deal, questioning a character's masculinity is fair game” (37). As Willy cannot perform his job properly, he cannot earn enough money. Moreover, though he has a job at the beginning of the play, he loses his job later. Therefore, he feels that his masculinity is questioned because he fails in his job and work is an essential part of man’s identity, as Anthony Astrachan expresses: “A man’s work is an important part of his identity as a man” (221). Therefore, Willy pretends to earn money by borrowing money from Charley because he thinks he needs to earn money to be respected and liked by his wife.

Willy gets angry when he sees Linda mending stockings not only because stockings make him remember his adultery but also because mending stockings indicates that he cannot buy new stockings, that is to say, he cannot support his family. This fact causes Willy to feel impotent and less masculine because he cannot financially fulfill his expected role and responsibility, which is to support his family. Willy does not want to see Linda waxing the floor, as indicated in these sentences: “Why did she have to wax the floor herself? Everytime she waxes the floors she keels over” (Miller, DOS 41). It is because Willy recognizes that he cannot provide for his family adequately when he sees Linda waxing the floor.

Willy idolizes Ben, his brother, who validates his masculinity by becoming rich through the diamond mines in Africa. It is because Ben symbolizes the individual who achieves Willy’s masculine ideals. Ben combines “the breadwinner role” with the adventurous and heroic male which makes him an ideal for Willy, as

Savran indicates in these sentences: “For Willy, Ben embodies a rugged and heroic virility (‘What a man!’ Willy exclaims after his first vision of Ben; p. 53) that the failing salesman desires” (34). As it can be inferred from these sentences of Savran and from Willy’s words, Willy perceives Ben as a real male who has all masculine qualities. It is because Ben is ahead of the ordinary breadwinner male whom Willy looks down on as he lacks heroism. The fact that Willy and Biff do not appreciate ordinary breadwinner male is expressed in these sentences of Savran: “Both Willy and Biff, however, scorn those domesticated breadwinners in favor of a more heroic and maverick ideal” (35). While Willy prefers being well-liked and heroic to everything else, Biff gives importance to “adventure and independence more than the acquisition of wealth” (Savran 34). As a result, despite the fact that they idolize Ben in the issue of masculinity, their masculine ideals also differ from Ben’s ideals for which money is the only necessity to be masculine. As for Willy, he gives importance to many American norms, as Ruadone claims: “[...] Willy Loman values – initiative, hard work, family, freedom, the frontier, self- sufficiency, public recognition, personal fulfillment, and so on – animate American cultural politics” (Bigsby, CCAM 60). Yet Willy perceives public recognition, which Willy defines as “being well-liked”, as the most important thing among these norms in order to be masculine. Therefore, his perception differs from Ben in that Ben values money above everything else. Although Willy is aware of the fact that he must have material wealth to be well-liked, he still has a different perception from Ben because he thinks that popularity will enable him to gain material wealth. Savran advocates that Willy “heartens back to a less competitive phase of capitalism in which it was more plausible that individual initiative and acts of daring would bring wealth and

success” (34). As for Biff, he gives importance to adventure and independence more than earning money because he thinks that he will regain his power and masculinity through adventure and being a cowboy, as Savran suggests: “For Biff, meanwhile, the dream of being a cowboy represents an attempt to recover the power that deserted him when he discovered his father’s adulterous liaison in Boston” (34). Biff tries to create an imagined ideal in order to regain his masculine powers, and in a way he is similar to Willy in that he also makes use of fantasy to recover his masculinity, as Savran points out: “After his disenchantment, however, Biff flounders and, like his father, turns to fantasy as a way of recouping masculine power” (34-35).

Willy uses fantasy and dream as a way of recovering his masculinity just like Biff. He daydreams and goes back to the days when he was well-liked by other people, especially by his children. He especially talks to Ben in his dreams and fantasies because Ben represents achieved masculinity. While Willy cannot achieve to live up to his society’s masculine ideals owing to his misperceptions, Ben achieves the expected role because he places money above everything. As a result, Willy sees Ben as a model, and wants to learn the secrets of success from Ben. He asks Ben the secret of being rich or how to treat his children because Willy thinks Ben should be good at parenting as he has material wealth which is to say he should have control over other people thanks to his money. Willy, however, feels insufficient in terms of parenting because he equates having control over his family with fulfilling his responsibility, which is to provide his family because fathers were expected to support their family both financially and socially in the twentieth century, as stated by Atkinson and Blockwelder: “During the first part of the 20th century, fathers were expected to provide for their children and perhaps to bridge the gap between the

home and larger society” (976). Willy, however, feels less manly because he cannot give any material things to his children, especially to Biff. To bridge the gap between his son, Biff, and his society means for Willy to bridge the gap between Bernard and Biff in terms of wealth. According to Willy, Biff has to be ahead of Bernard in order to be successful. Therefore, he attempts to leave Biff twenty thousand dollars by committing suicide because he thinks the insurance policy will pay money to his family. He expresses that Biff will “be ahead of Bernard again” by the help of this money (Miller, DOS 135). This attempt, however, turns out to be another illusion and failure of Willy. Irving Jacobson advocates that Willy tries to “reestablish his self-confidence [...] in the family” through committing suicide (25). Willy perceives this act of suicide as a way of regaining his self-respect and masculinity, along with his respect within his family. Willy tries to get the place he deserves as Matthew C. Roudane claims: “Despite the deep irony of his life choices, Willy Loman represents, for many, the ordinary “individual attempting to gain his ‘rightful’ position in his society” (Biggsby, CCAM 63-64). The act of suicide is also a part of Willy’s this struggle to the position he deserves in the society. Just before committing suicide, he complains about having nothing material: “Nothing is planted. I don’t have a thing in the ground” (Miller, DOS 116). This sentence reflects the paradigm of Willy in which material possession and masculinity go hand in hand. As Willy thinks he will be able to leave a material thing, money, to his family, he perceives the act of suicide as a means of regaining masculinity and respect because he needs material things to prove his success and masculinity as he indicates in these sentences: “A man can’t go out the way he came in, Ben, a man has got to add up to something” (Miller, DOS 119).

In accordance with his idea that a man has to leave something material, Willy plants the garden just as he is talking about the act of suicide with Ben in his fantasy. Miller uses the imagery of seeds in order to emphasize the importance of production in the issue of manhood by the help of Willy's character. It is because production and proving one's masculinity again and again by being reproductive are important issues in terms of American masculinity, as Kimmel claims:

It is this notion of manhood-rooted in the sphere of production, the public arena, a masculinity grounded not in landownership or in artisan republican virtue but in successful participation in marketplace competition – this has been the defining notion of American manhood, masculinity must be proved, and no sooner is it proved that it is questioned again. [...]. He who has the most toys when he dies wins.

(Whitehead and Barret 269)

As Willy cannot prove his manhood in terms of constant production and material things, he feels less manly because a man's masculinity is "validated through wealth, power and status" in his society, as Kimmel underlines (Whitehead and Barrett 221). Therefore, he seeks another way to show that he is productive by planting seeds just before his death.

Similar to Willy, Happy perceives production, that is to say money and possession as means of respect and happiness. Happy has the ideal of being the number one, that is to say, to be ahead of all people in terms of monetary values. This ideal of Happy is related to the values of his society because one is expected to be number one by rising above everybody in the twentieth century America, as stated by Greenbaum: "The national culture is founded very much on the idea to strive and

succeed. Instead of rising with the masses one should rise from the masses. Your extremity is my opportunity” (33). When there is a person ahead of Happy in terms of money, Happy tries to rise above him by lying with his girlfriend in order to prove he is more masculine. Yet he cannot be happy because he lacks emotion and morality, as indicated in these sentences of Happy himself: “Sometimes I sit in my apartment – all alone. And I think of the rent I’m paying. And it’s crazy- But than, it’s what I always wanted. My own apartment, a car, and plenty of women. And still, goddammit, I’m lonely” (Miller, DOS 23). Though Happy proves his masculinity in terms of money and sexual performance, he still feels unhappy and impotent because he lacks emotion and morality. As morality is another important issue in terms of 20th century American masculinity, Happy fails to adhere to his society’s dominant model of masculinity. Irving Jacobson points out that Happy lacks moral values emphasizing the relationship between gaining superiority over other men and stealing the women of other men in the eye of Happy: “[...] Happy becomes a thief, stealing women for transient pleasure and stealing the illusion of prominence with lies” (253).

Similar to Happy, Biff has problems related to moral values because Biff has the habit of stealing just like Happy. Yet Biff steals material things rather than women. Biff, however, is similar to Happy in that he steals things from people who are financially above himself. Stealing becomes a way of abolishing the material superiority of other people for Biff. As for the morality of Willy, he is the reason of his sons’ moral defects because he imposes on them to be “the number one”. Robert A. Martin advocates that Willy causes his sons to have moral defects not only by doing immoral things but also by encouraging his sons to do immoral things: “[...]”

he both practices and encourages lying, cheating, stealing, violence, day-dreaming, adultery, slander, and contemptuousness” (104). As a result, Willy brings up “morally and socially impotent” children (Field 23). B. S. Field suggests that Willy, Biff and Happy all are “morally and socially castrated” (24). As morality is an important norm in terms of American masculinity, neither Willy nor his sons can adhere to the masculine ideals of their society which causes them to feel impotent, unsuccessful, and unhappy.

Miller creates characters such as Charley, Willy’s neighbor, and Dave Singleman, Willy’s idol salesman, who succeed well in the material world unlike Biff and Willy. Charley and Singleman are similar to Ben because they are rich. Therefore, they adhere to the American masculine norms thanks to the fact that they represent wealth, power and mobility. In addition to conforming to “the bread winner” role of masculinity, these characters live up to other masculine ideals of their society such as being competitive, reasonable, and unsentimental. There is no reference to the relationships of Ben and Singleman with other people in the play. Therefore, they are presented as totally removed from their emotions. Similar to Ben and Singleman, Charley is a character that seems to suppress his emotions totally because there is no implication of any emotional bond between Charley and his son, as also pointed out by Stephen A. Lawrence: “We never see any emotion between Charley and his son” (548). Willy, however, is an emotional person as Lawrence advocates: “Attention must be paid to Willy Loman because he believes in love, which is only the extreme form of being well liked” (549). In the play, the most important thing for Willy is to be loved by his sons, especially by Biff. When Biff cries to Willy, Willy becomes very happy because he thinks that this is a sign of

Biff's love for himself. Along with his desire to be popular with his own children, Willy desires to be well-liked by other people, unlike Ben and Charley. Willy even perceives being well-liked by other people as a necessity to reach success. Since Willy imposes this idea on his sons, Biff and Happy give importance to emotions, too. As a result, neither Willy nor his sons can live up to masculine expectations of their societies because they are emotional. Even Happy, who affirms his masculinity in terms of material possession, is not accepted as masculine enough because he is not a mature, reasonable man who can suppress his emotions.

Willy is different from Ben, Charley and Singleman in that he is not removed from his emotions because he values his relationship with his sons. Yet he is similar to other male characters in the play in that he tries to exclude women in his fantasies. He tries to get rid of the image and voice of the women with whom he commits adultery because she ruins his life in a way. Although Willy feels potent and masculine by deflowering her virginity, she causes Willy to lose his respect and love in the eyes of Biff. As a result, Willy loses his authority and control over his son. Savran suggests that "achievement, responsibility, and authority" are "men's three cardinal masculine characteristics" (36). It can be claimed that women pose a threat to a man's masculinity because Willy's authority and Biff's achievement are challenged by a woman. Therefore, all male characters in the play either stereotype or exclude women in their fantasies and lives as much as possible. They stereotype women as whores or asexual ones like Linda. There are just a few women characters in the play, and all of them except Linda fit to the first categorization, the whore type. The woman in Boston with whom Willy has an affair and Happy's women fit to the whore type. Linda is different from those women in that she is presented as

asexual. Furthermore, she struggles to help her husband and sons to recover their power and masculinity rather than challenging their masculinity. She is the ideal type of women because both Biff and Happy want to marry a woman like Linda, as they express in these sentences:

“BIFF. Naa. I’d like to find a girl- steady, somebody with substance [...]

HAPPY. [...] Somebody with character, with resistance! Like Mom” (Miller, 1976 25).

They long for a woman like their mother because women except Linda pose a threat to their manhood. As a result, Biff wants to be away from women and marital issues, as Savran suggests: “Biff prefers a male community to a family to be completely free” (35). Therefore, Biff does not give a place to women in his dreams just like his father, as Savran suggests: “Both Willy and Biff exclude women in their fantasies” (35). Similar to Lomans, other male characters in the play exclude women. Ben is a free man who has not got a family or a wife because he “glorifies ‘comradeship’ (127) rather than family” (Savran 35).

Along with the issue of women’s exclusion, money earning and rationality, having strong and healthy bodies are also presented in relation to American masculinity in Death of a Salesman. In Death of a Salesman, American society’s inclination to bodybuilding and the effect of eugenics on individuals can be seen through Willy’s character. As Carol Bacchi expresses in her work “Race Regeneration and Social Purity: A Study of the Social Attitudes of Canada’s English-Speaking Suffragists”, race-regeneration and social purity were important issues for the twentieth American society. As a result, eugenics, which appreciates the idea of the survival of the fittest, came into existence as a theory of human proliferation.

People who have physical deformities were ignored while physically healthy people were appreciated. Willy seems to act under the effect of this theory because he gives importance to the physical appearance of his sons, thinking their physical appearance will make them successful in business, as expressed by Frank Ardolino:

Confusing divine omnipotence with his sons' good looks and personalities, Willy compares them to Adonis, and implies that their inherent qualities and physical prowess will make them successful businessmen just as the inherent power of gods allows them to achieve without effort: "That's why I thank Almighty God you're both built like Adonises". (32)

Willy imposes on his children that they should have muscles and strong bodies to be successful and well-liked, unlike Bernard who is described by Willy as a "worm" (Miller, DOS 40). As Savran expresses, Willy thinks that Bernard is not masculine because he does not have "athletic prowess" (39). As a result, Willy imposes on his sons that they must have athletic bodies to be masculine enough. Therefore, Happy is obsessed with losing weight while Biff is proud of his muscles. Willy's approach to his children's physical appearance reflects his society's inclination to body building as well as the importance of physical power in the issue of American masculinity in the twentieth century. Anna Alexandra Carden-Coyne points out the importance of bodybuilding in the twentieth century: "Through a reempowered and modernised classicism, bodybuilding established new standards for the male body, propelling modern masculinity from the Victorian past into a technological and sexualised future" (138). As expressed by Carden-Coyne, the society has a tendency to bodybuilding in the postwar America, that is to say, in the timeframe of Death of a

Salesman, because they think in order to have active mind, one should have a good-built body with muscles. If one does not have a physically strong body with muscles, this means one is not manly enough because strength and sexual dynamism are perceived as based on a good-built body with muscles. According to Carden-Coyne, muscular exercise and well-built bodies made men feel dominant and confident because “Postwar bodybuilding [...] offered them strength and sexual dynamism through the activity of pumping muscle” (138). Willy reflects his society’s perception of masculinity because he gives importance to physical appearance and sexual performance of his sons. The fact that Willy buys a punching-bag for his children as a present is related to his desire to have sons who have physically strong bodies with muscles. Along with his pride in his sons’ physical appearance, Willy becomes proud of his sons because they are virile. Willy becomes happy when his sons go out with girls or when his sons use shaving lotion because such kinds of things affirm their masculinity. As dating indicates that Biff and Happy are sexually active, Willy feels flattered because he thinks his sons are masculine enough.

In addition to his perception of masculinity as bound to muscles and sexuality, Willy thinks fighting is another important activity which makes a man more masculine. That is why he buys a punching-bag for his sons. It is important to state that Biff and Ben fight in Willy’s flashbacks. This situation indicates that even their games are based on fighting because fighting is perceived as a manly action in the twentieth century American society, as stated by Flaudi: “The fight is the thing, the only thing, if America was to retain its manhood” (25). As Flaudi and Griffen point out, fighting was perceived as a male rite in the twentieth century America because men must have control over other people and over their environment

through their physical strength and through fighting. The importance of fighting in the formation of manhood stems from the Darwinian approach to masculinity because American society in the twentieth century appreciated the Darwinian model of masculinity, as expressed by Griffen: “Their preferred style of masculinity expressed their social Darwinian view of the world as an arena where men struggled for survival” (195). Miller reflects this perception of masculinity in twentieth century America through Ben’s character as well as Willy. Ben appreciates using violence in order to be a wealthy person, as Ben remarks: “Never fight fair with a stranger, boy. You’ll never get out of the jungle that way” (Miller, DOS 49). The idea of the end justifies means which is to say one should do everything to dominate the external world and to be wealthy is presented through the character of Ben. Irving Jacobson also states that Ben does not hesitate to use violence to reach his aim: “Ben proves willing to use violence when it is necessary or useful, and he boasts of his mnemonic powers [...]” (252). Both Ben and Willy have similar ideas in terms of masculinity such as crushing, violating, dominating everything on your way by using violence. For instance, Willy feels manlier when he commits adultery with Miss Francis who is a virgin because he deflowers her virginity. The fact that Willy deflowers Miss Francis’ virginity can be inferred from this sentence of Miss Francis: “You know you ruined me Willy” (Miller, DOS 116).

The importance of violence, crushing everything, and physical fitness in the issue of masculinity leads American people to appreciate sports along with fighting because it is perceived as a manly activity, as Michael Messner suggests: “They [sons] become gendered by being introduced by fathers with sports because all boys do sports in a man society” (167). As a result, fathers “initiate their sons into the

manly art of ball throwing” (Griffen 199). It is because sports are perceived as manly activities which combine the elements of fight and violence. Therefore, sports become an important thing in the relationship between Willy and his sons, as Frank Ardolino states: “The traditional relationship between fathers and sons which lies at the heart of shared sports activities and rhetoric is in *Death of a Salesman* symptomatic of the madness which dominates the Loman family” (32). Willy is proud of Biff because he is a good football player which makes Willy believe in that Biff will be successful in life and business, too. Willy and Biff always talk about football when Biff is in high school. Willy boasts about Biff’s being a football player to Charley, and he even argues with Charley thinking that Charley is jealous of himself. It is because Willy thinks that Biff will make money through football which will make Biff prove his success and masculinity, as indicated in the following sentences of Willy: “When this game is over, Charley, you’ll be laughing out of the other side of your face. They’ll be calling him another Red Grange. Twenty – five thousand a year” (Miller, DOS 89). Willy reflects his society’s perception of masculinity because he sees sports as means of proving his masculinity. Willy remembers days when girls pay for dating with Biff thanks to the fact that Biff is a good football player, which points out the relationship between sports and twentieth century American masculinity. Biff was popular with not only girls but also with men, that is to say he was the number one when he was a good football player. Savran explains the relationship between football and masculinity for Biff in these sentences: “Before his fateful visit to Willy’s hotel room, Biff had been the incarnation of a charismatic and reckless masculinity: star athlete, captain of the football team, and a man ‘too rough with the girls’” (40). That Biff is a great football

player is so important that even Happy manipulates this fact. When Happy wants to attract girls, he says to them that Biff is “a great football player” which shows that sports are important in terms of affirming one’s masculine identity (Miller, DOS 102).

To sum up, Miller presents the important issues in the twentieth century America, particularly his society’s perception of masculinity, in his play, Death of a Salesman. The play reflects the ideals of twentieth century American society in terms of masculinity. Miller deals with the patterns of masculinity such as violence, fighting, sexuality, physical appearance and sports. He shows the importance of money earning in terms of success and masculinity through Willy who perceives money earning as a means of asserting his masculinity and his success. Miller represents Willy’s struggle to regain his masculinity in order to show the destructive effect of culturally structured gender roles on individuals, especially on men. He makes Willy commits suicide at the end of the play due to his obsession with material possession and money, which are important elements of twentieth century American masculinity.

CHAPTER III

Loss of Masculinity Related to Loss of Control over the Family in A View from the Bridge

In The Cambridge Companion to Arthur Miller, Christopher Bigsby writes: “Miller’s characters are deeply flawed [...] flaw is the essence of their humanity” (Int. 8). Bigsby particularly refers to Willy Loman and Eddie Carbone, the main male character in the A View from the Bridge, while suggesting that Miller’s characters are flawed in this sentence. He compares Willy and Eddie Carbone expressing that “Willy Loman and Eddie Carbone, die rather than accept a truth which they fear will render their lives retrospectively meaningless” (CCAM Int. 4). He is right in that Miller presents similar characters both in Death of a Salesman and in A View from the Bridge in order to show the society’s effect on the individual. In both plays, Miller reflects the society’s perception of masculinity through these flawed characters, Willy and Eddie Carbone. He presents the individual’s struggle to confirm his masculinity through social approval by creating characters who “seek some confirmation of their identity, some recognition that they have left their mark on the world, in a context in which that significance seems denied them” (Bigsby, CCAM 4).

Eddie and Willy are similar in that they are denied by both the society and their family. While Willy loses his respect in the eyes of his sons, Eddie loses his respect in the eyes of his wife. Therefore, their masculinity is challenged by their own families because they cannot dominate their family properly. As another point, Eddie is similar to Willy in that he cannot support his family properly which is

another important issue in terms of masculinity. That is to say, Miller presents similar issues related to masculinity in both plays. He deals with the issues of money earning, family control, social respect, sports, and physical power. Yet he also presents different masculine norms in A View from the Bridge such as sexual competence, having a good name, honor and heterosexuality. He deals with the issues of denial, betrayal, homosexuality and effeminacy as the challenges of masculinity. He creates a sexually impotent character, Eddie Carbone, who reflects the male's fear of effeminacy and homosexuality as a threat to his masculinity. Furthermore, Miller's this character, Eddie, has a suppressed passion for his niece, Catherine which paves the way for his loss of masculinity because he is too passionate to be masculine enough. As a result, he loses his honor and respect by wronging people thanks to his passion and desire at the end of the play which makes him a character destructed by his flaws and by social impositions.

A View from the Bridge deals with society's expectations and norms along with decorum and accepted roles. Therefore, opposing characters are presented in the play in order to show how the social norms and impositions are challenged in the form of a man's, Eddie's, masculinity. Even the title of the play indicates that there are two different sides and two opposing perceptions. Albert Wertheim points out that the word bridge means more than a concrete bridge which conducting two lands. He expresses that it means "bridge between conscious and unconscious acts, between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors" (112). Miller deals with Eddie's unconscious and conscious behaviors in the play. As Eddie cannot confess his passions and desires, he suppresses them. Therefore, he sometimes acts unconsciously, especially in his acts related to Catherine. While he thinks that he protects Catherine, he causes

her withdrawal from the external world. He does not let other men to come closer to her which is an unconscious act resulting from his own passion for Catherine. As another point, the play deals with norms, that is to say, acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. At the beginning of the play, Eddie and Beatrice talk about a man who snitches on his own uncle. Eddie and Beatrice express how terrible this evident was:

BEATRICE. Oh, it was terrible. He had five brothers and the old father. And they grabbed him in the kitchen and pulled him down the stairs – three flights his head was bouncin’ like a coconut. And they spit on him in the street, his own father and his brothers. The whole neighborhood was cryin’. (Miller, AVFB 18)

They express that what the kid does is something unacceptable, as it can be inferred from Eddie’s sentences: “Him? You’ll never see him no more, a guy do a thing like that? How’s he gonna show his face?” (Miller, AVFB 18). Furthermore, Eddie talks about accepted and unaccepted behaviors after the arrival of Rodolpho and Marco. Eddie expresses that Rodolpho’s behaviors are unaccepted behaviors in terms of masculinity, and people look down on Rodolpho because of his behaviors: “Just what I said, he sings. Right on the deck, all of a sudden, a whole song comes out of his mouth- with motions. You know what they’re callin’ him now? Paper Doll they’re callin’ him, Canary. He’s like a weird” (Miller, AVFB 30). While Eddie is talking about unaccepted behaviors, he also expresses accepted roles and behaviors, especially in the issue of masculinity, throughout the play.

In addition to dealing with accepted and unaccepted roles and behaviors, the play presents different cultures and perceptions. Albert Wertheim puts forward that the bridge in the play and in the title is a symbol of different people and perceptions:

The bridge between culture is not merely there in the symbol of the Brooklyn Bridge but there as well anthropomorphized in the on-stage figure of Alfieri, the immigrant-son lawyer who practices in Red Hook and tries to explain American legal statutes to men like Eddie Carbone, reared in the traditions of Sicilian family and tribal loyalties, imperatives, and taboos. (109)

A View from the Bridge starts with the juxtaposition of two men, Alfieri and Eddie Carbone, who stand for different characteristics and perceptions. Furthermore, they represent different masculine traits. Alfieri is a lawyer who has a good position in the society. He is employed, and he has a good regular occupation which indicates that he can earn money. Therefore, he is respected by other people in the society. Furthermore, he is logical as it can be inferred from his speeches, especially with Eddie. He is masculine enough not only because he has a regular job through which he can earn money but also because he is logical and he is respected by other people. As for Eddie, he also has a job; however, his job is not regular unlike Alfieri's job. Yet he represents other characteristics of masculinity because he is a physical worker. He is described as "a longshore man working the docks from Brooklyn Bridge to the breakwater where the open sea begins" (Miller, AVFB 5). That's to say, he is strong and his work requires physical strength which is one of the masculine characteristics. As another point, he drinks beer, and he plays bowling which makes him seem masculine because alcohol and sports are also associated with masculinity. Besides he is brave just like a man, as it is indicated in these sentences:

EDDIE. You call that a spider? You oughta see what comes outa the bananas sometimes.

BEATRICE. Don't talk about it!

EDDIE. I seen spiders could stop a Buick. (Miller, AVFB 16)

At the beginning of the play, Eddie is liked and respected by his friends. Furthermore, he has a control over Catherine because Catherine listens to him. He expresses that he is the one who dominates the family saying: "I'm responsible for you" (Miller, AVFB 7). Responsibility means that he also has authority over Catherine because he gives decisions in the name of Catherine, as indicated in these sentences: "You'll never get nowheres unless you finish school. You can't take no job. Why didn't you ask me before you take a job?" (Miller, AVFB 11). Yet while he tries to maintain his masculinity by maintaining his control over Catherine, he cannot succeed this because he cannot fulfill his role which is "the occupational role, in which his [a man's] status fundamentally inheres; and his *primary* function in the family is to supply an 'income,' to be the 'bread winner' (Kimmel, TGS 123). Eddie cannot support his family adequately. They live in a tenement building. They do not have much furniture, and Beatrice waxes the floors (Miller, AVFB 9). That Beatrice waxes the floors reminds the reader of Linda which indicates that Eddie is similar to Willy in that he cannot earn much money. Therefore, his masculinity is challenged related to the issue of money earning. Catherine expresses that she will "fix up the whole house", and "buy a rug" which shows that Eddie cannot manage to support his family well (Miller, AVFB 14). When Beatrice says that Catherine will earn fifty dollars in a week, Eddie is surprised because this is a big sum for him. Yet he says: "Look, did I ask you for money? I supported you this long I support you a little

more” (Miller, AVFB 13). He tries to maintain his masculinity and authority by expressing that he can support them. Yet as he is aware that he cannot manage to fulfill his role adequately, he cannot object anymore. As he cannot earn enough money to support his family, he cannot object to Beatrice and Catherine. As a result, he starts to lose his control over them which indicates that his masculinity is challenged.

While Eddie is similar to Willy in that he cannot support his family adequately, he is in a different situation from Willy. Willy himself feels less masculine since he cannot earn enough money. Yet his masculinity is not challenged by his wife, Linda. Willy’s wife does not pose a threat to his masculinity because she always takes side with Willy. She tries to find excuses, and blames other people or things in order to make Willy appear right and masculine. Willy has control over Linda because Linda obeys Willy. Yet Eddie’s wife, Beatrice, poses a threat to his masculinity as she is more powerful than Linda. She challenges his masculinity by disobeying him. She always opposes Eddie and gives orders to him. Beatrice tells Eddie what to do, as seen in this sentence: “All right, stop it” (Miller, AVFB 9). She tells Eddie what to do, and talks to him in a commanding way, as she does in these sentences: “Look, I’m sick and tired of it. I’m sick and tired of it! [...] I don’t wanna hear no more about it, you understand? Nothin’!” (Miller, AVFB 67). Eddie expresses he feels humiliated, and he is dissatisfied with Beatrice’s treatment by demanding respect: “I want my respect [...] I don’t like the way you talk to me, Beatrice” (Miller, AVFB 67). Yet Beatrice continues talking aggressively and in a commanding way.

Beatrice not only disobeys and opposes to Eddie but also tries to destroy Eddie's power over Catherine. She tells Catherine not to obey Eddie: "Be the way you are, Katie, don't listen to him" (Miller, AVFB 15). She challenges Eddie's masculinity because she causes Eddie to lose his control over Catherine by persuading Catherine to go against Eddie, as seen in these sentences: "Don't tell me you don't know; you're not a baby any more, what are you going to with your self? [...] I don't understand this. He's not your father, Catherine. I don't understand what's going on here" (Miller, AVFB 39). Beatrice tries to make Catherine a determined and an independent woman which shows that she is a threat to a man's masculinity because she destroys the obedient and dependent woman image. Beatrice struggles to destroy Eddie's power and influence over Catherine by suggesting Catherine to give her decisions on her own:

It means you gotta be your own self more. You still think you're a little girl, honey. But nobody else can make up your mind for you any more, you understand? You gotta give him to understand that he can't give you orders no more. (Miller, AVFB 39)

Beatrice poses a threat to Eddie's masculinity since she challenges his masculinity by disobeying and opposing him along with provoking Catherine to disobey him. Yet Beatrice challenges his masculinity not only because she is a powerful woman but also because Eddie is not masculine enough in reality. Eddie is too passionate and irrational to be masculine, especially in the issue of Catherine. He has a hidden passion and desire for Catherine, which is an unaccepted and unsuitable behavior causing his doom, as Brenda Murphy claims: "Eddie harbors an illicit passion for Catherine so rejected by the society and destructed by the people whom

he wronged” (12). Eddie cannot confess this passion even to himself, and he tries to suppress it. Beatrice, however, is aware of Eddie’s flaw and passion. As a result, she challenges his masculinity because she loses her respect to Eddie because of this situation. As another point, Eddie lacks sexual competence which is another important issue in terms of masculinity. Beatrice complains about this fact: “When am I gonna be a wife again, Eddie?” (Miller, AVFB 31). When Eddie says that the reason of his sexual incompetence is that he does not feel good, Beatrice tells that “it’s almost three months you don’t feel good” (Miller, AVFB 31). This shows that Eddie is not sexually active for months which causes Beatrice lose her respect for Eddie because sexual competence makes a man masculine and dominant, as Pleck suggests: “[...] expectations of strength, power and sexual competence form the basis of male roles” (Haywood and Ghail 7). Eddie is aware of the fact that Beatrice does not show respect him any more because he is not sexually competent, as he expresses: “I want my respect, Beatrice, and you know what I’m talkin’ about [...] What I feel like doin’ in the bed and what I don’t feel like doin’” (Miller, AVFB 68). Although Beatrice says that she does not mean anything about this issue, Eddie emphasizes that she does: “You said, you said, I ain’t deaf” (Miller, AVFB 68).

Although Eddie talks about sexuality and accepted masculine roles, he himself is not masculine enough because of his sexual impotence, as Albert Wertheim suggests: “In capable of speaking openly about sexuality, he is nonetheless racked by his failed masculinity, his impotence in the marriage bed” (110). While Eddie himself is not sexually active as a man must be, he still blames Rodolpho for being effeminate and a queer. Eddie manipulates the issue of homosexuality and effeminacy in order not to lose Catherine, as David Savran suggests:

Alarmed over the loss of his niece, Catherine, for whom he feels ‘a powerful emotion,’ Eddie Carbone turns in rage upon her suitor, Rodolpho, who, he somewhat arbitrarily decides, is a homosexual, ‘a weird,’ and ‘a punk’. (41)

Eddie claims that Rodolpho is unmanly and effeminate because he is blond and gentle. Furthermore, according to Eddie, Rodolpho does not display masculine behaviors such as fight and violence. Rodolpho is not masculine in Eddie’s eyes as he sings and dances. Moreover, Rodolpho is good at cooking and making dresses which are feminine roles. Eddie mocks Rodolpho since he can do such things: “It’s wonderful. He sings, he cooks, he could make dresses...” (Miller, AVFB 53). Eddie compares Rodolpho to himself in order to show that he is masculine who can handle a manly job while Rodolpho is not: “I can’t cook, I can’t sing, I can’t make dresses, so I’m on the waterfront” (Miller, AVFB 53).

The fact that Eddie blames Rodolpho for being effeminate and queer is a kind of reflection. Eddie accuses Rodolpho of being not normal in order to hide his own impotence and malice, as Savran suggests: “A View from the Bridge provides the most elaborate example of the jealous and quilty Miller protagonist using the fear of effeminacy to justify his own malice” (41). Eddie tries to hide his desire and passion for Catherine by manipulating the issue of effeminacy. As another point, he tries to suppress his fear that he himself can be effeminate, and he can have homosexual desire. Savran claims that Eddie’s fear of effeminacy “slides into homophobic panic, which, almost inevitably, slides into homosexual desire” (42). Eddie degrades Rodolpho and homosexuality in order to suppress his own homosexual desires which he may have. He even kisses Rodolpho to persuade other people that Rodolpho is

effeminate and homosexual: “*Eddie pins his arms, laughing, and suddenly kisses him*” (Miller, AVFB 63). Eddie kisses Rodolpho just after he kisses Catherine, that is to say, Eddie kisses Rodolpho when his desire for Catherine is totally revealed. He uses the act of kissing Rodolpho in order to mask that he has kissed Catherine which shows his desire for Catherine. Yet he also kisses Rodolpho to show Rodolpho is not normal because later he claims that Rodolpho is not masculine and normal. He claims that if Rodolpho was normal, he would hit Eddie when he kisses Rodolpho: “I’m tellin’ you I know- he ain’t right. Somebody that don’t want it can break it. Even a mouse, if you catch a teeny mouse and hold it in your hand, that a mouse can give you the right kind of fight. He didn’t give me the right kind of fight...” (Miller, AVFB 65). As Rodolpho does not do anything, Eddie thinks and tries to persuade other people that he is right in blaming Rodolpho for being a homosexual.

Eddie also tries to ignore the fact that Rodolpho and Catherine have a heterosexual relationship by kissing Rodolpho, as Albert Wertheim suggests: “Eddie’s kiss, ‘a desperate act to castrate the young man,’ prove that Rodolpho is a queer, and thereby challenge the validity of the heterosexual act that has moments before taken place” (111). Eddie struggles to ignore the fact that Rodolpho is sexually potent, and he has sexual relationship with Catherine while Eddie himself is sexually impotent, and he cannot have Catherine. Savran claims that Eddie’s kiss is related to “Cold War Masculinity” rather than “his psyche” (41-42). Yet this kiss also reflects the deficits of Eddie’s character as well as his failed masculinity. While Savran claims that Eddie’s kiss is related to “Cold War Masculinity”, he also admits that Eddie’s last kiss reveals his own effeminacy (41-42). Savran compares Eddie to

Biff to show that their rejection of effeminate man stems from their fear from their own effeminacy:

For Biff, an oral transgression, the imitation of his math teacher, marks his attempt to rescue his athletic achievements and embattled manhood by impersonating and casting off the feminized man. The possibility that his scapegoating ritual will not work, that his effeminacy will suddenly burst forth, like the passion of Eddie's last kiss, or that, like the perfect method actor, he will become the lisping mister he imitates [...] (42)

Eddie accuses and rejects Rodolpho on the basis that he is effeminate and homosexual in order to recover and maintain his own masculinity. It is because masculinity is achieved by rejecting effeminacy and homosexuality which are challenges of it, as Jeffrey Weeks points out: "Masculinity or the male identity is achieved by constant process of warding off threats to it. It is precariously achieved by the rejection of femininity and homosexuality" (61). Therefore, Eddie criticizes and attacks Rodolpho thanks to Rodolpho's behaviors which are effeminate in his eyes. Eddie tries to show that Rodolpho is not interested in manly acts while he is good at feminine errands. Eddie talks about fighting and boxing which are masculine acts for him because the society imposes on him that fighting and violence are masculine norms. He pretends to teach Rodolpho boxing so as to show that he cannot fight, and he is not strong enough to be masculine (Miller, AVFB 54). At the beginning Eddie is in control because Rodolpho admits that he cannot fight. Yet Marco causes him to lose his power and control by proving that he is not as strong as himself by lifting a chair while Eddie cannot: "*He comes to the chair, kneels, grasps the leg, raises the chair one inch, but it leans over to the floor*" (Miller, AVFB 56). Therefore, Eddie's

attempt to asserting his masculinity by proving that Rodolpho is not a real man ends in his own loss of masculinity.

In addition to Eddie's attempt to prove that Rodolpho is not masculine, there are other reasons for his gradual loss of masculinity. Eddie does not conform to other masculine norms such as honor, honesty, being logical and trustworthy. Albert Wertheim emphasizes that Eddie is too passionate which is a kind of weakness: "Eddie is a man of powerful passion and a man who never quite understands these passions" (112). As a man must be logical and removed from his passions, Eddie is not masculine enough. Furthermore, he commits unaccepted acts because of his passions, especially because of his passion for Catherine. Miller shows how informing against someone challenges a man's masculinity through the character of Eddie because he proves it is an unaccepted and immoral act which ends in Eddie's tragic fall, as suggested in these sentences: "[...] he also made the act of informing against one's fellow men the crux of the wholly private tragedy of *A View from the Bridge*" (Gassner Int. XIV). Eddie loses his good name and his respect among his community by wronging people. He calls the Immigration Bureau, and informs them against Marco and Rodolpho. This is a dishonorable and an unmanly act which Eddie himself criticizes at the beginning of the play. Marco spits on Eddie's face in front of people when he recognizes Eddie's betrayal which makes Eddie lose his masculinity by losing his respect and good name. As a result, Eddie is rejected by the society because people turn their back to Eddie just like Lipari: "*Lipari, the butcher, turns and starts up left with his arm around his wife*" (Miller, AVFB 77). Lipari does not talk to Eddie which shows that Eddie is rejected by his fellow men.

Eddie resorts to violence and physical power as the last attempt to regain his masculinity. Since violence and physical power are characteristics of masculinity, Eddie thinks that he can recover his masculinity if he proves he is physically powerful and violent than Marco who challenges his masculinity. He depends on his knife, a phallic symbol, to make Marco apologize to him. He thinks he can regain his respect and masculinity if he defeats and makes Marco apologize to him. Yet Marco is more powerful and brave than Eddie which makes Eddie's last attempt useless. As Albert Wertheim suggests, Eddie's knife which Eddie uses as a means for recovering his masculinity totally destroys him just like his obsession with "phallic maleness": "[...] his phallic maleness channeled into at taboo lust he cannot acknowledge, turns in on him, tragically undoes him, and his knife does likewise" (112). Marco proves he is more powerful and masculine by killing Eddie with his own weapon, his knife. Therefore, Marco proves his masculinity by living up to almost all masculine expectations of the society. He is brave, strong, trustworthy, and physically powerful. Furthermore, he is married with children, and this proves that he has sexual competence, which is another masculine characteristic. Besides he can earn money to support his family which shows that he fulfills "the breadwinner role". He takes his revenge by destroying his enemy which indicates that he is capable of surviving by destroying everything against him. Wertheim claims that Marco fits to Sicilian stereotype: "The swarthy, laconic, married, Marco, with his wrestler's build, fits the socially acceptable Sicilian virile stereotype [...]" (110). Marco is not only accepted by Sicilian society but also by American society because the characteristics of Sicilian stereotype are similar to the norms of American masculinity. Therefore,

Marco can be accepted as masculine depending on the characteristics of American masculinity.

In conclusion, Miller deals with the issues related to American masculinity in A View from the Bridge. He creates opposing characters to present the norms of American masculinity such as sexual competence, honesty, reliability, physical power, and dominance. He creates a character, Eddie Carbone, who loses his masculinity as a result of his passions and fears. While Eddie talks about masculine norms by accusing Rodolpho, he himself cannot conform to these norms. His fear from effeminacy and homosexuality reveals his own passions. As a result, he loses his control over his family along with his respect within his community which results in his death and his total loss of masculinity.

CHAPTER IV

Masculinity versus Feminity in A Streetcar Named Desire

In his work, “Tennessee Williams: Streetcar to Glory”, C.W.E. Bigsby maintains: “Critics have often been at passion to draw a distinction between Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller on the basis that the former is concerned with personal fears and frustrations while the latter is concerned with social issues” (103). Bigsby touches on an important issue because Williams and Miller are always compared by critics in terms of their being social playwrights. While critics suggest that both Williams and Miller are autobiographical, they usually claim that Miller deals with social issues to defend the social impositions, unlike Williams who is concerned with individual issues to challenge the social impositions. Williams, however, also reflects social issues such as masculinity and feminity in his plays, especially in A Streetcar Named Desire. He presents the society’s perspective on gender roles by creating opposing individual characters not only to challenge the impositions but also to reflect them.

Mel Gussow defines Williams as “a hauntingly autobiographical playwright who could transform his dreams into his plays” to suggest that Williams is highly autobiographical (Int. 9). Gussow compares Williams to Miller by claiming that although Miller is also autobiographical, he is “more of an objectifier” who “seems to be projector” (Int. 9). It is true that Miller deals with society in his plays as he does in Death of a Salesman and A View from the Bridge. Yet Williams also relates individual and autobiographical issues to social ones, as Bigsby emphasizes: “Yet Williams, too, has his roots in the social theatre of the 30’s while, like Miller’s *All*

My Sons and *Death of a Salesman*, most of his work is concerned with the plight of the individual in the modern world” (103-104). Although critics suggest that Williams is removed from social issues unlike Miller, actually Williams’s difference stems from that he challenges the social values rather than defending them, as Savran points out: “Miller’s work tends to reinforce such constructions of gender while Williams challenges such hegemonic constructions of gender” (9). Williams creates a perfect balance between two sides polarized in the society in his plays while he attacks to social constructions. Both sides are not only flawed but also right and understandable which makes neither of them superior to other, as Bigsby emphasizes: “Williams’ sympathies are always with the weak and defeated while his admiration is always with those who manage to survive in and dominate contemporary society” (TWSG 108). While we can empathize with Stanley who represents masculinity, we also pity for Blanche who represents females destructed by male authority.

Though A Streetcar Named Desire is apparently a play dealing with Blanche’s tragedy and downfall along with the battle between Stanley and Blanche, Williams reflects larger issues related to society in this play. He presents the society’s perception of masculinity through opposing male characters such as Stanley, Mitch and Blanche’s poet-husband. He presents some masculine traits such as violence, rape, physical power, aggression, sports, sexual competence, and alcohol by the help of Stanley’s character. Besides, he deals with issues of effeminacy and homosexuality which are among the challenges of masculinity. Furthermore, he touches on another important issue, “the survival of the fittest”, to show that this issue is one of the norms forming the basis of American masculinity. In addition to

dealing with accepted masculine behaviors, Williams deals with accepted and unaccepted feminine behaviors by creating two opposing female characters, Blanche and Stella. While Blanche poses a threat to a man's masculinity, Stella is the stereotypical female character who is dependent on a man. While the characters going against social expectations such as Blanche and her poet-husband cannot manage to survive, the other characters who fit in to the social norms manage to survive because the dominant philosophy in the American society is "the survival of the fittest".

Stanley, the main male character in the play, reflects "the survival of the fittest" theory which is described as "a masculine traits for American male" by Ghail: "The notion of "survival of the fittest" has a certain masculine allure" (111). Stanley is combative and strong enough to beat his rivals as well as being destructive. Irwing Shaw describes him as "brutish, destructive in his healthy egoism, dangerous, immoral, surviving" which indicates that he is the fittest one to survive (47). John T. Von Szeliski points out that "the survivors are the sexually, albeit bestially, adjusted ones" in the play (67). Stanley can adjust to the society in which he lives. Furthermore, he is sexually aggressive and active. Savran claims that "'pleasure with women' is 'the center of his life'" (122). Stanley is sexually competent. Therefore, he is regarded as masculine since sexual competence is one of the important traits of American manhood. Furthermore, his sexual competence enables him to dominate his environment, especially his wife, which is another important issue in terms of masculinity. Stanley has total control over Stella, as Elia Kazan maintains: "She's given up all hope, everything, just to live for Stanley's pleasures. So she is dependent on Stanley's least whim. But this can last only as long

as Stanley wants her” (25). As Kazan points out Stanley has the control in every way in his relationship with Stella.

Kazan emphasizes that Stanley is a self-centered person who values his pleasures and comfort more than anything else (27). Stanley and Stella go on their lives in accordance with Stanley’s pleasures such as sex, bowling, poker, and alcohol which are listed as Stanley’s “enthusiasms” by Elinor Hughes (29). As sports, sexual competence and drinking alcohol are among the characteristics of a man, Stanley’s pleasures make him more masculine. Williams’ description of Stanley and his friends when they are playing poker indicates that they are masculine: “[...] they are men at the peak of their physical manhood, as coarse and direct and powerful as the primary colors” (45). As Williams indicates, Stanley is a powerful man. He has a well-built body with muscles, and he is physically strong. He works in a job which requires physical power. Above all, he conforms to masculine “the breadwinner role”, as Jordan Yale Miller indicates: “He is a responsible worker and apparently a steady provider [...]” (Int. 13). At the beginning of the play; Stanley brings meat, and throws to it Stella which shows that he is capable of supporting his family (Williams 14). Joseph N. Riddell indicates that Stanley’s appearance is masculine when he is bringing the meat: “Stanley’s appearance in his masculine vigor, carrying a ‘red stained package from the butcher’s,’ competes with the mythical aura of the scene.” (83). Furthermore, that Stanley throws the meat is also a masculine act because this act implies Stanley’s “virility”, as Riddell expresses (83).

While Williams shows accepted masculine behaviors through Stanley, he presents unaccepted behaviors which are unmanly by creating opposing characters to Stanley. Williams presents unmanly behaviors through the character Mitch, Stanley’s

friend, and through Blanche's poet-husband. Blanche's poet-husband is not rude and aggressive, unlike Stanley who is rude and aggressive. The fact that he writes poems indicates he is emotional and delicate which makes him unmanly because a man must be unemotional and hard. Blanche describes him as a kind and delicate person who is highly sensitive. Yet his acts are associated with effeminacy because a real man must be logical instead of sensitive in terms of the masculine norms of the society. Therefore, the poet-husband is different from other men who are accepted as masculine, as Signi Falk claims: "The boy she married, though not effeminate looking, had something different about him – a tenderness, an unmanly softness, and nervousness" (98). While Stella is talking about Blanche's young husband, she emphasizes that he writes poems. Then she expresses that Blanche's husband is an abnormal person: "This beautiful and talented man was a degenerate" (Williams 102). Stella uses the word beautiful while she is describing the poet-husband. This is a reference to the poet-husband's effeminacy because beautiful is an adjective mostly used to describe women. As another point, it can be inferred from Stella's words that writing poetry is associated with effeminacy and degeneration because it requires kindness, softness, and sensitivity. Therefore, the act of writing poems is associated with effeminacy and homosexuality which are challenges of masculinity. That is to say, Williams presents the issue of effeminacy and homosexuality through Blanche's poet-husband. Williams shows that American people perceive a man who is soft, sensitive and delicate enough to write poems as unmanly because he must be effeminate and a homosexual to have these characteristics.

In the play, Blanche's poet-husband also turns out to be a homosexual, as it is revealed by Blanche:

Then I found out. In the worst of all possible ways. By coming suddenly into a room that I thought was empty – which wasn't empty, but had two people in it [...] the boy I had married and an older man who had been his friends for years... (Williams 95)

When his homosexuality is revealed, the boy feels so humiliated that he commits suicide because homosexuality is an unaccepted and an embarrassing act for a man in view of the social impositions. Although the poet-husband goes against these impositions, he is still under the effect of them. As a result, he kills himself as John Mason Brown argues: “[...] Blanche’s poet husband, whom she loved dearly, had turned out to be a homosexual. Upon her discovery of his secret he had blown out his brains” (43). Joseph Wood Krutch emphasizes that Blanche’s poet-husband is abnormal, and his homosexuality is unacceptable: “[...] her maladjusted husband committed suicide, who has vainly sought release in miscellaneous sex, and who has become an incurable neurotic with delusions of grandeur” (38). As the poet-husband goes against social impositions and masculine norms, he falls into the rejected group of people. Therefore, he cannot manage to survive because he cannot live up to the expectations, especially masculine expectations, of the society.

In addition to Blanche’s poet-husband, Williams presents Mitch as another opposing character to Stanley. Jordan Y. Miller describes Mitch as a man trying to assert his manhood:

As for Mitch, the tragic implications in his case turn out to be largely pathetic Mother-fixated, self-conscious, desperate for manly release, he can only stumble along with a sense of propriety and decorum that is impervious to his own needs and those of Blanche. (Int. 13)

Mitch gives importance to decorum and social norms, that is to say, he cares for masculine expectations of the society. For instance, he boasts about the fact that he is a member of the New Orleans Athletic Club. He is obsessed with his physical appearance and power, as it can be inferred from these sentences:

I work out then with the weights and I swim and keep myself fit. When I started there, I was getting soft in the belly but now my belly is hard. It is so hard now that a man can punch me in the belly and it don't hurt me.

(Williams 89)

Mitch tries to show that he deals with sports, and he is strong just like a man. He wants Blanche to punch him in the belly in order to persuade her that he is strong and fit. Then he boasts about his physical appearance: "I weigh two hundred and seven pounds and I'm six feet one and one – half inches tall in my bare feet- without shoes on" (Williams 90).

Mitch talks about his physical appearance because he has a well-built body which is one of the masculine characteristics. Yet he is delicate, emotional and kind, which are among the challenges of masculinity, despite his manly appearance. He is kind towards Blanche unlike Stanley. Yet he does not want to marry Blanche when he discovers that she has had unaccepted affairs before. He cannot go beyond social impositions in his relationship with Blanche because these impositions affect his conscious and unconscious. Yet he himself cannot totally conform to these norms though he believes in gender roles constructed by the society. For instance, he is not masculine enough to make up his own decisions. He is dependent on a woman, his mother, which makes him unmanly. He is totally under the control of his mother. Furthermore, he wants to marry a dominant woman, as Elia Kazan points out: "She

finds the only man on the earth whom she suits, a man who is looking for a dominant woman” (24). Mitch is unlike Stanley who dominates women, especially his wife Stella. Therefore, he wants a dominant woman who is in control. This fact makes Stanley get annoyed because he cannot stand seeing a man controlled by a woman, especially by Blanche who poses a threat to his own masculinity.

Williams not only creates opposing male characters but also presents opposing female characters. He shows accepted and unaccepted feminine behaviors as well as showing how women pose a threat to a man’s masculinity. Stella, Stanley’s wife, is a conformist female character who is dominated by her husband. Marion Magid describes Stella as “the helpless creature under the physical domination of another, accepting his favors with tears of gratitude” (78). Stella depends on her husband for survival because she believes she cannot live without him. She adjusts her life in accordance with Stanley’s pleasure and desire which shows that her husband is at the center of her life. For instance, they go bowling together. Moreover, she does not complain about Stanley’s poker nights or that he drinks alcohol. She expresses that she must accept Stanley as he is: “People must accept each other’s habits” (Williams 65). Furthermore, she is accustomed to Stanley’s violent action, and she sees violence as something normal: “Stanley’s always smashed things” (Williams 64). She expresses that she is used to Stanley’s smashing things by saying these words. She does not think that Stanley’s aggressive behavior is something unusual and bad. Although Stanley beats her, she still defends Stanley by finding excuses for his aggressiveness: “In the first place, when men are drinking and playing poker anything can happen. It’s always a powder-keg. He didn’t know what he was doing...” (Williams 63). Stella perceives Stanley’s violence

and aggressiveness as normal acts, which indicates that she is in favor of Stanley's masculinity and gender roles. As another point, she adores Stanley because he is sexually competent. That is to say, Stella supports Stanley's all masculine characteristics even if these characteristics give harm to her.

Unlike Stella, Blanche is a delicate and fragile female, as Signi Falk claims: "The contrast between the two sisters – Stella as the normal, happy, and average woman; Blanche as the refined, hypersensitive, and decadent aristocrat – is obvious" (94-95). While Stella is accepted as normal thanks to her conformity and obedience, Blanche is not accepted as normal because she goes against gender roles. For instance, she drinks alcohol, and she flirts with a lot of men. Yet she is still dependent on a man which makes her similar to ordinary women like Stella. As Brooks Atkinson expresses, she is obsessed with finding a man, especially "a rich man" to be rescued (33). She is a typical woman to some extent, as Elia Kazan claims: "Blanche is like all women, dependent on a man, looking for one to hang onto" (24). Yet she looks for a kind man who wants a dominant woman, and this makes her different from Stella. Although Blanche has some typical feminine traits, she does not totally conform to accepted roles, as Durant da Ponte expresses: "It is a stereotype with difference" (53). Her difference mostly stems from her opposition to masculine traits in the form of opposing Stanley. When Stanley acts violently, Blanche does not perceive this as something normal unlike Stella. As another point, Blanche is just opposite of Stanley. Blanche is delicate while Stanley is violent and rude which makes Blanche an opposing character of Stanley, as Jordan Y. Miller suggests: "As so often in Williams's plays, the opposing sides offer little choice. On the one hand is Blanche; lush, erotic, decadent, overripe; on the other is Stanley,

lusty, animalistic, earthy” (Int. 12). In a way, Stanley represents masculinity while Blanche represents femininity despite the fact that she goes against some gender roles and female stereotypes.

Blanche poses a threat to Stanley’s masculinity because she challenges his manhood by humiliating him, as she does in these sentences: “On the contrary, I saw him at his best! What such a man has to offer is animal force and he gave a wonderful exhibition of that!” (Williams 69). Blanche downgrades Stanley claiming that he is “common”, “ordinary”, “plain”, and “bestial” (Williams 71). She suggests that Stanley is removed from humanity, and she likens him to an ape:

He acts like an animal, has an animal’s habits! Eats like one, moves like one, talks like one! There’s even something – sub-human – something not quite to the stage of humanity yet! Yes, something – ape-like about him, like one of those pictures I’ve seen in – anthropological studies!

Thousands and thousands of years have passed him right by, and there he is – Stanley Kowalski - survivor of the stone age! (Williams 72)

Blanche describes Stanley and his friend as an ape group. She mocks Stanley’s pleasure by calling his poker night as “this party of apes” (Williams 72). That is to say, she challenges Stanley’s masculinity by mocking his physical appearance, his pleasure, and his social group. Also, she challenges his “breadwinner role” as she is not satisfied with the conditions Stanley and Stella live in. She indicates that Stanley cannot support his family adequately because she complains about his home. Moreover, she tries to provoke Stella against Stanley. For instance, Blanche tells that Stella is “married to a madman” (Williams 64). She tries to persuade Stella to go against Stanley, and to leave him: “But you’ve given in. And that isn’t right, you

aren't old! You can get out" (Williams 65). Blanche challenges Stanley's power and dominance over Stella by provoking Stella against Stanley, as Elia Kazan maintains:

Stella is plain out of her mind about Stanley....He is her first man, really; he made her a woman. He fulfilled her more than she knew possible and she has to stop herself from *crawling* after him. She's utterly blind as to what's wrong with Stanley. She's blind to it and she doesn't care, until Blanche arrives. At the end of the play, her life is entirely different. It will never be the same with Stanley again. (25)

Blanche shakes Stanley's power and control over his wife. Since she interferes with Stanley's and Stella's lives and opposes to Stanley's behaviors, Stanley sees her as a threat to his masculinity, as C. W. E. Bigsby claims: "There is an instinctual animosity between these two. Blanche responds to him with a pathetic mixture of aristocratic contempt and flirtation, while Stanley sees in her only a threat to his own way of life." (TWSG 106)

Elia Kazan emphasizes that Stanley perceives Blanche as a threat to his way of life: "One of the important things for Stanley is that Blanche *would wreck his home*. Blanche is dangerous. She is destructive" (26). Since Stanley sees Blanche as a threat to his masculinity and power, he tries to have control over her. He makes use of violence in order to maintain his masculinity and power just like other males who apply violence when they feel powerless or challenged, as Kimmel points out: "Men's feelings of both powerlessness and entitlement are also part of the backdrop to the problem of violence in the home" (TGS 282). Kimmel expresses that men uses violence "instrumentally" to have control over other people, especially over their wives (TGS 286). Kimmel claims that when men apply to violence, they have in

their mind this idea: “They have power over me so I want power over them” (TGS 281). When a man feels that a woman has power over him, he tries to abolish her power to be dominant again by the help of using violence. Similarly, Stanley tries to have control over Blanche and Stella by using violence. He beats his wife and smashes things in the house. For instance, Stella and Blanche do not obey him in his poker night when he orders them to turn off the radio. As a result, he throws the radio and beats Stella. Signi Falk describes the scene of violence in the poker night through these sentences: “When she [Blanche] turns on the radio to encourage Mitch to dance, Stan in a drunken fury seizes the radio and hurls it out the window. He brutally strikes his wife, Stella who tries to send the men home” (97). In the play when Stanley throws the radio out of the window, Stella shouts at him: “Drunk – drunk – animal thing, you!” (Williams 57). Then she wants other men to go their home which makes Stanley get angry because Stella humiliates and challenges him in a way. Therefore, he beats Stella to have dominance over her again.

Whenever Stella says a bad thing about him, Stanley uses violence either by beating Stella or by throwing things away. For instance, Stella talks to him in a commanding way in scene eight: “Your face and your fingers are disgustingly greasy. Go and wash up and then help me clear the table” (Williams 107). Upon Stella’s speech, Stanley takes and throws a plate because Stella not only expresses her disgust but also talks to him in a commanding way. Stanley breaks a plate to evoke fear in Stella in order to maintain his dominance. Then he expresses that he is the master of the house through these sentences: “Remember what Huey Long said – ‘Every Man is a King!’ and I am the king around here, so don’t forget it! [*He hurls a cup and saucer to the floor*]” (Williams 107-108). Stanley tries to make Stella and

Blanche obedient through violence. He sees violence as a way of asserting his masculinity because “violence has long been understood as the best way to ensure that others publicly recognize one’s manhood” (Kimmel, TGS 277). It is because violence is among the traits of manhood which leads Stanley to use it to recover his masculinity. Since Stanley sees Blanche as a rival, he tries to beat her to prove his masculinity because beating one’s rival is a way of affirming masculinity for a man. Therefore, Stanley resorts to sexual violence in order to have control over Blanche while he resorts to physical violence to control Stella.

Kimmel points out that rape occurs when men feel both powerless and powerful at the same time (TGS 287). As rape combines two masculine characteristics, sex and violence, it is a means of maintaining masculinity (Kimmel, TGS 280-281). It is because rape is a weapon which strengthens gender roles and gender discrimination to the benefit of men, as Kimmel claims: “[...], rape reproduces both gender difference (women as vulnerable and dependent upon men for protection, women afraid to dare to enter male spaces such as the street for fear of victimization) and gender inequality” (TGS 112). Stanley also resorts to rape as a weapon against Blanche because he associates sex with domination, as Elia Kazan argues: “In Stanley sex goes under a disguise. Nothing is more erotic and arousing to him than ‘airs’... she thinks she’s better than me... I’ll show her.... Sex equals domination... anything challenges him – like calling him ‘common’ – arouses him sexually....” (27). Kazan suggests that Stanley cannot bear Blanche because she thinks she is superior to Stanley: “The one thing that Stanley can’t bear is someone who thinks that he or she is better than he” (26). Therefore, he rapes Blanche to show that she is not superior to him as he is more powerful and dominant as well as being

capable of her destruction. As another point, Kazan suggests that rape is a way of pulling Blanche down to his own level for Stanley: “Stanley rapes Blanche because he has tried and tried to keep her down to his level. This way is the last...” (26). Yet actually Stanley lowers himself rather than Blanche, as Jordan Y. Miller claims: “Stanley’s ultimate weapon, rape, is violently repulsive. [...]. Still, the final rape is appropriate, a totally degrading act that, ironically enough, lowers him to his victim’s own level, destroying his moral superiority over her” (Int. 13). That is to say, while rape enables Stanley to have power over Blanche, it also causes him to lose his moral values which are among the important issues for masculinity. Although he maintains his masculinity through rape in a way, the act of rape shakes his morality at the same time by making Stanley dishonest and unreliable. Rape, however, enables Stanley to get rid of Blanche and become the master of the house again. Besides, this act enables him take his revenge from Blanche. Signi Falk suggests that the act of rape may be “the culmination of Stan’s ‘revenge’ ” which helps Stanley to prove his power by taking his revenge from his rival (98).

The act of rape is the final attempt of Stanley to destroy Blanche. Stanley tries to destroy Blanche from the beginning because she is a threat to not only his own masculinity but also Mitch’s masculinity. Therefore, he digs up Blanche’s past to find out her mistakes in order to abolish her influence over Mitch. Stanley discovers Blanche’s socially unaccepted acts such as having an affair with one of her students and going out with a lot of men. He makes Mitch get rid of Blanche’s influence, and abolishes Blanche’s last hope and solution. Then Stanley rapes Blanche as the last step to entirely destroy her. At the end of the play, Blanche represents a female character that is destructed and victimized by the patriarchal society. While Blanche

represents the female challenging the social impositions and patriarchal values, Stanley represents the patriarchal society and masculine traits which undo Blanche. That Blanche is taken away by a male doctor in the last scene indicates she is defeated by the male society since “the doctor and matron – stereotyped, masculinized symbols of the state institution” reach their aims by taking Blanche away (Riddell 87). In other words, the male society reaches its aim by throwing out and rejecting a female who poses a threat to it.

In conclusion, Williams presents the tragedy of a female, Blanche, who cannot live up to society’s expectations in A Streetcar Named Desire. He shows how social impositions and gender roles have a destructive effect on individuals through the characters of Blanche and her poet-husband. While Williams deals with the issues related to masculinity and femininity, he presents opposing characters to reflect opposing perspectives. Yet he sides neither with the conformist characters nor with the nonconformist ones. Therefore, he balances the two sides neither by entirely accepting nor by directly rejecting the social norms presented in the play which indicates that he does not reinforce gender roles or social impositions though he implicitly challenges them.

CHAPTER V

The Necessity of Physical Power and Sexual Agressiveness in terms of Masculinity in The Late Henry Moss and Conclusion

To conclude my thesis, The Late Henry Moss by Sam Shepard will be analyzed because masculine issues examined in previous chapters are presented in this play. Shepard deals with the relationship between physical strength, violence and masculinity in The Late Henry Moss just like Tennessee Williams who presents similar masculine traits in A Streetcar Named Desire. In addition to physical power, Shepard shows the necessity of sexual aggressiveness and sexual potency to be accepted as masculine which reminds us of Eddie Carbone's lack of sexual potency resulting in his loss of masculinity in A View from the Bridge. Shepard resorts to flashbacks to present his characters' past like Arthur Miller who reveals Willy's past through similar techniques. Yet, in Miller's Death of a Salesman, Willy Loman perceives money as the only way to achieve respect and masculinity, unlike Henry Moss who loses his masculinity despite the fact that he has money.

Henry Moss is similar to Willy Loman in that both of them have two sons with whom they do not have a good relationship. Henry Moss has a problematic relationship with his sons because his sons are scared of him. He uses violence in the past, and he causes their mothers death by beating her violently. Willy, however, has a problematic relationship with his sons, especially with Biff, thanks to his affair with another woman. Furthermore, as he cannot give them anything in terms of materiality, he thinks they do not respect him. Therefore, both Willy and Moss do not have control over their sons which indicates that they cannot control their family

well. Willy, however, tries to make up for his mistake to recover his respect and masculinity though he cannot manage this. Yet Moss does not seek for reconciliation, or he does not want to make up for his mistakes. Therefore, he leaves his family's problems unsettled; and they cannot have a good family, as Allen J. Kuharski maintains: "As in a number of Shepard's earlier works, *The Late Henry Moss* portrays a reunion of two estranged brothers haunted by an absent father and an unresolved common history of domestic violence and familial betrayal" (500). When Henry's sons meet again after years, their problems come into surface. Ray accuses Earl of leaving him and his mother when they need him. Similarly, Henry also blames Earl for not stopping him while he was beating his wife: "You coulda stopped me but you didn't" (Shepard 113). Henry blames Earl for his troubles in a way. It is because he thinks Earl should have stopped him when he killed his wife. Yet he still does not try to make up for his mistakes. That Henry charges Earl with his own mistake indicates Henry does not seek for reconciliation.

Apparently, he regrets killing her because he killed a human being. Yet actually he regrets killing her because, metaphorically speaking, he killed himself by killing her as he says: "I thought I'd killed her – but it was me I killed" (Shepard 112). Matthew Roudane claims that The Late Henry Moss is a play presenting the issue of self-destruction: "The play, for Henry, has been a self-murder mystery" (CCSS 289). Henry kills himself by killing his wife because he kills the other who helps him to prove his existence and masculinity. He kills a submissive and obedient woman through whom he proves his masculinity. He does not have an other to dominate as a proof of his masculinity after killing her. Furthermore, Henry has to leave everything after he kills his wife because he has to leave the home. Matthew

Roudane goes further in the issue of Henry's running away because he connects this act to Henry's identity and character: "[...] this is a man who 'ran out' of his marriage, relationship, home, fatherhood, shrouding him" (CCSS 288). That is to say, Henry loses everything what makes him Henry after he kills his wife. Therefore, he metaphorically kills himself by killing his wife because he loses main elements of his identity. It can be claimed that Shepard deals with the need of having an identity in The Late Henry Moss by presenting Henry's dilemmas and regret. Shepard expresses that the need of an identity is a problematic issue for human beings: "To me, one of the strangest and most terrifying things about being a human is the need to come up with an identity" (Roudane, CCSS 290). Shepard tries to show how problematic the issue of identity in The Late Henry Moss because he presents characters who "cannot come to terms with their identities" (Roudane, CCSS 290).

Shepard also deals with stereotypes as well as the issue of identity. For instance, he presents two opposing female stereotypes in The Late Henry Moss. Similarly, Arthur Miller creates two opposing female character in Death of a Salesman. Henry's wife is similar to Linda, Willy's wife, in that both of these women are obedient to their husbands which indicates that they support their husbands' masculinity. They fit to the accepted woman role because they are submissive, obedient, angel-like, and faithful, as Earl describes her mother: "Faithful. She was faithful. No matter what. I remember her now. I remember her on her hands and knees" (Shepard 109). Henry's wife and Linda always work for their families. Similar to Linda, Henry's wife scrubs the floor on her knees, as Ray says: "You remember how she used to scrub, day in and day out. Scrub, scrub, scrub" (Shepard 97). The fact that both women scrub the floor on their knees indicates that Willy and

Henry cannot support their family adequately. While Willy is bothered by seeing Linda scrubbing the floor on her knees, Henry does not care about this fact. Willy feels less masculine as this scene makes him remember that he cannot support his family adequately. Yet Henry does not think that he is not masculine enough even if he cannot support his family adequately because he resorts to violence to maintain his power and to feel masculine.

Another similarity between Linda and Henry's wife is that both of them are idealized by their sons. While Happy and Biff, Linda's sons, express that they want to marry a woman like Linda, Ray expresses his jealousy of his father through these sentences: "And then – I used to think she was doing all that for us, you know. You and me [...] It was for *him*. It was for Henry. Everything. All those hours and hours, slaving away – Slaving away. It was for him" (Shepard 98). Both Miller and Shepard not only present submissive female characters but also create opposing female characters to these submissive ones. While Miller creates the woman with whom Willy has an affair, Shepard presents a stronger female character, Conchalla. Conchalla goes beyond stereotypical gender roles because she is so strong that she dominates the male characters around her. For instance, she has total control over Henry, Earl and Esteban. She gives orders to them, and they obey her orders. Upon the death of Henry, she orders Earl to wait three days to touch Henry's corpse. Earl obeys her, and waits three days to call his brother. The fact that Conchalla dominates the male characters shows that she poses a threat to their masculinity. Henry accepts he cannot overcome her by expressing the need of an actual man to defeat and persuade Conchalla: "Walk right over there to her, like a man, and explain the situation" (Shepard 76). Conchalla also challenges Esteban's masculinity thanks to

her physical power, and mocks Esteban's masculinity through these sentences: "He looks to me like a man who could use some bouncing. Look how flat he is" (Shepard 102). Cochalla is similar to Blanche, the female character in A Streetcar Named Desire, in that she challenges a male's masculinity. Furthermore, she drinks alcohol similar to Blanche. Yet she is the victimizer, unlike Blanche who becomes the victim of the patriarchal society through Stanley. It is because Cochalla is a strong and an independent female rather than a fragile one like Blanche.

Stanley dominates Blanche and recovers his masculinity through sexual violence. Henry cannot resort to any kind of violence towards Cochalla because she is physically stronger than him. Yet Henry also resorts to violence to dominate his wife because he is physically more powerful than her which shows the necessity of physical power to maintain masculinity. Similar to Stanley, Henry smashes things in the house, as Earl reveals through this sentence: "You broke the place up. You smashed all the windows" (Shepard 110). Moreover, Henry beats his wife violently. Allen J. Kuharski claims that "Shepard has captured a certain American monstrosity in Henry" (501). It is because Henry resorts to violence to maintain his power just like many American males. In the play, the fact that Henry uses violence to dominate his family is revealed through the transformation of Ray and Earl into Henry and his wife. Ray takes the place of Henry while Earl transforms into his mother in a way. Ray makes Earl scrub the floor on his knees which reminds us of his mother. Besides, he beats him, and expresses that this is just the same way Henry treats his wife in these sentences:

[...]. And there she was – On the floor! Just like you, Earl. Just like you are now. Backed up under the sink! Crushed. He was kicking her, Earl!

He was kicking her just like this! [...]And every time he kicked her his rage grew a little bit and his face changed! His eyes bulged out and the blood rushed into his neck! And her blood was flying all over the kitchen, Earl! (Shepard 99-100)

While Henry is similar to Willy in that he cannot support his family adequately, he maintains his masculinity by using violence. It is because violence is a way of evoking fear to dominate other people, especially women, as Kimmel claims: “[...] men tend to use domestic violence instrumentally, for the specific purpose of striking fear and terror in their wives’ hearts, to ensure compliance, obedience, and passive acceptance of the husband’s rule in the home” (TGS 286). As Willy perceives money and material possession as the only thing to be respected, he tries to recover his masculinity through committing suicide. He thinks his family will get money from the insurance policy which will enable him to regain his respect and masculinity. Yet Shepard shows that money is not as important as physical power in The Late Henry Moss. While Henry does not have money, he has control over his family thanks to his physical power which makes him maintain his masculinity. Alex Vernon expresses that violence is an important issue in terms of identity in Shepard’s plays, especially in True West (146). Shepard shows the necessity of violence in terms of identity formation, especially in terms of masculine identity formation, in The Late Henry Moss, too. It is because violence and strength enable a man to maintain his supremacy, as Wayne Ewing suggests: “The ruling paradigm for male supremacy remains to this hour, physical violence” (358). He, however, cannot dominate Conchalla even if he has money because he is not physically strong. Now Conchalla dominates him because she is physically stronger than him.

Conchalla is similar to Beatrice, Eddie's wife in A View from the Bridge, in that both of them are strong characters. While Conchalla has control over all the male characters around her, Beatrice poses threat to Eddie's masculinity by opposing him. Beatrice sometimes gives orders to Eddie by telling him what to do which makes her similar to Conchalla. Another similarity between Conchalla and Beatrice is that both of them talk about sexual power of their partners which indicates that they challenge the masculinity of their partners. While Beatrice complains about Eddie's sexual impotence by expressing that she wants to be a woman again, Conchalla even goes further by mocking Henry's sexual power. Shepard makes use of phallic symbols to reveal Henry's sexual impotence. For instance, Conchalla takes Henry's fish, and plays with it as if it was Henry's sexual organ. When Henry boasts about his fish, Conchalla makes a connection between the fish and Henry's sexual organ: "I remember he bargged the same way about his penis" (Shepard 72). Conchalla looks down on Henry's sexual organ through this sentence. Then she eats the fish while it is still alive which indicates that she ravishes Henry's masculinity by ignoring his phallic power (Shepard 78).

Shepard is similar to Miller and Williams in that all of them present phallic symbols. For instance, Miller makes use of a knife, Eddie's knife, as a phallic symbol. Dennis Hall suggests that knife is a phallic symbol for Americans in his book called American Icons (105). Miller presents Eddie's attempt to recover his manhood through his knife. Eddie tries to make up for his lacks, especially by his sexual impotence, by the help of his knife because knife signifies "phallus, a body part that comes to signify sexual prowess" (Hall 105). Shepard presents another phallic symbol, the bottle, in The Late Henry Moss. Henry is obsessed with a bottle,

and searches for it: “What the hell happened to that bottle! [*Henry starts searching for bottle again.*]” (Shepard 58). The bottle symbolizes Henry’s sexual organ in a way. That Conchalla undermines his sexual organ causes Henry to get obsessed with his sexual organ. Therefore, Henry’s obsession with the bottle is a reference to his struggle to regain his phallic power and masculinity. Similar to Shepard, Williams uses bottle as a phallic symbol in A Streetcar Named Desire. Stanley has a beer bottle in his hand just before his act of rape. The bottle symbolizes Stanley’s sexual power in a way. The fact that he has the bottle in his hand is a reference to his victory because this scene indicates that he regains his control and power through his sexual organ. Yet Henry cannot recover his masculinity because he is not physically and sexually powerful enough to dominate Conchalla.

Shepard challenges the phallo-centrism through the character Conchalla. While their sexual organs usually enable men to be in control, in this play a man loses his power because his sexual organ is undermined by a woman. While Stanley recovers his masculinity by means of his sexual organ in A Streetcar Named Desire, Henry Moss loses his power as Conchalla is not satisfied with his sexual organ in The Late Henry Moss. Henry is similar to Eddie who loses his power over Beatrice since he is not active in bed despite the fact that Henry has not lost his sexual competence totally yet. Conchalla, however, still declares Henry as dead because he is not physically and sexually powerful enough to dominate her. Although Henry tries to convince her that he is still alive, Conchalla does not care about him. Henry tries to make use of other masculine traits such as fight and war to recover his masculinity, as seen in these sentences: “What did I ever do to deserve this? I’ve led an honorable life for the most part. I’ve served my country. I’ve dropped bombs on

total strangers” (Shepard 79). Yet these masculine traits do not enable him to regain his control because now he is too weak to dominate Conchalla. Conchalla takes revenge of another woman, Henry’s wife, in a way. While Henry paves the way for his wife’s death by beating her, Conchalla declares Henry as dead: “She pronounced me dead! That’s what she did” (Shepard 61).

There is an exchange of gender roles between Henry and Conchalla in the play. Shepard challenges stereotypes and gender roles because he creates a powerful, independent woman while he presents a dependent, weak man through Henry’s character. Henry is an aggressive, independent man in his relationship with his wife. Yet he turns out to be dependent, weak, and unmanly in his relationship with Conchalla, as indicated by Matthew Roudane: “Henry soon dies after Conchalla, in a paradoxically cajoling and comforting gesture, pours liquor down his throat” (2002 290). It can be claimed Shepard attacks the idea that gender roles are innate because he shows that power creates the inequality between genders. A woman can be independent and in control when she has the power and physical strength, just like Conchalla. Henry admits that he cannot defeat Conchalla because she is stronger than him: “I couldn’t resist. It’s true. There she was – big as day!” (Shepard 108). Shepard not only creates a male character dependent on a woman like Henry but also an effeminate character, Esteban, to attack gender stereotypes. Esteban reminds the reader of Rodolpho, the effeminate character in A View from the Bridge. Esteban is good at housework done by women in terms of gender roles just like Rodolpho who is good at similar errands. Rodolpho can cook, and he can sew dresses which makes Eddie claim that he is effeminate and abnormal because such kind of errands should be done by women in Eddie’s eyes. Similarly, Esteban can cook, and he serves other

men like a woman. Similar to Eddie, Earl complains about the fact that Esteban has some female traits such as ordering things and being sensitive: “[*Kicking out at Esteban.*] Get away from me! It’s like being with a woman, being around you!” (Shepard 82). Although Earl yells at Esteban, Esteban does not really care about his complaints. While Earl continues yelling at him, Esteban answers him by just saying: “Menudo is almost ready” (Shepard 83). He is similar to a submissive and an obedient woman, especially because of this answer. That is to say, he is so interested in cooking and arranging things that he does not care about other things. Shepard challenges gender roles through Esteban because he has feminine traits while Conchalla, who is also physically stronger than Esteban, has masculine traits.

In conclusion, Shepard deals with issues related to gender, especially masculinity, which are also dealt by Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller. While Miller presents the relationship between masculinity and sexual competence in *A View from the Bridge*, Shepard shows the importance of physical and sexual power in terms of masculinity. Both Miller and Shepard create male characters that lose their control over their family and over women. While Henry is similar to Willy in that both of them lose their control over their sons, Henry also makes us remember Eddie who loses his dominance over his wife, Beatrice. As Beatrice and Conchalla are strong and independent female characters, they challenge the masculinity of males around them. Henry could maintain his masculinity by using violence in his youth, similar to Stanley who maintains and recovers his masculinity by using sexual and physical violence. Yet Henry cannot manage to maintain his masculinity by using violence any more because now he is against a female who is stronger than him. Therefore, he loses his masculinity and his life which indicates that Shepard

challenges the gender roles and all kinds of stereotypes by presenting an exchange between the roles of female and male characters. That is to say, Shepard proves that a woman can behave like a man when she has power which indicates that he attacks the idea that gender is something innate.

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