OBJECTIFICATION OF PERSONHOOD: AN ANALYSIS OF FEMALE HEROES IN AMERICAN TV SERIES

by

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Objectification of Personhood: An Analysis of Female Heroes in American TV Series

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Candidate of **Doctor of Philosophy** at the National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that the dissertation **Objectification of Personhood: An Analysis of Female Heroes in American TV Series** submitted by me in partial fulfilment of PhD degree, is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

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Neelum Almas
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ABSTRACT

Thesis Title: Objectification of Personhood: An Analysis of Female Heroes in American TV Series

This dissertation examines the representation of the female hero in the American television drama series which at a cursory glance seems to be informed by the enlightened discourse of feminism. The study looks into the notion of the female hero through a feminist lens in order to determine what ways of objectification, or treating women as objects, are at work in the depiction of the female hero in American television drama series. The objectives of the study were to determine the extent to which the female hero is objectified in American television drama series and expose ideological biases in terms of instrumentality, autonomy, agency, violability and subjectivity that exists in the representation of the female heroes in television drama series. For the purpose of the study of objectification of the female hero three drama series were selected: *Grey's Anatomy, Castle* and *The Good Wife*. Martha Nussbaum's theory of objectification delineating seven notions of objectification, namely: instrumentality, denial of autonomy, violability, inertness, denial of subjectivity, fungibility and ownership formed the theoretical framework of the study. Horace Newcomb and Paul M. Hirsch's textual critical approach was used to study and interpret the dominant messages embedded in the pleasant disguise of fictional entertainment.

A detailed analysis of the three notions of objectification: instrumentality, denial of autonomy and ownership (Chapter IV) shows that despite being given the role of the hero around whom the action of the drama series revolves, the female heroes, Meredith, Beckett and Alicia are undermined in various ways through objectification. Members of their family, male or female co-workers objectify them and deny them autonomy and claim ownership of them. The needs, interests and experiences of these female heroes are subordinated to those of the powerful, who are authority figures predominantly men and in some instances women as well, either in the family or the workplace. The female hero's treatment as violable and her lack of autonomy (Chapter V) shows that she is not granted powers expected in the figure of a hero. Authority figures and men who control the female heroes' lives fail to acknowledge that these women are owners of their own lives and have the right to self-determination and

action. There is little awareness and resistance on the part of the women heroes as they sacrifice their individuality and independence and submit to the authority of men considering it beneficial to them. The analysis of the female heroes reveals that despite being given the role of heroes their agency is limited. They are not fully autonomous and are inert as someone else manages the decisions about their life and career. This inertness mars their status as heroes who are not fully active agents. It is a subversive strategy used in patriarchal societies to control tough women which reveals that women are only allowed to show power within certain parameters which do not threaten male dominance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Drama Series and the Main Cast

Grey's Anatomy

Grey's Anatomy is an American medical drama created by Shonda Rhimes. It premiered in March 2005 on ABC (American Broadcasting Corporation) completing twelve seasons in September 2015.

Main Cast

Meredith Grey: Meredith, daughter of a renowned surgeon, Ellis Grey, is the surgical intern in the first season of Grey's Anatomy at Grey Sloan Hospital, formerly Seattle Grace Hospital. In season eleven she is the resident doctor and wife of Derek Shepherd.

Derek Shepherd: A resident Doctor and head of neurosurgery at Seattle Grace Hospital who is also the love interest of Meredith Grey in season one and eventually her husband.

Ellis Grey: Meredith's mother who suffers Alzheimer's, formerly an esteemed surgeon.

Cristina Yang: A trainee doctor and Meredith's friend, who she refers to as her "person".

Alex Karev: An intern who initially is antagonistic toward Meredith and other coworkers. His friendship with Meredith grows stronger as the series progresses and he takes up the role of her "person" after Yang's departure.

Izzie Stevens: Another surgical intern at Grey Sloan Hospital who is a former lingerie model.

Miranda Bailey: Hospital's chief resident who later becomes an attending general surgeon.

Amelia Shepherd: A neurosurgeon who appears in the later seasons of the show. She is the youngest sister of Dr. Shepherd.

Maggie Pierce: Meredith's half-sister who joins Grey Sloan Hospital as a surgeon in later seasons.

Castle

Castle is an American detective/crime TV drama series by Andrew W. Marlowe. It was aired in March 2009 on ABC and lasted eight seasons till May 2016.

Main Cast

Kate Beckett: A detective in NYPD who is promoted to Captain in season seven. She is the love interest of Richard Castle and eventually becomes his wife.

Richard Castle: A mystery/detective best-selling author who through his friendship with the mayor joins Kate Beckett to assist her in homicide cases.

Javier Esposito & Kevin Ryan: They are best friends and part of Beckett's investigation team in NYPD.

Captain Roy Montgomery: Beckett's boss in season one who is replaced with Captain Victoria Gates in season seven.

Alexis Castle: Castle's teenaged daughter by his first wife.

Martha Rodgers: Castle's mother, who is a veteran actress.

Will Sorenson: Beckett's former boyfriend and FBI agent.

The Good Wife

The Good Wife is an American legal drama series, by Robert King and Michelle King, premiered on CBS in September 2009 and ended in May 2016.

Main Cast

Alicia Florrick: Alicia is the wife of Peter Florrick. She joins Lockhart & Gardner as a junior lawyer, after her husband is sent to prison on charges of corruption and philandering. She later becomes equity partner in the firm and also runs for the seat of State Attorney.

Peter Florrick: Alicia's husband and State Attorney.

Zach Florrick: Alicia and Peter's son.

Grace Florrick: Alicia and Peter's daughter.

Cary Agos: Alicia's competitor at Lockhart & Gardner. He later becomes her partner in the firm.

Kalinda Sharma: The in-house investigator at Lockhart & Gardner. She is also Alicia's confidant.

Diane Lockhart: Alicia's boss and a partner in Lockhart & Gardner

Will Gardner: Alicia's boss at a partner in Lockhart & Gardner. He is also Alicia's old school fellow and her romantic interest.

Eli Gold: Eli is Peter Florrick's manager and campaign strategist.

Johnny Elfman: Alicia's manager during her campaign for state attorney's election.

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DEDICATED

To papa

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

The representation of women in media such as films and television has undergone a noticeable change due to the efforts of feminists and the interest of critics in the portrayal of female characters in film and television shows. As a result of rising awareness about women's rights and roles, the depiction of women on television has changed dramatically in the 21st century, mirroring social changes in gender roles and relationships (Jacobson 120). Elyce Helford observes that television from 1990s onwards, began to offer a wider array of women characters than the previous decades and none remained confined to the domestic sphere in which they were previously contained as housewives and mothers only (5). Women can be seen playing more significant roles in television shows. In the early years of television, women in television dramas were cast mostly in the roles of homemakers and if shown at workplaces they were cast in subordinate positions or low key roles such as "secretaries or waitresses". Gradually, as the women's movement gained momentum, television started featuring working women in lead roles (Jacobson 120). Today's television presents women performing roles which in the past were considered appropriate only for men. From being passive objects of desire for the male hero, female characters in films and television dramas have come to be the moving forces. Plots revolve around them vesting them with power and authority and making them the protagonists. The popularity of female heroes in films and dramas in the new millennium is increasing. Examples of female toughness epitomize contemporary media representations of women. Television series such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003), *Xena: The Warrior Princess* (1995-2001), *Sabrina: The Teenage Witch* (1996-2000), Nikita (2010-2013) and Hollywood films like *Cat Woman* 2004), *Laura Croft: Tomb Raider* (2001), *Kill Bill* (2004), *Divergent* (2014) and many other films can be cited as examples. Therefore, it becomes important to understand whether the image of the female hero that is portrayed in the contemporary film and television is the image of the female that feminists and proponents of women's equality have been striving for.

In this study the researcher examines the construction of the female hero which at a cursory glance seems to be informed by the enlightened discourse of feminism and is often perceived as the politically correct representation of women under the banner for women's liberation and empowerment. This study attempts to determine if the representation of the female hero in dramas is indeed a tribute to women and femininity or if it is just a poor façade behind which the dominant forces of female suppression lurk and carry on their work of oppression. The study is expected to help in understanding the promises and limitations of women's roles in contemporary television dramas.

Popular media is not only finely attuned to the changes in societal perceptions and attitudes but it also helps to generate such changes, including those in gender perceptions. "Media images are important because they contribute to the construction of what it means to be a woman or man" (Carilli & Campbell 104). Research also indicates that media images contribute to sex role stereotyping and sex role socialization (Signorielli, *Role & Stereotyping*; MacKay and Covell). Traditionally gender roles for men and women, in film and on television are dictated through social norms and practices. Men have generally been regarded as strong, dominant and independent. On the other hand, women are depicted as weak, submissive and sensitive (Basow 53). However, in contemporary media such as, film and television drama, women can be seen performing more flexible gender roles, from those which were once termed as masculine to those called androgynous. It is worth noting whether these flexible and androgynous gender roles allow women to exercise power, freedom, domination and independence in the same way as enjoyed by their male counterparts or if these seemingly flexible gender roles constitute just a façade of emancipation and liberation and they are still confined to the stereotypical roles that the society assigns to them. Keeping in view this position, the study aims to investigate the roles of the female heroes in popular American television drama series.

The purpose of the study is to examine American TV drama series, asking questions about the depiction of the female hero in contemporary American television drama series. The study looks into the notion of the female hero through a feminist lens in order to determine what ways of objectification, or treating women as objects, are at work in the depiction of the female hero in American television drama series. American culture has great influence all over the world and the same is the case in Pakistan. The popularity of American fast-food chains, clothing brands, TV series and Hollywood

films in Pakistan is a testimony to the fact that American popular culture has a strong presence and potential to influence the local lifestyle, language, educational system and also the modes of entertainment. Pakistanis look up to American standards of refinement and taste. The unrestrained expression of the American popular culture allows people to consider and evaluate those issues which are either avoided or considered taboo in our culture. Politics, gender roles, sexuality, family and relationships etc. are explored through American popular culture such as film, television, songs and advertisements forcing the viewers to form their own opinions. The easy access of American television drama through cable channels and DVDs makes them a cheap and affordable form of entertainment for the educated middle class in Pakistan. It is due to this immense influence of the American popular culture that the researcher has chosen to work on the American television drama. The researches that have been conducted on American popular culture mostly take the Hollywood films into account whereas the American television drama is a neglected genre in the context of academic research in Pakistan. The researcher did not select Pakistani drama owing to the fact that in terms of themes and roles assigned to women Pakistani dramas offer little variety as most dramas revolve around the theme of marriage and domesticated women. Women seldom appear in professional roles. If working women are shown in the Pakistani dramas their lives at work remain in the background. Such roles of women offer more options for the study of physical or sexual objectification but not of personhood.

Since its advent in the 1940s, American TV dramas, in the form of situation comedy, soaps and series have attracted viewers in America. We have been privy to hundreds of dramas and characters which reflect the ideas and ideals of the time and also the future. In this study I will examine whether the female protagonists in American television drama series are presented as invested with true power and independence or their representation is undermined by objectification and gender stereotyping in practice in the society. The female hero is the expression of the gender identity in contemporary culture. Julie A. O'Reilly argues that the popularity of the powerful women on television dramas in the late 1990s drew the attention of the media and cultural studies scholars and they began to consider this new surge of "action heroes", "warrior women", and "tough girls" for scholarly purposes (O'Reilly 7). Recognizing the importance of the female heroes on TV, Moy Suelain notes that girls today "look up to a new breed of small-screen heroine who is smart, funny, physically formidable—

and sure of herself…" (86). Thus the study of the female hero from the standpoint of objectification offers a fresh perspective on what opportunities are offered for change in the image of females on television in the future.

1.2 Statement of the Purpose

The study seeks to determine if the apparently independent and powerful female heroes of the American primetime dramas, that present women in the roles which are considered the prowess of male heroes, have overcome objectification of personhood as defined by Martha Nussbaum.

1.3 Key Terms

In the following pages is given the description of the terms and concepts that are essential to undertaking the study. The definitions explain the way these concepts have developed over time and what they have come to mean in contemporary scholarship.

1.3.1 Hero: Origin and Evolution

In order to understand the term "female hero" it is necessary to look at the concept of hero first and also what qualities and attributes are associated with the figure of a hero. Also it becomes imperative for the sake of understanding the perspective of the research regarding the "female hero" to realize how the "female hero" does not mean the "heroine", and what sets the "female hero" apart from the pejorative term "heroine".

The term hero in literature and film has been used to refer to a figure who possesses some extraordinary qualities or is the savior of humanity. The most iconic superhero, Superman (1938) has been defined as "the savior of the oppressed—he battles the forces of evil and injustice" (Feiffer 10). An overview of the evolution and development of the notion of both the male and female hero is also given which helps in determining where the female hero stands at present. In the following section are given the detail of the traits and types of male hero as the female hero is a later development than its counterpart. In earlier representations of the female in film and literature the place assigned to the female lead character was that of a "heroine" who acted as a foil to the hero.

i. Monomythic Hero

Joseph Campbell, using the term monomyth coined by James Joyce, defines the monomythic hero who undergoes a series of transformations on a quest (19-20).

Monomythic hero's journey takes him through various adventures. He faces many ordeals and crises to clinch victory and returns home with honor. *Monomyth* refers to the stages or the motif of journey of the hero. There are both religious and secular heroes in history who have been presented in literature. These fictional heroes reflect our society. For example, they reflect the patriarchal setup where the male hero carries the legacy of his forefathers. Some monomythic heroes are off springs of deities and humans, and some possess supernatural qualities (Leeming 179). Campbell states that "The hero is the man or woman who has been able to battle past his personal and local historical limitations, to the generally valid normally human forces" (19-20). Achilles, Hercules, Odysseus and Beowulf are a few examples of the monomythic heroes. The hero enters an unknown world from the ordinary world, confronting strange forces and events. He must survive a hard test and challenge. In the end he may achieve a great gift or "boon" (J. Campbell 20).

Heroes have traditionally been male but Campbell's definition of the monomythic hero reveals that women can also fit this definition of the hero as he does not limit his definition to male hero only. "The hero is the man or woman who has been able to battle past his personal and local historical limitations, to the generally valid normally human forces" (J. Campbell 19-20). The hero must venture forth into a region of supernatural wonder or the underworld, he must face the challenges and win over the evil forces and then return to "bestow boon on his fellow men" (J. Campbell 57). The hero's journey into the unknown regions is the metaphor for the knowledge of the self. In this sense women can also be heroic.

Even in the stories of the monomythic heroes the female is presented as an enchantress of the patriarchal hero. She is his nemesis as Adam's Eve, Samson's Delilah, Aeneas's Dido. These females are merely distractors to the hero, representing a form of evil and one of the hurdles that the hero has to cross in his journey, whom he has to conquer just as he conquers the demons and terrors of the underworld (Leeming 180-81). Leeming further states that the patriarchal monomythic hero is the celebration of the traditional archetypal man. It boasts of the stereotypical male characteristics; specifically, male power, and the role of a female in these stories is secondary to even that of an instrument. For example, the hero's mother dies after giving birth to him. Lang and Trimble note about the monomythic hero "The heroes struggle was one of vertical mobility, raising himself from humble beginnings until he forced society to recognize him as a successful individual" (159).

ii. Super Hero

The heroes appearing in superhero comics in the 1940s such as Superman, Batman, Spiderman and Flash are a few examples of action heroes with supernatural abilities. Peter Coogan states that the superhero is a figure that "resolves basic cultural conflicts and contradictions" (24). Coogan identifies mission, secret powers and identity as the core constituent elements of the superhero. The superhero's mission is prosocial and selfless. It is essential to the superhero's character "because someone who does not act selflessly is not heroic and therefore not a hero" (30-31). Julian Chambliss in her study of superhero comics states that superhero embodies power that is beyond normal standards (Chambliss 146). Coogan also notes that "typically superheroes have dual identities, the ordinary one of which is kept secret" (Coogan 358). He notes that the defining features of the superman did not come together until the creation of Superman comics by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster in 1938.

> Sherrie A. Inness notes that the image of the tough guy or superhero has become a media staple and an overwhelming number of tough men appear on popular media (3). She also notes that since the 1990s tough women are also becoming more prevalent on-screen, both Hollywood and the American Television. She highlights the significance of the study of the female heroes or "tough women" due to the growing number of women in the male dominated realm. "How tough women are depicted in the media has become an important issue in recent years because they are being depicted more frequently than in past decades" (Inness 4). Given the opportunity women are demonstrating their rise to equal power as men. The democratization of the hero from heroic to unheroic or what is commonly known as anti-hero has in fact led to the emergence of the female hero as a dominant figure as her male counterpart rather than a foil to the male hero.

Mervi Miettinen in *Superhuman Comics and the Popular Geopolitics of American Identity* contends that the American monomythic hero is primarily a male figure and represents the white American males (16). Charles Piehl also stresses the same point, "The predominant heroes of American history have been male and white" (129). Since the ethnicity and color of the hero are beyond the scope of my dissertation I will limit myself to the discussion on the issue of exclusion of the representation of female gender from the role of hero in the past.

Another important aspect about the selected female characters that this study seeks to explore is that the lead female characters in the three selected drama series are not action or super heroes. As generally it is considered that to qualify as a hero a character must possess some extraordinary abilities or supernatural powers. The selected female characters qualify as heroes as they battle the testing situations in life against the expectations of the society.

iii. Action Hero

Action hero is the embodiment of masculinity and power associated with manhood. The male action hero is defined by his physical strength and manliness. He possesses a tough body. Characters played by Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Terminator* and Sylvester Stallone in *Rocky* represent such tough male heroes (Tasker, "Gender and Action Cinema" 81-84). Action hero embodies typically masculine traits such as independence, intelligence, reticence, cool-headedness, physical strength, even aggression. He exhibits little emotion and is associated with activity and action and the ability to perform harrowing feats singlehandedly, with great courage. The male action hero also displays authority or effectively handles authority handed over to him through rank or position. The action hero's identity is associated with agency and activity. Actions like fighting against crime or enemies, running, searching, chasing, rescuing etc. typify his role and strength as a hero. Kendrick notes that "the pure action heroes are outwardly aggressive and determined, and their primary objective (solving the case …taking out a terrorist…) is less important than their victory in attaining it" (Kendrick 97). The action hero can even defy law in proving his heroism. This Kendrick says, defines the new action hero (98). Kimmel and Aronson note that for decades, spy action films (such as the *James Bond* Series appearing in 1960's) both on television and Hollywood, celebrated masculine empowerment, forming the social conceptions of masculinity and also presenting heroes that preserve American society (185). Eric Lichtenfeld contends that *Dirty Harry* and *Bonnie and Clyde* set the stage in 1967 for the action movie hero in Hollywood, combining action and heightened violence (9). These films and the Bond series set the stage for the Hollywood action hero personified in the characters played by Sylvester Stallone in *Rocky* and *Rambo* respectively, Bruce Willis in *Die Hard* and Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Terminator* movies in the 1990s. He argues that the 1980s was the classical period of the rise and power of the action hero in Hollywood (80-81).

Himmelstein states that we create heroes, whether literary or public personages to fulfill the archetypal need of social organization (Himmelstein 158). Heroes in this way, are social types drawn from a cultural stock of images and symbols. They "represent roles which though informal have become rather well conceptualized and in which there is comparatively high degree of consensus" (158). They provide models for people to emulate and also act as photographs of the society's past and present practices. A close examination of a hero's character traits reveals a lot of information about cultural values and traditions.

The discussion of the various types of heroes will help in understanding the role and characteristic traits assigned to a heroine in films and drama.

1.3.2 Heroine

In popular romances and also in the hybrid Hollywood action films and romantic comedies, "heroine" is the stock character, a lead female who is mostly a mere decorative figure and love interest of the male hero. "The heroine of Hollywood action pictures has more commonly been figured as romantic interest of the hero" (Tasker 15). The "love interest" according to Abele is "often a passing fancy and damsel in distress for the hero" (115). She depends on the hero to be rescued from the danger or the clutches of the villain. Lack of agency and focus on beauty and fragility are her defining marks. A heroine is a passive or submissive lady, merely fulfilling the needs of her male counterpart. She has no independent or significant role to play. "Their role was commonly as the "prize" to be won by the hero" (Knight x). The "heroine" is the foil to the hero in that she represents what the hero is not. A hero is physically and mentally strong, necessarily not attractive in appearance, the heroine is fragile and emotionally week. Unlike the hero the first and the foremost trait that qualifies her as a heroine is her beauty and physical attraction. The history of cinema is replete with examples of doe-eyed heroines of perfect figure and shape in the roles played by Marilyn Monroe, Ava Gardner, Elizabeth Taylor etc.

Owing to the fact that the term "heroine" has been used to refer to the passive female characters this study will not use this term for the lead female characters of the Television drama series it explores. The criticism available on the lead female characters of the selected American Television drama series also highlights that they are termed as "heroes" not heroines as heroine is considered a gendered term. Since the

study is using the term “hero” for the lead female characters it is necessary the term “female hero” is explained in detail.

1.3.3 Female Hero

For this study the term “female hero” is used instead of “heroine”. The term “heroine” is associated with a lead female character who is the object of desire for the male lead and who performs as a heroine. At a glance the term “female hero” seems a contradictory term. Generally, the word hero is used for a man and heroine for a woman. As Sally Slocum puts it “Female hero” may seem at first a paradoxical term, since we are accustomed by a long literary tradition to think of the word “hero” as masculine and “heroine”as feminine (5). To justify the use of the term hero for a female as well she goes on to state that the role and actions of a female character in the plot determines her position as a heroine or hero. “A heroine is thus recognizable by her performance of a traditionally identified, female sex-role. But any woman who by choice, by circumstance, or even by accident, escapes definition exclusively in terms of such a traditional role is capable of heroism, as opposed to heroinism” (Slocum 5-6).

It is also worth noting that “hero” is a gender neutral term. While referring to the female fictional subjects, Pearson and Pope also prefer using the term “hero" over “heroine” which is considered diminutive, claiming that “women are and have been heroic” (vii) but patriarchal society has refused to recognize female heroism. Pearson and Pope state that the female heroes do not play a supporting role but venture out on a quest of self-discovery which resembles the journey of the monomythic hero on archetypal level (vii).

The female hero is not a passive recipient of the male hero’s attentions or a glamorous object for whom the male hero performs his deeds of valor and for whom she is a reward; and is, therefore, not a heroine. The female hero integrates “female power and sexuality, strength and beauty, courage and grace” (Gramstad 351). The female hero is an active hero who happens to be female but with all the virtues and qualities and power of a male hero.

Heroes have traditionally been male but Campbell's definition of the monomythic hero reveals that women can also fit this definition of the hero as he does not limit his definition to male hero only. “The hero is the man or woman who has been able to battle past his personal and local historical limitations, to the generally valid normally human forces” (J. Campbell 19-20). Campbell in his seminal work *The Hero*

With a Thousand Faces includes the mythological hero Psyche who survives a succession of trials, journeying the underworld in her quest for her lost lover, Cupid. Campbell states that "Psyche's voyage to the underworld is but one of innumerable such adventures undertaken by the heroes of fairly-tales and myth" (J. Campbell 98). One of the earliest definitions of hero has been devised by Joseph Campbell. Campbell's definition of the hero has been considered most precise and comprehensive (Porter 5). Citing the example of Psyche, a female hero, Campbell establishes that women also can be heroes in literature and popular culture. It is interesting to note that the representation of the female heroes in literature and popular cultural forms like films and television the female hero has undergone a long and tough battle to establish her position. Edwards Lee talks about the bias of making heroism a male phenomenon:

> The possibility of woman hero is contingent only on recognizing the aspirations of consciousness as human attributes; it is the absence of this understanding that has kept Psyche and her heroic daughters so long in shadow … if heroism is defined in terms of external action alone and heroic actions are confined to display of unusual physical strength…or social or political power, than physiology or a culture that limits women's capacities in these areas thereby excludes women from heroic roles. (11)

Pat Browne in *Heroines of Popular Culture* examines the development of the concept of "female hero". He argues that the education of women in the nineteenth century helped to raise awareness in women about their heroic capabilities. Earlier, men "kept women stored away, like explosives in a warehouse" (Browne 1). He contends that novels of Victorian age present strong female characters. He develops the argument that the female hero existed in classical novels. The idea of building female hero was there in literature and then the other genres also more explicitly explored this type of hero. Starting from classical English literary texts such as *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*, to the depiction of female hero in soap operas and rock music he makes his point clear that women also qualify as heroes and the term is not gendered, specifically to be used for men only. He contends that these representations of the females in literature and popular culture reveal that females also can fit the definition of hero as defined by Joseph Campbell who states that the hero's journey or quest is a metaphor for self-awareness. In this way women can also be heroes. Browne states that throughout history the idea of hero has undergone a change but some traits still remain the same as the hero is an archetypal figure who bears the possibilities of life, exhibiting

courage and love. JoAnna Mink contends that if heroism is possible, it belongs to both men and women. “Heroism is a human necessity, capable of being represented equally by either sex” (Mink 20). The women in the Victorian novels were attempting to change the social order and the missing representation and misrepresentation were amended by the evolutionary path set by these women heroes who made it possible for the woman hero to emerge more closely with her male counterpart. Mink states the examples of the female protagonists in Charlotte Bronte, Ann Bronte, George Eliot, Henrik Ibsen and Thomas Hardy’s novels that have helped pave the way for the emergence of “Woman as Hero” (Mink 20).

The term “female hero” has been used for a female performing a leading role in a novel or a film. She does not depend on the more dominant male character in the film, rather herself plays the central role. In order to qualify as a hero, the female hero is expected to represent the female gender as powerful and capable as men who can perform the same tasks and undergo the same adventures as the male hero, therefore the term “female hero” is more suitable than “heroine”. Wonder Woman and Lara Croft are the popular examples of the female heroes. Unlike Wonder Woman and Laura Croft, the female heroes in the selected American television drama series, Meredith Grey, Kate Beckett and Alicia Florrick are not action or super heroes, they are ordinary women taking care of their family and battling challenging situations at work. Their heroism comes to light with the extraordinary feasts they perform at work to prove their competence and worth against all odds.

In the light of the above discussion it can be established that the three female protagonists in the selected American television drama series, Meredith Grey, Kate Beckett and Alicia Florrick are heroes in the contemporary American television drama. Daniel Rossides contends that as a result of backlash against inequality against women and their stereotyping in passive roles women are being represented in active roles in popular cultural representations such as films and television. They are presented in “achievement roles and as heroes” (213). They appear in the roles of doctors, lawyers, detectives and so on. D’enbeau and Buzzanell contend that the female in the role of a working woman or a female action hero displays “resilience and perseverance and works to transform her own life and the lives of those around her” (3). Kate Beckett the female hero in *Castle* performs the heroic job of catching criminals and providing justice to victims, at the risk of her own life. In Season seven finale, Beckett takes the exam for captainship of the precinct and appears before the board for interview where

she faces harsh attacks by the panel against which she defends herself and impresses the panel who admit attacking her in order to test her. In recognition of her devotion to her job one of the panelists praises her, calling her a true hero. "We've been looking for someone like you. Someone who isn't corruptible. A certifiable hero who the people can get behind. Kate you are bigger than what you're doing now…We think you have an amazing future" (Hollander's Woods). Not only does she qualify as a hero for being a detective enforcing law but also by upholding justice and service to the state she has earned for herself the title of hero. Her superior's words are a testimony to the fact that she is a hero. Leory Panek states cops and private eye "who protected society" gained popularity in the new medium of television in 1960s (78). They became most common heroes in the detective genre and provide an idealization of the law enforcement and heroism in the American culture.

i. Evolution of Female Hero

Diana Meehan in her work traces the history and evolution of the female hero using the example of Lucy in *I Love Lucy* (1954) the imp, a rambunctious tomboyish "rebel who was intermittently heroic and seldom womanish" (21). Lucy is very much like a male hero who is typically active, adventurous and asexual yet she is not heroic but an imperfect being whose energy and actions lead to some disastrous results. The havoc and trouble are usually caused by some conflict with an authority figure of the established order e.g. police officer. Her husband also represents an authority figure admonishing her to follow his order. She is shown as incapable of being a successful homemaker and too self-centered to be a good wife or mother. Her incompetence in domestic affairs, economic dependence, disasters and failures in business adventures prove that she was bound to fail in both roles. Essential to the study of the imp character with reference to Lucy is the trait of incompetence. She is inept as housewife and equally incapable of success in business. It can be argued that the notion of incompetence was necessary for generating comedy but it undermines the image of the female hero. The flaw manifest in her action and personality prevents her from becoming a hero in the true sense.

The stereotyping and oppression of women is evident from the fact that women are often portrayed as characters of secondary importance to the male characters (Meehan 94). Women are the embodiment of some typical and traditional elements that represent femininity. These include "docility, delicateness, virtuousness, modesty,

gentleness, emotionalism, physical weakness, dependency, gullibility, ability to nurture and a lesser intelligence than men" (Knight xv). While male characters are shown as active and adventurous, female characters are presented as passive and static (Knight xv). With movies like *Coffy* (1973) and *Foxy Brown* (1974) starring Pam Grier, women entered action, war, westerns and martial-art and crime film genres which previously had been believed to be the domain of the male hero. Women were cast in exciting roles, appearing as a new female hero rather than a heroine or a passive female character subordinate to a male hero (Schubart 16).

A female character in a film as a heroine is assigned a role as subordinate and opposite to the male hero. "…he acts, she waits; he does, she watches." (Hopkins 139). Hopkins contends that the domination and hegemony of the male hero in fact leads to legitimizing violence against women and also female oppression. The male hero's monopoly reflects the patriarchal culture and the practices of the oppressor that is man. A male hero is recognized for his masculinity and physical and mental strength rather than his looks, for instance Clint Eastwood with a squint, Sylvester Stallone with a stammer still qualify as heroes, whereas a female hero has to be perfect in terms of beauty whether it is her figure or skin (Schubart 10). The point that Schubart stresses is that even in the changing roles of the females in cinema the notion of beauty and femininity as defined by men is upheld even though the woman is granted the more dominant role in the movie as a hero. Her physical traits undermine her mental and emotional capabilities. The male hero can be rough and tough but the heroine has to be lean and white. All the focus is placed on a woman's body in a way that her intelligence and personality are not acknowledged. We therefore, witness a fragmented woman as her entire being is identified with her body. Women are treated as things to be decorated and gazed upon. Greenslade notes that women are often portrayed as sex objects in television shows, video games and fantasy films by being shown as weak, unintelligent, shallow or playing minor roles (iii).

Molly Haskell in her book *From Reverence to Rape* criticizes the roles assigned to women in the movies from 1930-50. "With … a number of women performing, achieving, choosing, to fulfill themselves… we are insulted with the worst—the most abused, neglected, and dehumanized—screen heroines in film history" (35 qtd in Petro). She is referring to the "whores, quasi-whores, jilted mistresses, emotional cripples, drunks, Daffy ingénues, Lolitas, kooks, sex-starved spinsters, psychotics, icebergs, zombies" (Haskell 327). She lashes out at such representations of women but

at the same time does not fantasize about films on women to be inspirational sagas detailing their capabilities and achievements, but to be the representation of the "interior life" of women which precedes or succeeds their relationship with men.

The study of the female hero in Hollywood movies is useful in determining the limitations of the female characters and the compromises that they make in order to occupy the place of "hero" or their obtrusion with the space between the persona of hero and the heroine—an attempt to transcend the stereotypical confines of the role of "heroine" and enter into the unchartered territory of male heroes. Charlotte Brunsdon argues that there are aspects of the lead female characters in the 70's movies that reveal naturalness which has its basis in the 60's "counter-cultures" (*Screen Tastes* 51) and the feminists' rejection of the "stereotypical femininity" (51). She further states that the adventures and roles of these female characters are limited in scope despite the fact that they presented the rhetoric of the time—"the real woman" as opposed to makeup-laden perfect figure of a damsel. She contends that they do not fit into the term "hero" and are definitely the "heroines" in search of their "prince charming" (Brunsdon, *Screen Tastes* 51).

Edwards Lee contends that "Heroism is a human necessity, capable of being represented equally by either sex" (11). The notion of female hero has undergone a dramatic change since the late 90s. Now the examples of female bravery and strength are found in the depiction of women in television, film, comics, video games and novels (Knight viii). Stephen King the enormously popular writer of the twenty first century portrays ordinary women as heroes in his fiction. They are heroic because they confront difficult and awful situations with courage and conviction (Browne 3). In one of his novels *Cujo*, the hero Donna in order to save her son takes up the challenge and abandons the notion that she is a female who cannot protect herself and her son. The idea of a female rescued by a man was popular in fiction and established female dependence on men and the cliché that men are saviors and protectors of women are traits considered integral to the notion of the hero. One of the tropes signifying male heroism has been his rescuing a girl from enemies or trouble. Analyzing Donna Trenton as King's "Modern American Heroine" Carol A. Senf notes that she is a woman whom an ordinary reader can identify with. What establishes her as a modern American female hero is that King places her in a realistic setting facing the problems of an ordinary person in today's world. King deliberately contrasts her with the dependent woman of the earlier fiction and film (91). Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Xena: The Warrior

Princess, also break free from the traditional female role of helpless victim in need of rescue (Hopkins 118).

This research does not deal with the notion of the female "action" hero, but the female hero and focuses on the fact that the popular TV representations of females are replete with ordinary women who depict the more life-like picture of female heroes who are working women and are fulfilling their responsibilities towards their families as well, proving the point that it is not just an extraordinary quality that makes a person a hero but being successful in one's domain is also what makes one a hero though they may be unrecognized. This study explores the notion of female hero with respect to such female characters who are deemed extraordinary due to the roles they play for their family and the society, at home and work both. They are neither action heroes nor super heroes but are heroes in the sense that they represent American women striving hard and determined to change the image of the meek and docile women dependent on men to support them. Through these roles women in literature and popular media are fighting to break free from the stereotypical roles that are assigned to them. Critics consider it a violation of women's rights and a discursive practice to carry on and perpetuate oppression of women. As Wallace Watson points out, "Putting a woman at the center of a film narrative, however, did not usually mean allowing her to venture far from the circumscribed roles traditionally assigned to her gender—as mother, wife, or other supporter of men. Characteristically the movies were anything but liberating for the female members of the audience" (Watson 132).

Lynnette Porter claims that in the western culture heroes are becoming increasingly popular and "a new definition of hero needs to be developed to incorporate popular values into the methods used to determine literary and cinematic heroes" (5). He also notes that the definitions of hero change not only with time but also with medium. Notable authors and critics such as Joseph Campbell, Lord Raglan, and Northrop Frye devised definitions and categorized literary heroes yet these definitions lack some characteristics that contemporary readers film audiences use in developing their popular definitions of hero.

The female characters in the selected movies are neither action heroes nor do they possess any supernatural ability. They are ordinary women who qualify as heroes in terms of their persistent struggle to be a part of the movement to break free from the confines of stereotyping of women and domination of men on the screen. As the present research relates to the study of the popular culture and media, the following section

gives an overview of the area, defining the type of drama chosen for the study and is expected to help in understanding the importance of this study in relation to cultural and media studies.

1.4 American Mass Media and TV Drama Series

The American mainstream media is dominant and dominating as it has influence on other cultures and their media representations. According to Lane Crothers American popular culture impacts the whole world in the form of movies, television and music. His research reveals that American movies and DVDs dominate the entertainment industry outside America as well. American daytime and nighttime soaps and dramas are highly popular around the world (102). Mass media is dictated by economic, political and cultural ideologies. The large viewership of the American TV dramas, Hollywood movies and also advertisements leads to contributing to knowledge formation and shaping the consciousness and mindset of the society. The reception and popularity of American television dramas has led to "transnational flow of meanings across national boundaries" (Brunsdon and Spigel 9). These American Television dramas circulate in a global market attracting audiences in diverse cultures, ranging from Japan to Sweden, from India to New Zealand. In addition to the "glocal" appeal of the episodic daytime drama, reality shows and primetime drama, its accepted claim to represent ordinary people living real lives have made these formats interesting not only for the viewers but also for television critics who are exploring them in relation to how race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality are represented through these forms (Brunsdon and Spigel 3). Deborah Rhodes comments on the role of media in shaping opinion saying that media is "increasingly responsible for supplying the information and images through which we understand our lives" (8). As a cultural institution it "play[s] a crucial role in shaping public consciousness…' (8).

1.4.1 American Television Drama

The late 1940s and the 50s were the embryonic years of television era in American entertainment industry. Along with other formats and programs television drama in the form of soap opera also made its way from radio to television screen as people became accustomed to this new medium of home entertainment. Jim Cox tracing the origin of the television drama serial states that "the idea of daytime serial was predicated upon the success of the serial fiction in newspapers and magazines" (11). Soap operas or daytime dramas are regarded as the earliest forms of the episodic drama

on American television. These live quarter-hour serials got off and on the air every week day (2). “Throughout radio’s golden age and in the epoch of television the episodic serial was the prevailing form of continued dramas in primetime listening and viewing hours” (10). The daytime serials could be separated from the nighttime episodic serials by their open-ended, suspenseful final act in each chapter.

TV Drama comprises a series of real life situations which may be somewhat exaggerated but the audience can relate to it through its use of setting, themes, characters and narrative. The episodes of a TV drama series are based on related story line and involve multiple characters whose personal and professional relationships are dealt with in multiple episodes.

1.4.2 Difference between Series and Serial

A TV drama series is an episodic drama comprising many episodes and a number of seasons. Each season is divided into many episodes. The main characters are the same but the story is different in each episode. There may be references to the previous episodes but each new episode has its own story and a drama series may run for years, depending on its popularity and public demand (O'Donnell 119). Despite the fact that each episode in a series is self-contained the characters evolve and show growth and change. Many primetime dramas and soaps fall in the category of drama series such as *Grey’s Anatomy*, *Two and a Half Men* etc. whereas in a drama serial the story is ongoing. Each new episode starts form the point where the previous ended, and that point usually is a crucial moment in the drama serial evoking suspense.

David Self considers that television drama in its most distinctive form is “a segmental narrative” (Self 22) that viewers watch episode by episode yet do not feel disoriented should they miss the occasional one. Explaining the difference between a series and serial he states that a series as the term implies is a series of separate plays about a recurring group of characters, with a constant location for example, workplace or institution. Crime series provide a good example of a drama series in which the leading detective would be involved along with other permanent cast, in solving a different case in each episode, with the main location, the agency’s office, serving as the setting. In contrast a serial involves interdependent episodes and a continuing story. A serial may have three to thirteen episodes or may have unending series more often known as soap operas (Self 22). He also notes that during the 70s the divide between the two forms became less distinct and a compromise between the two forms resulted

in a drama, in which on one level each episode was a self-contained story that reached its resolution at the end. On another level there will be a continuing story developing with each episode for example the relationship of the characters or war in the background (Self 23).

A TV series consists of many episodes, or seasons that may span years like a soap but the difference between a soap and a serial is that soaps are romantic and melodramatic plays that focus on the emotional relationships of the characters to the point of melodrama. As far as the story line and the plot of soap operas are concerned they are more blurred, they rarely wrap things up and are open-ended, generally ending on a cliffhanger. "Although the soap operas are melodramatically eventful, the visual quality of a soap opera is usually lower than primetime US television drama series due to lower budget" (Lloyd, "Television Reviews"). Even the most serious prime time dramas have shades of dark comedies, just to offset the grim nature of the plot. For instance, shows such as *Desperate House Wives* or even *Grey's Anatomy* often incorporate comic relief and offer some respite in a serious or nerve wracking situation.

Peter Conrad in *Television: The Medium and its Manners* explains that "The structure of a television series belies the continuity which is its professed aim. Each episode has to be complete in itself, and season's programs comprise a file of separate anecdotes, adventures or investigation" (44). He also states that the time slot in which a drama series is aired is what gives a series identity as it builds a routine for the viewers who wait on a particular day and time for a drama series and keep watching it not by suspense but by habit.

1.4.3 Prime Time Drama and Daytime Drama

In the history of American Television, the period spanning the 1950s through 80s is referred to as the "network era" (Lotz 2). During this period networks constructed a schedule to broadcast programs on specific hours in a day according to the availability or viewership of the people. For instance, morning and afternoon slots were for women's and children's programs and the late evenings and night slots were allotted to programs aimed for a mature audience or men. Amanda D. Lotz also notes the significance of advertisers and budget apart from the target audience for the allocation of a specific time slot of the program. She defines primetime as:

> The period each evening from 8:00 to 11:00 p.m. (EST, MST, PST: 7:00-10:00 CST) when the national broadcast networks typically provide high-budget

> series…these evening hours commonly gather most viewers, and the networks consequently design and select shows with a breadth and inclusiveness appropriate to attract a wide array of people. (Lotz 2)

The high budget of the prime time programs allows these a particular "quality look" and sets arbitrary norms such as schedules for roughly twenty-two episodes of a drama per year and the new episode is aired once a week. But they might repeat an already broadcast episode many times a week. The programs including drama serials of primetime are viable in international market since this contributes to its, topic, themes and casting as well (Lotz 3).

Prime time drama became popular in the 60s and 70s. Newman and Levine point out that in the early 1960s, a number of series began to be structured around a central narrative goal. The "Quality TV" phase of the 1980s saw the popularity of the primetime drama series such as *Dallas* and *Hill Street Blues*. The soaps' long standing association with the feminine is central to the distinction drawn between daytime and primetime drama. The latter "is framed in masculinist terms that work to distance such programming from its feminized other" (Newman and Levine 84). Genre series or dramas presenting cops, detectives, doctors, lawyers etc. had wholly populated primetime drama in the 80s era. While the daytime soaps concerned themselves with the domestic life of a family and women, attracting the female audiences. A new kind of drama with the old continuing stories and depicting soap like interpersonal relationships embedded these features within the non-soapy cop show, *Hill Street Blues*. These new series not only distinguished themselves from the feminine daytime soaps through their focus on male characters and issues such as workplace challenges but also "these series necessarily allowed for and presented characters that changed over time" (Newman and Levine 85). These episodic drama series allowed for character development across episodes. These two forms of drama; the day time soaps and primetime drama came to be known as melodrama or soaps and Quality drama respectively. The Quality kind of drama became a valued primetime staple in the 1980s.

Peter Conrad considers that the time-slot or a drama series' location in the schedules distinguishes one type of series form the other. "It's this—a location in the schedules and in the routine of the viewers—which gives a series its identity: positioning in television's private time and space, not content. The nature of a series is determined by the hour at which it's meant to be transmitted" (144-145).

This categorization does not entail that the television dramas could be classified into fixed genre or a type of narrative but only for the sake of recognizing from among a variety of types recognizable to both produces and viewers alike as sitcoms or soap operas or action series etc. Ella Taylor while talking about the episodic series maintains that "genres are neither fixed nor immutable entities. They evolve into traditions that become modified over time. They are socially constituted and articulated discourses" (17).

1.4.4 Sub-Genres of Drama Series

There are different types of TV drama series that are being aired on American primetime television. For the sake of information regarding the selected drama series for the study I have discussed some popular subgenres. There are numerous other forms and sub-genres of television dramas but for the scope of the present study it will be irrelevant to delve into the detail of all the types.

One of the popular formats of sixty-minute prime-time drama series is workplace drama. Workplace dramas are about groups of professional people in a hospital, law firm, government office, etc. The cast comprises both young and experienced professionals of mixed gender and race. The setting of the workplace provides the characters' growth for both their professional and personal relationships. Just like the pattern in the detective or crime series the conflict in each episode is resolved but the interpersonal conflicts continue over several episodes. The characters grow in personality and their relationships also undergo changes. Hospital has been a popular setting for workplace drama on television. Victoria O' Donnell comments on *Grey's Anatomy,* stating "Much more a personal drama than a medical drama, *Grey's Anatomy* follows a group of young, attractive, doctors through their first-year surgical residency at a Seattle hospital and the older doctors who harass them" (122).

i. Detective Drama

Detective Drama revolves around investigations of a crime e.g. murder, and finding clues to solve a mystery, usually a murder. It involves role of a detective as a major character. Detective drama offers "mystery and suspense" and "struggle between good and evil". These shows "dramatized the cases of real life law-enforcement agencies" (Moore et al. 107). The sixty minutes long crime series starts with the exposition of a problem, usually a crime like, murder, rape, kidnapping or theft. The dilemma is resolved by the lead cast, a detective or a police officer. The detective series

emphasize law, order and justice. They also deal with the determination and skill of the hero performing the job of a detective or law enforcement official. Examples include *CSI, Sherlock* and *Castle*.

ii. Medical Drama

Medical/Hospital dramas are set in hospitals involving characters as doctors and nurses carrying out medical procedures such as treating patients in emergency or performing operations etc. These dramas focus on the medical staff and the issues related to personal and professional lives, involving their interaction with colleagues and patients. Barbara Moore and colleagues note that the medical drama genre does not merely reenact real cases in medicine, it also focuses on relationships of these professionals and their personal lives (95). Examples of medical dramas include, *Scrubs* (2001-2010), *House, MD* (2004-2012) *Grey's Anatomy* (2005-2015).

iii. Legal Drama

Legal Drama is set in the legal environment—the court of law. Its "narrative … [is[centered around the drama aspect rather than the legal proceedings" (Szostak 78). Using the generic structure of the legal procedural, this drama explores the relationships of the main characters working in a fictional law firm. Each episode revolves around a different legal case where the lead characters are involved in providing justice and putting criminals to task. *Ally McBeal* (1997-2002), *Boston Legal* (2004-2008) *and The Good Wife* (2009-2016) are a few examples of dramas involving legal setting.

Whether the drama is crime series, medical drama or a legal procedural, the common feature in these types is that the individual episodes stand independent of the previous or the next episode as the problem raised in each episode reaches a resolution at the end of the episode. These dramas have ensemble casts which are usually mixed in gender, age and race. The lead characters have interpersonal relationship with one another. As the conflicts in each episode are resolved the suspense and conflict between characters is not and it is carried over to the next episode or may last till the whole season or to the next. And the "characters develop some depth over time" (O'Donnell 120). In the drama series comprising many season spanning over years, the characters develop in their professional and personal lives.

The drama series selected for the study explore the female heroes' lives in the workplace, dealing with personal and professional issues. Meredith Grey in *Grey's Anatomy*, Kate Beckett in *Castle* and Alicia Florrick in *The Good Wife* prove

themselves heroes by saving lives, serving humanity or fighting crime. Meredith proves herself an eager and intelligent intern in a cutthroat competitive environment of a hospital, dealing with difficult patients and hard to please bosses, Beckett meets a new challenge every day in the world of horrible crimes and a profession where she has to prove her worth as a woman in the role of a detective, Alicia Florrick fights the legal battles as an attorney and is also supporting her politician husband, who is facing allegations. They are heroes in their own right for they face challenging situations in the competitive world where opposition comes from so many fronts and in a number of guises such as social conventions, threat from criminals or authority figures etc. Their persistence, steadfastness, courage, dignity and the ability to take up challenges make them the heroes of our times. Their presence in the male dominated professions as well as the male dominated genre of primetime drama needs further investigation. As from the feminist perspective it is critical to explore the roles of women that these dramas proffer in order to establish the identity and image of today's woman. Amanda D. Lotz notes that the female centered dramas offer multiple issues related to women's lives. They also indicate "the need for reassessing critical feminist frameworks and building theories that are able to analyze a robust range of textual context" (7). An overview of the feminist theory and feminist media criticism is helpful in understanding the critical issues related to feminism and television drama.

1.5 Feminism

Feminist theory is the outgrowth of the general movement to empower women. It aims at bringing about gender equality in the world. Feminists fight for the equality of women in all respects and promote the idea that women must be given equal opportunities and access to resources such as the right to vote, education, property, job opportunities etc. the feminist hold that people should not be discriminated against or denied opportunities in the society because of gender.

The chief concern of the feminist movement is equivocation on the question of male domination. As Denise Thompson puts it "The meaning, truth and reality of feminism, is its definition of and opposition to male domination and its concomitant struggle for a human status for women … and which is outside male domination and control" (1). She further states that feminism is a "social enterprise" a moral and political framework concerned with redressing social wrongs.

Feminism is a broad movement that has many off-shoots in the form of liberal, Marxist, socialist and radical strands. Feminist theory advocates for the perspective of women. It examines and critiques existing practices and structures in the light of women's needs and experiences. Feminist theory challenges “a universal, aperspectived objective reality. The purpose and the practice of the feminist theory is to name, expose and eliminate the unequal position of women in society” (Finley 353). All feminist theorists share the underlying goal of eradicating the socially and economically unequal position of women. Feminism stands for liberating women of enforced subordination, limited options and social powerlessness. It also challenges male pursuits from women's perspectives, from the standpoint of women's social experiences. Catharine MacKinnon sheds light on the feminist agenda in these words, “A feminism that seeks to understand women’s situation in order to change it must therefore identify, criticize, and move those forms and forces that have circumscribed women in the world and in the mind” (15). The driving force of feminism is to make things fair between men and women. Its core value is to bring diverse individuals together. Mary F. Rogers explains feminist philosophy in these words, “Feminists believe that women and men are equally entitled to all the good things a society makes available to its members—all the opportunities, rewards, respect and status, power and responsibilities” (3). Thus according to feminists, gender should not be a distributive mechanism in society that should account for social hierarchy or determine that some aspects of a person remain underdeveloped or remain ignored altogether and others get overdeveloped. Judith Grant argues that “Feminist interpretations and actions are interventions into the ideology of gender” (179). Mary Rogers names hierarchy as a distributive mechanism in society that puts men in a privileged position and women at disadvantage. Feminists question such standards that are used to justify why some people are preferred to reach to the top and others remain at the bottom of various hierarchies (3). In this context women’s ascension to the roles which were previously considered appropriate for men and their representation in the prime-time dramas demands investigation as to how powerful, active and independent these female heroes are who have been granted access to the much coveted domain of workplace drama of the primetime.

1.6 Feminist Debate on Film and Television

Media culture in the modern industrial societies creates the fabric of everyday life shaping people's views and social behavior. It “also provides ever more material

for fantasy, dreaming, modeling thought and behavior, and identities" (Kellner 1). Douglas Kellner also points out that media has become the resource for the formation of personality models and in this way it contributes to creation of cultural identities. Television, film and other forms of media culture provide models for what it means to be a male or female, powerful or powerless. It is also through media that people build their sense of race, class, ethnicity, nationality and sexuality. Media culture shapes and defines prevalent views and values, what is good or bad, moral or immoral, positive or negative. Bianca Mitu states that media stories and images give the symbols, myths and materials which help shape a common culture for majority of individuals. Media is extremely powerful in creating role models for people (141).

Feminist studies of literature extended to the field of media due to its increasing popularity and influence in our lives. Feminist film studies emerged in the 1970s as a cultural and critical discourse. It focused on issues of representation, spectatorship and sexual differences. As a critical method it makes gender an axis of analysis for films, exploring the representation of women in film. Patricia White explains the focus of feminist film studies that female as an image has been a central issue of film and related visual media for feminist critics (117). In the last three decades, feminist film criticism has extended its analysis of gender in film and it investigates multiple issues related to women such as representation of gender in relation to race, nation and class. It has also included related media such as television and video in its paradigm. It has led to creating awareness about the role and relation of popular culture with the socially disenfranchised.

Here it needs to be clarified why I am including the criticism from films along with television criticism on the female hero or from the perspective of feminism. Feminist television criticism is a later development than feminist television criticism as television studies faced more difficulty than film to be accepted and to get established as an academic subject. Film as an art form was able to find a place in humanities and cultural studies scholarship whereas television as mass media was taken up by social sciences or journalism first. As television, considered primarily a source of "commercial popular entertainment encourages the belief that it does not deserve "serious" analysis and that its programs are simple…" (Allen 4). In the 1970s feminists were developing theories for analyzing Hollywood films and television criticism in social science focused primarily on quantitative or content research. Ann Kaplan notes that television criticism benefited greatly due to advancement in feminist film criticism.

"In general a circular effect was set in motion, such that the more feminist theory was developed for film studies, the more it absorbed the interest of scholars who might have pioneered feminist approaches to TV" (249). She explains that in the 1980s as feminist cinema studies reached maturation, a number of feminist film scholars turned to work on female representation on television.

Feminist film and television criticism as part of cultural studies offers an analysis of how ideology is produced and functions through television practices and how audiences interact with television in their lives. Advancement in technology has resulted in the perpetuation and penetration of the mass production of television images. It has gained the status of an institution that has the power to direct and control our lives. In Marxist terms it is the superstructure of the society. Sherrie A. Inness contends that media representations of gender, especially women on television drama "deserve critical attention because they are helping to constitute how viewers understand both acceptable and unacceptable roles for both men and women" ("Tough Girls" 49). O'Reilly supports the study of popular cultural representations of women on media such as television drama, stating that the study of women on media falls within the premise of feminism as "these fictional representations potentially contribute to oppressive power structures" (O'Reilly 14). In order to expose and critique the discursive practices used by representational medium like television, critics must go beyond content analysis of the television drama. The feminist media critics and theorists contend that in the current practices in research on popular media such as film, television and advertisements they need to take stock of women's contemporary experiences and current situation by taking into account the range of popular texts that influence and shape our understanding of "the modern female self" (Genz 4).

The feminist television critics study how television programming contributes to presenting various issues regarding women and feminism. Television entertainment serves the function of "interpreting social change and managing cultural beliefs" (Dow xv). Bonnie J. Dow contends that treatment of feminism as a theme and women's roles in entertainment programs are important topics for feminist television critics. Scholarly criticism in the 1990's on television drama such as the study of the family motif in primetime television by Ella Taylor, study of television films by Elayne Rapping, study of popular culture on television and women's participation by Susan Douglas, Julie D'Acci's extended investigation of female centered detective drama *Cagney and Lacy,* initiated the debate on television's role and significance, particularly the role of

television drama in "producing assumptions about women's "appropriate" roles, and in appealing to and constructing a subjectivity for women…" (Dow xix). The feminist critics seek to investigate both, the lack of awareness about feminism and feminist interests and the existence of any resistance to women's oppression found in the popular medium. Traditional beliefs about women's roles, duties and responsibilities is an important part of the critique of the feminist scholars writing about television and women. Dow points towards the significance of feminist criticism of television drama by stating:

> To attempt to understand past and present reactions to feminist movements without attending to television's frequent attempts to offer vision of the "new woman" produced by women's liberation is to overlook the medium's considerable power in making sense of social change…those representations have brought to many viewers…progressive portrayals of women among primetime schedules filled with passive housewives, sultry sex objects, and helpless female victims. (xix)

Supporting Newcomb and Hirsch's assertions on the role of television she further states that academic scholarship and criticism must take this medium into account for "in its role as central cultural medium television presents a multiplicity of meaning rather than monolithic dominant point of view" (xv). She argues that the discourse in the television shows is much more complicated than it appears on the surface. The feminist television critics work hard to lay bare the contradictions lurking behind the seemingly placid surface of these shows. Hollywood, especially Disney movies are criticized by the advocates of feminism for reducing women to young impressionable doe-eyed victims of circumstances which they themselves cannot face or change and wait for a knight in shining armor to liberate and complete them. This is a very debilitating message that impressionable girls internalize through the mass media and popular culture.

Keeping in view the developments in the field of feminist cultural studies and media criticism the study of representation of women on television from the standpoint of objectification theory will offer fresh perspectives on the position of women in television drama.

1.7 Objectification

The concept of objectification is central to feminist theory. Objectification is generally understood as viewing or treating another person as an object or a thing. It is considered harmful as it dehumanizes others. It can be explained by examining its two basic distinctions; sexual or physical objectification and objectification of personhood.

1.7.1 Physical/Sexual Objectification

The feminist notion of objectification has been derived from the philosophic writing of Immanuel Kant on human morality by the late twentieth century feminist theorists, Andrea Dworkin and Catherine McKinnon. Dworkin defines it in the following words:

> Objectification occurs when a human being, through social means, is made less than human, turned into a thing or commodity, bought or sold. When objectification occurs, a person is depersonalized, so that no individuality or integrity is available socially or in what is extremely circumscribed privacy … Objectification is an injury right at the heart of discrimination: those who can be used as if they are not fully human are no longer fully human in social terms: their humanity is hurt by being diminished. (31)

MacKinnon in her feminist critique of gender hierarchy and male dominance states that the objectification theory takes feminist critique on treatment of women beyond the much discussed idea of female stereotyping, "beyond the dynamics of differentiation but including them. It is developing a theory that objectification is the dynamic of the subordination of women. Objectification is different from stereotyping…" (118). She terms it a deeper idea than stereotyping or mistaken ideas about what women can and cannot do, and broader than the social meaning of female identity that restricts and confines them. The subordination of women is maintained through objectification in a social system based on gender hierarchy. Women are held to be inferior in this hierarchy and subordination practices. Their inferior status is maintained in their sexual usage or exploitation by men and objectification is one such means of subordination. (Mackinnon 118, Dworkin 31).

Sandra Bartky and Susan Bordo argue that women's preoccupation (and the society's preference of looks and appearance of women over mind and thoughts) with their bodies and appearance has reduced them to mere objects lacking being and possessing only body. Objectification has been defined by Bartky in the following

words “A person is sexually objectified when her sexual parts or sexual functions are separated from the rest of her personality and reduced to the status of mere instruments or else regarded as if they were capable of representing her” (26). Bartky further states that an inferior status has been inscribed to women which turns them into objects.

Feminists like Catherine MacKinnon, Andrea Dworkins and Martha Nussbaum were influenced by Immanuel Kant's moral philosophy in which he explains how sexual love turns a person into an object of appetite. According to Kant when a person becomes “an object of appetite for another … a person becomes a thing and can be treated and used as such by everyone.” (*Lectures on Ethics* 163). This is how the notion of objectification took shape and feminist theorist used it to define dehumanization and mistreatment of women arguing that objectification denies a person of her “humanity”. Unlike animals and objects humans, according to Kant, have "inner worth" as opposed to “relative worth” (*Lectures on Ethics* 163). He goes on to state that use of a person as sex object leads to loss of humanity as the person is reduced to a thing or a mere sexual object. Kant explored the notion of objectification from the perspective of instrumentality: the treatment of a person as a tool for the lover’s advantages. For Kant objectification is rendering someone as an object or tool—something for use. The body and the compliant actions of the person are means that the other uses for his sexual gratification “to the extent that the other person is the fungible, functional thing” (Soble 226). This notion by Martha Nussbaum has been defined in the theory of objectification as “instrumentality” (*SSJ* 225).

1.7.2 Objectification of Personhood or Literal Objectification

The issue of objectification is central to the notion of oppression of women. Not only does it involve sexual or physical dimension but also the mental or intellectual. Oppression means “to lie heavily on, to weigh down, to exercise harsh domination over” (Webster). When we talk about oppression we generally think about economic or political oppression but there are other way of oppression and exploitation as well which are not immediately political or economic. One of the subtle ways of oppression is psychological oppression since the oppressed are unaware of the intentions and cruelty of the agencies responsible for institutionalizing and perpetuating psychological oppression. This allows legitimacy to the act of violence which might otherwise be termed as illegal (Bartky 22-23).

Nathan Heflick and Jamie Goldenberg distinguish from sexual objectification what they term as "literal objectification". It has been defined by them as "an outcome in which a person is perceived as, or behaves, object-like, relative to humanlike. Manifestations of literal objectification include attributing people less of the traits that distinguish people from objects" (*Objectification of Women* 225). They argue that literal objectification is distinct from sexual objectification or dehumanizing. When women are implicitly associated with animals than with objects when they are depicted sexually, it is distinctive of dehumanization and not literal objectification. "Literal objectification is not specific to a focus on body that is sexual" (Heflick and Goldnberg *Objectification of Women* 225). They further explain this dimension of objectification by stating that human mind has two primary functions; ability to think (agency) and ability to feel (experience). Women are perceived to have less agency as well as limited reasoning and thinking (Heflick and Goldenberg). This attitude toward their inability to act as fully human is regarded as literal objectification. Jessica M. LaCroix and Felicia Pratto also argue that objectification is a much broader phenomenon and "extend the concept of objectification to include phenomena outside the sexual realm" (186). They argue that the use of other human beings as merely tools without regard to their needs and autonomy is objectification because "it violates the fundamental human norm to reciprocate" (185). In their discussion on objectification they do not limit the treatment of a person as an instrument only in sexual terms but include the violation of a person's needs, feelings, desires and autonomy within the premise of objectification. They "take "treatment" to mean behavior as well as "psychological treatment" involving perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes" (LaCroix and Pratto 187).

The other dimension of objectification that involves denying a person her freedom and rights through curtailing her mental or intellectual powers is equally important as the physical or sexual dimension. If sexual objectification reduces a woman to the role of an object of gratification, mental objectification denies her the exercise of her capabilities. Objectification cannot be looked in a narrow context of the female body only. Martha Nussbaum states that we take the concept of objectification in a very narrow sense if we limit it to sexual objectification only (Nussbaum "Sex and Social Justice" 251). Objectification involves the act of disregarding the personal and intellectual abilities of a female, reducing a woman's worth or role in society. LeMoncheck also supports Nussbaum's idea that a person can be objectified in a number of ways, not just through objectification of her body or sexual objectification.

Objectification is dehumanizing humans and treating or viewing another person as inferior. She is lowered in the status from a "moral equal to moral subordinate" (LeMonceck 29) that is to deny her human rights, freedom, self-respect, self-determination and well-being.

1.8 Delimitation

Keeping in view the scope of the research, the television drama series selected for analysis of the female hero were limited to two seasons of each of the three selected drama series.

1. *Grey's Anatomy*
2. *Castle*
3. *The Good Wife*

I have chosen top rated American TV drama series. Their popularity and ratings are testimony to the fact that they are most representative of the American attitudes, values, beliefs and tastes. The three selected drama series *Grey's Anatomy, Castle* and *The Good Wife* were running in their twelfth, eighth and seventh season respectively in the year 2015.

To delimit the study further the present research focuses only on the characters of the female heroes in the selected drama series. Meredith Grey, Kate Beckett and Alicia Florrick the lead female characters in the three drama series are studied from the perspective of objectification. These characters are looked at as heroes in the contemporary society, representing accomplished and working women. Meredith a doctor, Beckett a detective and Alicia a lawyer serve humanity and qualify as heroes.

Ratings

	Series	**Season**	**Rank** (18-49)	**Viewers** (in millions)
1	*Grey's Anatomy*	1	5	18.46
		11	13	11.57
2	*Castle*	1	41	10.19
		7	37	10.69
3	*The Good Wife*	1	18	13.12
		6	22	12.17

Table 1.1

Awards

	Series	**Awards**		
1	*Grey's Anatomy*	Golden Globe Award	People's Choice Award	NAACP Image Award
2	*Castle*	TV Guide Fan Favorites Awards	People's Choice Award	NAACP Image Award
3	*The Good Wife*	Golden Globe Award	Primetime Emmy Award	Critic's Choice Television Award

Table 1.2

Since television drama series comprise many seasons and those receiving positive feedback and rating by the audience reach up to ten seasons. Each season comprises approximately twenty episodes. From the exhaustive list of ten seasons for the present study I have chosen the first and the latest season (at the time of the research the season which was on air). Keeping in view the scope of the study American TV dramas aired after the millennium, within the period of 2005-2015, I have selected two seasons, the first and the seasons aired during the year 2014-2015 of the three drama series. The reason for choosing the latest season was to account for the changes and development in the character of the female hero. As the characters in drama series develop, grow and change over time and choosing the latest season along with the first one, in which the character is introduced and establishes itself and over the period of time is expected to develop in the subsequent seasons. In order to rule out the limitation that only the first season cannot fully represent a character in a drama series, I chose another later season also. The following table illustrates the selected dramas, the selected seasons and the years in which they were aired.

Serial #	**Drama Series**	**Season**	**Year**	**Character/ Hero**
1	*Grey's Anatomy*	One and Eleven	March 2005 and Sep 2014	Meredith Grey
2	*Castle*	One and Seven	March 2009 and May 2015	Kate Beckett
3	*The Good Wife*	One and Six	May 2010 and May 2015	Alicia Florrick

Table 1.3

1.9 Research Questions

- What reading of the female heroes in American TV dramas can be made in the light of Martha Nussbaum's theory of objectification?
- What ideological biases exist in the depiction of the female heroes in the selected television drama series?

1.10 Significance of the Study

The present study holds significance due to the increasing importance of the media and TV representations in creating and molding people's understanding of women and their roles in life. It is a general view that American TV and film representations of women show and acknowledge the feminists' point that women are denied power and equality when it comes to their roles on television and in movies. Hence, the more contemporary images of women heroes exhibit empowered women, handling situations that are testing and dangerous and which earlier were considered the prowess of the male hero. The study of such seemingly strong and empowered women in the roles of heroes in the American television drama will be useful in determining if the American women have found a better or equal representation for themselves and overcome objectification. This will allow us to envision the problems and issues related to the representation of women and the problem of objectification of women in the Pakistani media, specifically in the popular genre of television drama.

1.11 Chapter Breakdown

This dissertation comprises of six chapters. The First Chapter presents the premise of the study, detailing the purpose and rationale of the research that revolves around the study of the female hero of television drama through the lens of feminism employing Martha Nussbaum's notions of objectification. It describes the significance of television studies and the importance of feminist criticism for the study of television. It also defines the key areas and terms such as feminism, female hero, objectification and television drama series that are necessary for the understanding of this study.

The Second Chapter titled, Review of Related Literature, details the roles assigned to female heroes in popular media such as film and television drama. It also discusses how feminist critics and scholars have commented on these characters and their representation. The review of literature helped in identifying the methodologies adopted for the study of female characters in media and the angles focused on by the researchers for the study of objectification of the female hero. It reviews how the notion of objectification has been approached by scholars and critics in literary studies leading the researcher to the identification of the gap in the existing research on television drama series with respect to Martha Nussbaum's notions of objectification.

Chapter Three, in its critical description of the method and the theory of the study, details the culturally oblique approach taken in this research. Horace Newcomb and Paul M. Hirsch's "textual-critical approach", will be used for conducting critical analysis of the female hero's representation in the television drama series. This critical approach is useful in finding answers to questions about the female hero's autonomy, inertness, fungibility, violability, instrumentality, denial of subjectivity and ownership by another person/s. As for the description of the theoretical framework of the study influenced by Martha Nussbaum's theory of objectification, I shall explain her theory in detail and for a better understanding of her theory, also take into account the descriptions of her seven notions of objectification given by other critics. The Textual Critical Approach has been explained at length with reference to how it has been used by critics and theorists for the study of television drama.

The Fourth Chapter is the first of the discussion chapters, in which four of the seven notions of objectification have been discussed. The notions of Instrumentality, Denial of Autonomy and Ownership have been explored with reference to female heroes in the three drama series, Grey's Anatomy, Castle and The Good Wife whereas

the penultimate chapter, Chapter Five, the second of the discussion chapters, explores the female heroes' characters in the said drama series with reference to the remaining three notions of Martha Nussbaum's theory, namely: Inertness, Violability, Denial of Subjectivity and Fungibility. The three female heroes' (Meredith Gray, Kate Beckett and Alicia Florrick) characters will be analyzed critically drawing upon Martha Nussbaum's seven notions of objectification to determine how these notions are at work in these series and are used to objectify the female hero.

The concluding chapter of the dissertation will state the findings of the study with respect to the seven notions of objectification as observed in the roles of the female heroes in the television drama series. It will also propose recommendations for future research in the field of feminist television criticism.

1.12 Conclusion

At present women can be seen playing a variety of roles in television dramas. It is also observed that instead of being confined to stock or stereotypical roles, women are given access to roles that were previously considered appropriate and worthy for a male hero to perform in. Nowadays female characters appear in lead roles or as heroes performing challenging roles and roles which were typically considered inappropriate for men in the past. With the entry of women in roles such as those of spies, detectives, CIA agents or doctors and lawyers etc. it is considered that the media especially television drama has answered the call of the feminists and critics who are fighting against women's exploitation and stereotyping. However, it still needs to be examined whether these roles, where women are granted the status of heroes, do in fact liberate and grant them freedom from the confines of the stereotyping and objectification which the feminists want. A detailed look at the roles and identities assigned to the female heroes in popular American TV drama series will offer a viable entry point into further analysis of the status of females in American society and the problems and issues related to their identities and roles in contemporary American society in particular and in the world in general. The analysis of the female hero from the perspective of objectification in terms of action and autonomy will reveal if the mental oppression and objectification of personhood is still present in portrayals of women in lead roles in television drama.

Martha Nussbaum's theory of objectification provides the theoretical grounding for this study. Her seven notions of objectification will be used to analyze the characters of the female heroes in the selected television drama series. The notion of physical and sexual objectification has been exhaustively analyzed in previous researches but objectification of women as described by Martha Nussbaum in her theory still needed to be explored with reference to female heroes as the theory is concerned with objectification in terms of denial of agency and autonomy rather than treating women as sexual objects. Drawing upon Martha Nussbaum's objectification theory the study aims to explore the depiction of female heroes in American television drama series.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

For the review of the related literature I begin with the discussion on the female heroes and roles assigned to them in literature, film and television drama. I will also talk about how feminist critics and scholars have commented on these characters and their representation.

The purpose of the review of related literature is to identify the major points of discussion on the female heroes in films in general and in television dramas in particular with the purpose to identify the areas where research is lacking as regards the female hero. The literature review also includes representation of women in television drama series with strong lead female characters, particularly those dramas that focus on working women and summarizes the critique of research with respect to feminist criticism. Although my research focuses on the study of the female hero in television drama series, studying women's representation in the related media such as films and other genres of television drama like soap operas will help in understanding the ways women have been presented in media and how scholars and feminist critics have analyzed their roles and representations. It also informs the present study in understanding the methods adopted by these critics for the study of the female characters across various genres, which will be helpful in devising methodology for the study.

2.1 Feminist Film and Television Criticism

Television has enormous influence on our daily lives and our informal discussions with friends and family revolve around the characters, themes and issues presented in our favorite TV shows. It has been regarded as a media worthy of scrutiny and criticism by scholars and critics alike. Journalists, academic critics, and film and media critics and theorists' interest in the TV shows and their exposition of the underlying problems in the representation of our lives on TV have generated debates in the academic circles regarding the place and value of this particular media which is the most popular entertainment mode of the popular culture. Television reflects culture and

this will allow the study to generalize the results. Television theorists' interest in the soaps and episodic dramas on television helped in overcoming the prejudice associated with this media as low art or unworthy of intellectual debate. Christine Geraghty pronounces that feminism played a crucial role in developing an atmosphere for criticism of the medium of television in which pleasures and practices associated with women could be re-evaluated (2).

In order to identify the gap in the existing literature on representation of women in media, the following section of literature review discusses the particular perspectives on women in media that have been explored by critics and scholars and also the particular methods and approaches used to study those issues. The researcher examines researches across genres to gain a critical insight into the issue of women's representation and objectification. For this purpose research and criticism on women's roles and representation in films, television and related forms of popular media has been explored and critiqued.

2.1.1 Early Developments in Feminist Media Criticism

Brundson and Spigel note that Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) was an early example of feminist media criticism in which she assembles critique of patriarchal oppression of social and political structures through the study of media. She reviewed "female heroines in women's magazines from their career girl adventure roles in the late 1930's to the 'happy housewife heroine' of the postwar world" (Brunsdon and Spigel 6). Television from the 1960s onwards was seen as "part of the media and image-making industry" (Brunsdon and Spigel 6) by television critics and feminist alike, instrumental in misrepresenting women. Early scholarship on women on television in humanities from the perspective of feminist theory investigated the daytime drama or soap opera which was considered to be a female genre. In the late 70's Carole Lopate (1977) and Tania Modleksi (1979) brought into this debate the issues of presentation of women's everyday life and female perspectives and experiences other than image analysis. Given this it was no surprise that for the study of the representation of female's roles and lives, the first subject that feminist television critics turned to was the soap opera. (Brunsdon and Spigel 7). A large body of work exists on the textual analysis or close reading of these daytime dramas' narrative structures, symbolic codes, themes, and iconography. The focus on text and its relation to female subjectivity and women's pleasure persists from the early 1970s/1980s

literature to the present (7). The textual analysis augmented its focus on soap opera and melodrama, essentially labelled as female forms of popular culture, by taking into account a broader range of genres portraying women on television such as action dramas and crime series. Brunsdon and Spigel note that feminist television criticism is "interested in finding women's voices, or the conditions under which femininity is produced, and this means either looking in places that are not conventionally regarded as legitimate or revisiting and re-visioning traditional sites and sources" (9). Hence they point to the genres of crime, investigations and the likes which are considered to be the genres of dramas associated with men and in which women's representation has not been explored much as the more evident forms of feminine programs like soap operas have gained attention of critics for their obvious link to women and housewives who are the target audience of these shows.

With the changing times audience perception about the roles of women on television has also undergone a change. The research on television shows and the roles of women on television in particular also focused on determining their reception in the audience more than exploring the ideology they present and the biases and stereotypes they perpetuate. Ronald Jacobson observes that the depiction of women in television series has changed dramatically over the years, largely mirroring social changes in the gender roles and relationships. In the 50s era women on television were mostly shown as homemakers, tending to family and supporting their husbands. As the women's movement gained force, women began to appear on television in the lead roles and as working women. Tracing the development of women's roles on television Jacobson states that in the course of 20 years, woman in television drama evolved from perfect mother (e.g. June Cleaver On *Leave it to Beaver* 1957-63), to the single and independent career woman (e.g. Mary Richards on *Mary Tyler Moore* 1970-77). Professional and working women, such as a journalist or a business woman, also began to emerge on television drama showing possibilities of change in their representation (Jacobson 120).

2.2 Significance of Research on TV Dramas

Existing criticism points to the significance of TV dramas in forming cultural trends and shaping the society. Stressing the significance of television drama Diana Meehan states that television dramas "provide viewers with ideas and values…such television content serves as a model for audience member's behavior as well…we learn ways of interacting, coping, and communicating form media characters" (4). In this

section I have synthesized the comments and researches of scholars and critics who have highlighted the significance of the study of television.

Kathryn C. Montgomery states that television as a powerful and pervasive medium, in its short history, has become an indispensable part of our public and private lives. “But television's greatest power is in its role as the central storyteller for the culture. It is the fiction programing even more than news and public affairs that most effectively embodies and reinforces the dominant values in American society” (Montgomery 6). Television engages its viewers through a powerful combination of narrative and visual images. Unlike cinema, “television tells stories round the clock. No other media provides such a large quantity of story material on continual basis” (6).

Primetime draws its material from contemporary American life, refashioning it to suit television's commercial and institutional conventions. It becomes hard to escape the influence of the image it presents to us. We hear about them at work in discussions with our colleagues, from children or parents. Due to this, Montgomery argues “TV's plots and characters take on special symbolic significance” (7). The contents of television programs have been measured and criticized by social scientists and different advocacy groups. Critics of television mostly focus on what is missing or what is misrepresented. She states that to minority groups such as women, “television is a cultural mirror which has failed to reflect their image accurately. To be absent from prime time, to be marginally included in it, or to be treated badly by it are seen as serious threats to their right as citizens” (Montgomery 8). That is why they campaign for more positive and fuller representation in the world of television.

Charlotte Brunsdon and Lynn Spigel argue that television scholarship has become an increasingly interdisciplinary endeavor, and feminist-inspired work on the medium has encouraged methodological elasticity as scholars search for ways to understand television's numerous (and rapidly changing) cultural forms. Brunsdon and Spigel draw attention towards the fact that the field of feminist television criticism is “dynamic and the categories of analysis tend to overlap and intersect. Textual/spectator analysis, institutional/ historical 'context' analysis, and discourse research” are more often intertwined in television criticism (Brunsdon & Spigel 11).

Susan Douglas in *Where the Girls Are* talks about the impact mass media has had on the development of the feminist movement. In her exploration of the treatment of women in a wide variety of media including women's magazines, television and film she holds media responsible for “aggrandizement” (as objects of pleasure) and

"infantilization" (both physical and emotional) of women on television and film. She investigates the representation of women on media stressing that it provides us with stories and images that shape how we make sense of the roles we assume in our lives, at home, workplaces, and society in general. "Women are supposed to be dependent, passive, nurturing types, uninterested in competition, achievement, or success, who should conform to the wishes of men in their lives" (Douglas 17). She argues that one of the most important social revolutions since World War II was the women's liberation movement 1968, out of which developed the ideology of radical feminism in the United States (6). She opines that "our collective history of interacting with and being shaped by mass media has engendered many women a kind of cultural identity crisis" (8). This influence of mass media especially television, due to its presence and availability to female audience at home, has led to the loss of identity or schizophrenia. It is "a dangerous and all too powerful enforcer of suffocating sex role stereotypes" (Douglas 6). She states that the effects of television's representations of women on the minds of young women are very deep and they begin to emulate those roles and representations, unaware that this is not liberating but harmful for them. She states that since the advent of television and due to the pervasiveness of its images in our lives we (women) have gathered mixed messages regarding what we are and what we can become, what we should and should not do or look like. "This was true in 1960s, and it is true today. The media of course urged us to be plaint, cute, sexually available, thin, blond, poreless, wrinkle-free, and deferential to men. But it is easy to forget that media also suggested we could be rebellious, tough, enterprising, and shrewd" (Douglas 9).

Douglas's point is that the massive influence and constant presence of media images through television, shapes our lives and dominates our minds. She expresses concern that women in the contemporary era suffer fractured selves as they develop love-hate relationship with television. The model of perfect beauty and femininity that it presents becomes their dream but is hard to achieve at the same time:

> … the mass media … played a key role in turning each of us not into one woman but many women—a pastiche of all the good women and bad women that came to us through the printing presses, projectors, and airwaves of America. This has been one of mass media's most important legacies for female consciousness: the erosion of anything resembling a unified self. (Douglas 13)

The pervasiveness of American media images contributes to making them part of our daily experience and it has permeated into our lives through the television

screens. American television dramas, soap operas, situation comedies and reality shows have a huge fan following in Pakistan. These programs and the representation of images and heroes in these programs is important as it links us to not only the American culture in particular but also gives us a sense of who we are and what we want to become in particular. The meaning of gender and the roles and relationships of genders also are tied to various forms of cultural representations. The way these roles are enacted in television drama mirror a society's attitudes and preferences. Sherrie A. Inness contends that media representations of gender, especially women on television drama "deserve critical attention because they are helping to constitute how viewers understand both acceptable and unacceptable roles for both men and women" (Tough Girls 49). Therefore, it is necessary to explore the representation of women on such a popular form of media, i.e. the American drama series.

2.3 Stereotyping of Women in Media

Women are cast in roles that limit their capacities and freedom. These roles and representations are not only limiting but also degrading. Myra Macdonald contends that "the media plays an important part in setting stereotypes and promoting a limited number of role models…like ideology, stereotype works by being plausible and by masking its own value system" (13). Such stereotypes on television and other media are criticized and a wide range of positive role models is desired, especially for those groups which are already marginalized and denigrated. She points to the lack of professional women's representation in soap operas as one such example that has been frequently censured by the feminists (Macdonald 13). She proclaims in *Representing Women: Myths of Femininity in Popular Culture* that the study of dominant stereotypes of women historically is helpful in exposing changing ideologies. For instance, the understanding about why females in the roles of vamp figure, were popular in the early 20th century, dumb blonds in the middle, and the superwoman in the last quarter, reveals the changing stereotypes about femininity.

Sharon Smith notes that sexualization of women in films started gradually but it has been increasing at a very fast rate in the new millennium (S. Smith 17). There are very few films which provide a strong female character to identify with. She further states that women must be shown as active not passive, involved in adventures which do not revolve around sexual attraction for men or indulging in pursuits of wooing them.

“Women just want a chance to be heroes; a chance to be shown humanly (not just femininely) frail…” (S. Smith 18).

Myra Macdonald points out that the studies in popular media tackle the issue of gender, focusing on the unequal position of men and women within the social structure. The central concern of these investigations has been the study of devaluation of women's role as mothers, wives, or workers. Stressing the importance of research in popular media she argues that “the influence of media and other cultural forms, encourage men and women in adult life both to adopt behavior that reinforces gender specific roles, and to internalize the appropriateness of this as part of their own sense of identity” (Macdonald 13). Affirming Macdonald’s thesis Kathleen Rowe contends that within third wave feminism popular culture is used as “a natural site of identity formation and empowerment” (33). She also notes that this representation serves as “a storehouse of images and narratives valuable less as means of representing reality than as motifs available for contesting, rewriting and recording” (Rowe 33-4).

Discussing the image of women in the Disney movies Susan Douglas states that these films present girls or princesses who are much more beautiful than anyone else. They are virtuous, warm, welcoming, in harmony with nature and their environment. They are presented as extremely hard working, cleaning floors, washing laundry and picking fruits, serving food to others, smiling and singing songs throughout the chores and never ever complain. On the other hand, the villainous and older women in these films are ugly step moms or old jealous queens or witches; vindictive, murderous, greedy, jealous and ruthless: “these women had too much power for their own good, embodying the age old truism that any power at all completely corrupted women and turned them into monsters” (Douglas 29).

Nancy Signorielli compiled results of the studies conducted on women's role portrayal and stereotyping on television and concludes that women in television drama are presented as less aggressive than men, take more orders than men and are generally limited in their employment possibilities. She also notes that the portrayal of women in dramas shows that “women in the labor force generally were in more subordinate and less important position, they were more passive and generally more interested in relationships than in profession” (Signorielli 13-14). She also notes that male characters dominated the world of television drama by a four to one ratio (4).

Marjorie Rosen and Molly Haskell's works focus on the sociological surveys of women in cinema. Rosen in *Popcorn Venus* (1973) and Haskell in *Form Reverence to Rape* (1974) studied the development of dominant roles assigned to women in Hollywood movies and related this to social development. On the other hand, Annette Kuhn (1982) argued that the criticism and research should go beyond such simple comparisons to exploring beneath the surface to reveal the hidden structures ands undercover processes—the films' ideological processes. Unlike Rosen and Haskell she emphasized the study of films' text over context. She advocates that "internal operations of film text may inform analysis of their institutional, social and historical contexts" (Kuhn 81). This she claims will reveal the implications of various types of constructions of women and their roles in different types of cinema.

The discussion above sows that the earlier criticism on the representation of female characters shows that the critics were concerned with the stereotypical portrayal of women in popular media. They were interested in drawing attention towards the unrealistic representation of women. The female as sexual object in films or ineffective housewife in television soap opera have been the debatable issues for the feminist media critics. Since the daytime drama or the soap operas were considered a feminine genre, they drew the attention of critics and feminists. The circumscribed roles assigned to women in the soaps and also their exaggerated representation over fickleness of women and preoccupation with trivialities was much criticized. Critics have done exhaustive research on individual daytime dramas as well as the study of the roles assigned to women in the soaps which drew attention of the academics and scholarly circles to the importance of the popular medium of television.

2.4 Daytime Drama and Roles Assigned to Women

A substantial amount of research exists on daytime TV drama. This research shows that women were cast in unconventional roles and given a degree of agency but not necessarily meant to show these women in a good light. This section summarizes the research that has been done one the roles of the female characters in the daytime drama.

Exploring the history of the American Television programs, James Roman observes "as television programming matured, the role of women changed, and the perception of the single independent woman evolved" (81). He identifies *My Little Margie* (1952-55) as one such drama of the earlier days of the primetime and daytime

drama. He notes that after the more traditional roles played by women in the 50s television drama the 60s, like *My Living Doll* featured women as objects of desire. The premise of single and exquisite women became acceptable in the 60s and women were cast in dramas as "plot device, and their sexuality was articulated in an amorous dynamic of unfulfilled desire" (Roman 82). The popular show of the 70s *Charlie's Angels*, although condemned for making a backward movement by presenting women in stereotypical roles of sex objects set the trend for women detective heroes in primetime and daytime drama. He states: "crime fighting was usually the purview of male domain in film and television" (87). He highlights the role that daytime serials and sitcoms played in defining the status of women and the changed perception about women in the American Society under the influence of feminist movements. Roman notes the contributions of such dramas featuring female heroes at their center like *Cagney and Lacy* (1982-88) made "a serious attempt to show women in law enforcement … Showing strong women with a commitment to their career" (Roman 87-8). The serial is also distinct in its address of issues faced by women and most highlighted by feminists, such as rape, abortion, sexual harassment, spousal abuse and abortion. According to Roman these dramas not only provided awareness to public about the issues of women but also "provided an opportunity for women to demonstrate their ability to cope within a male-dominated environment" (88). He notes that in the American television drama in the 90s, a radical change in the empowerment of women in the society has resulted in the "redefined sense of feminist sitcoms". Although these changes were slow to come in the history of the drama on television since the 50s era to the present there a pronounced struggle against male bias in the drama presenting women dealing with issues of work, family and sexuality in the context of the modern society (Roman 89). He gives the example of a drama series *Ally McBeal* (1997-2000) featuring female hero, depicting a thirty something attorney "on a quest to become a liberated woman yet caught in self-doubts and insecurities" (89). Roman argues that in the context of the feminist values the evolving matrix of the perception of women in the society should be highlighted in the television drama, a medium that presents the aspirations, values and morality of the society and also "reflects an ideological mythology that depicts a highly stylized rendition of our society within the traditional roles of family and work" (Roman xx).

Mary Cassata and Thomas Skill look at the representation of female characters from the angle of how the representation contributed to manipulation the society. Although women on television were cast in new roles but this still was not really good representation as it lacked what women actually experienced. They chose to investigate "mediated image of women from an audience perspective" (23). Their research, a survey based study elicited viewers' responses to the portrayal of women characters as to how they see their favorite female character. Whether the woman in these drama serials was presented "as a model of contemporary woman, or a throwback to the traditional housewife of years past" (Cassata and Skill 23). They selected major female characters of daytime drama in order to discover which aspects of the characters are acceptable for the viewers. They listed certain traits displayed by the female protagonists in these programs to be rated by the viewers as acceptable or unacceptable. They chose eleven serials namely: *Another World, All My Children, Days of Our Lives, Edge of Night, General Hospital, One Life to Live, Ryan's Hope, Search for Tomorrow, Texas,* and *The Young and the Restless*. They state in their research on American daytime drama that the purpose of their study was to see "whether the women characters who are portrayed as taking control of their lives will always be interpreted as manipulative and self-indulgent; while the female characters who exercise the least control over their lives will be seen as honorable role models" (Cassata and Skill 35). They argue that the message seems to be that strong traits such as power and aggressiveness are considered harsh traits and are best left for men, and traits such as "sensitivity and believability" are reserved for women as these are termed soft traits. Their study finds that traits such as ambition, career oriented-ness, independence, and power displayed by daytime female characters contributed little to the "most good" description. The image of the most appropriate model for women that emerges is the one that leans towards a traditional role, "one that de-emphasizes the strong traits and encourages the softer traits" (34). The results of their study about women character in the daytime serial indicate that the viewers' perception of female characters in soap operas encompasses a sophisticated image of women. Their study also confirms that daytime serials do not present "simple, cardboard representations of women in society; but on the other hand, the subtle constructions that go into creating the villainess or heroine may go against blatant stereotypes and allow the subtle ones to slip past our guard and seep into consciousness unnoticed and undisturbed" (Cassata and Skill 36).

Cassata and Skill note, “from the very beginning, soap operas portrayed the professional women: dress designer, nurse, doctor, lawyer, reporter, actress, business-woman” (96) but the questions remains, if they are presented nicely “with kindness” (97) or not. They state that it was believed that “women characters could have an affair but what they couldn’t have was a career…career women were usually portrayed as bitchy other woman … Today's serial drama reveals signs of allowing women to juggle career and family …” (97). They highlight that over the span of fifty years, from 1930s to 1980s women in soap operas have managed to hold dominant position. Since soap operas are domestic dramas of highly emotional nature, broadcast predominantly for women audience, the characters who are shown in these are also predominantly women, “to fulfill perhaps, their fantasies of power or indulge in the urge to strike back, if only vicariously” (Cassata and Skill 98).

About the centrality of the female characters Cassata and Skill state that women characters in daytime drama outnumber women in prime-time drama, where men outnumber women. Since it is obvious that daytime drama catering to women audience, depicts more female characters than primetime drama where men outnumber women. Most of the research such as this one by Cassata and Skill focuses on daytime or soap opera for the study of the portrayal of female characters. Therefore, one needs to see how women characters fare in its counterpart—the prime time drama, the territory where male protagonists rule. This particular genre of drama has been associated with women characters and viewers.

Critics also compare the medium of television and film in their depiction of women characters. Some find that television brought to its audience such female characters that are more life-like and believable, as compared to the Hollywood films. Ashley Sayeau in her study of television drama notes about daytime drama that such television shows relate to women's desires more closely in their representation of average women and their experiences at home. Quoting examples of dramas like *I Love Lucy* and *Martha Rye Show* she states that unlike Hollywood films showing Marilyn Monroe and Liz Tylor, “these television stars were viewed as more authentic, more natural than the unreachable starlets of the silver screen” (53).

2.5 Female Hero in Film and Television Drama

Research on the roles of female heroes in film and television points to the fact that although over the years, women have moved from domestic sphere to professional realm in their roles on film and television but they never seem fully empowered and independent. They have been struggling to defy the stereotypes which associate them with beauty, weakness and vulnerability than work, ambition and practicality. Molly Haskell in her critique of women's representation in film looks at film as a social product as well as a social arbiter. Women are presented as mere bodies who possess neither ambition nor ability. She exposes society's deeply ingrained belief of women's inferiority explaining how women are represented in films and how their roles in films serve as projections and verifications of our myths about women. She recognizes that women have appeared more frequently in films than any other profession dominated by men. In the 1940s women were recruited to fill men's places and aid in the world war. After the war women seemed a challenged to male economic supremacy and dominance at workplaces "movie heroines had to be brought down to fictional size, domesticated or defanged … In the roles of love goddesses, mothers, martyrs, spinsters, broads, virgins, vamps, prudes, adventuresses, she-devils, and sex kittens, they embodied stereotypes and occasionally, transcended them" (Haskell 8). Considering their centrality to the history of film and the importance of these women in shaping our lives and perceptions about how we think about ourselves their roles and representation in film must be paid serious attention. "Women in the movies reflected, perpetuated, and in some respects offered innovations on the roles of women in society" (12). She argues that the movement of sexual liberation has done more harm in re-imprisoning women, bringing them to the debased level of confinement to sexual roles that she refers to as "sex kittens" (31). Talking about the 70s era in the Hollywood and television she says that the freedom of expression resulting out of the protest and efforts of critics and feminists' remonstrations against women's subordination has in fact led to women performing roles in films which makes them "the most abused, neglected, and dehumanized—screen heroines in film history" (32). Haskell's argument is that we must not be duped by the freedom of expression allowed to women on screen and seeing the record number of women performing roles unheard of in the past as these roles still show women "degraded and humiliated and chained to stereotypes" (33). Haskell's observations, although are about women's representations in films from 40s to the 80s era, her argument that women are beguiled through so called representation along with

men in roles that show them “performing, achieving, choosing to fulfill themselves” (Haskell 30) may be a façade of the old practices, redirecting women’s self-definition through a subversive ideology.

Yvonne Tasker notes the stereotyping into which the female action hero falls in the Hollywood films. “Female action heroes are positioned in narrative terms as macho/masculine, as mothers or as Other: sometimes even as all three at different points in the narrative” (Tasker, Working Girls 115). Yvonne Tasker's critique of female action hero functions as a useful example in this respect. She chalks out the significance and emergence of the female action hero in the Hollywood. She argues that on one hand the female action hero represents a response to feminism which called into questions the images of gendered identity in popular cultural forms such as films, music videos and television. She states that the persona of “the action heroine borrows on well-established images such as that of the tomboy so that the heroine who is cast as the hero's sidekick, can be read as a girl who has not accepted the responsibilities of adult womanhood” (15). Tasker sees the female action hero as center of action, developing in the late 80s Hollywood films. She argues that *Alien* (1979) and *Aliens* (1986) represent “one of Hollywood's most visible action heroines” (15). The characterization of Ripley, the female action hero in *Alien* represents a significant development in the portrayals of action heroines. However, the climactic action sequence of the film in which Ripley undresses before her final confrontation with the alien, eclipses the empowering of the female hero and generates questions about “the limits and possibilities of cinematic representation of the action heroine” (15). It serves to undermine the power and development of the female hero who seemed to have battled past her objectification and her image as a mere body for visual pleasure.

Identifying a shift in the representation of females in films and on television, critics and feminist see it as positive sign that from absence and from distorted representation female characters on small and big screen have started to offer variety. “With changes in women’s real lives came changes in popular imagery. No longer women could be presented in the same stereotypical ways as they had been in the past. Something had to change. The rise of the female action heroine was a sign of the different roles available to women in real life” (Inness, Action Chicks 6). Sherrie A. Inness attempt to chalk out the action female hero’s roles in television series in order to see how the tough women are subversive in a variety of ways. She contends that the action female heroes rebel against traditional gender roles and also call into question

the duality of gender (7-8). She sees the emergence of the female action hero in television drama series as a sign that the roles women play in real life are also changing. Therefore, the evolution of women's roles from a sidekick to the action hero needs to be analyzed critically as it reflects that change in the roles of women in real life. She contends that the analysis of tough women in media reveals that they are sex symbols employed primarily for the male audience and the media representations of tough women show that tough women are "toned down to make them more palatable to a mass audience" (9). Women are allowed to be tough and violent only within restricted parameters largely prescribed by men what they are willing to tolerate. "The new action babes have to celebrate women's power without being so threatening…" (8). Jackie Byars finds in the forties' Hollywood movies, resistance on part of "feminine voices, gazes and power" (4) against the powerful "male voice, gaze and dominance". She claims that a substantial inequality still exists between male and female roles in terms of autonomy and exercise of power. These feminists such as Haskell and Byars observe that women in cinemas are presented as lacking ambition and ability and are mere bodies.

Discussing the construction of femininity in film Myra Macdonald argues that the position in which woman is placed and the lack of authority with which she articulates her role are the major markers in the construction of female identity and "enigma of femininity" (105). She explores a variety of media including film, videos of songs and fashion modeling and advertising to explore the issue of denial of voice and identity construction in the portrayal of women. She claims in her research that these representations often deny voice to women and deprive them of "individual personality features" (105). Exploring the Hollywood films of the 1940s for her study she contends that film noir of the 40s gave "shape to the enigma of femininity" (105). The later decades 1980s and 90s, according to her, "fashioned a new urbanized moral monster" (105) characterized by irrational behavior and mysterious motives. Macdonald also explores the question whether such representations of women in the popular media are "merely the ultimate simulacrum, meaning nothing, but fun to consume?" (Macdonald 106). Whether or not this image of the femme fatale is a "blocking device". Discussing various films as examples such *as Gilda,* and *The Lady from Shanghai,* she writes that the late 40s film noir presented siren-like female protagonist—mysterious, sexually alluring, manipulative, one who tricks men into believing in her sincerity and love. "Several noir heroines pose mystery about where

they belong, and where they have come from" (117). Exposing the threat, she poses to the subdued woman characters that peopled the films earlier. Her roots and origin is in question as she is seen as an alien in this environment where a homely good wife and coy lady existed previously. The heroine's dislocation from the sphere of home signals disruption of the normal order and expectations. "Within the women's films, hearth and home feature as the natural locations for women" (117).

The siren figure of the heroine of the film noir of 1980s and 90s, poses danger to the domestic figure of a heroine due to her alluring sexuality and lack of innocence. She contends that popular media representations reassert masculine control over women's expression of their desires and individuality (Macdonald 130). The film noir presents moral punishment for the woman for her betrayal of man's trust. In the end she is punished by either killing, imprisonment, or is domesticated to be tamed to fit into the norms of family life (119). Ann Kaplan notes that the seductive show of her beauty and charms makes the femme fatale more memorable than her role in the plot of the film (36).

Elizabeth Abele stating examples from Hollywood films, discusses how the definition of the American action hero expanded in the 1990's to include women and how earlier Hollywood films set the groundwork for reinventing gender roles in action films. She cites Ripley's example from *Alien* 1979, *Aliens*, *Alien* 1986, *Alien: Resurrection* 1992, whose position she contends is androgynous. Joseph Maddrey also sees in Ripley "the assimilation of victim/heroine and monster" (67) as she is impregnated with a queen alien. He notes that she responds to the sexist and patriarchal culture by "reconfiguring her body and identity" (Maddrey 67). Abele also sees Ripley as a metaphor for the challenges that active woman faces in the contemporary society (Abele 109). She supports her argument by referring to Laura Mulvey's concerns that the female action hero in the Hollywood cinema is "masculanized". Mulvey sees the active female character as the reaffirmation of the passive position of a female. Abele notes that in the sequels of the movie Ripley appears "haunted and beleaguered by her past victories and is a reluctant participant in subsequent missions" (Abele 109). On one hand she commends Ripley for helping to establish the possibility of female action heroes but observing her limitations she states that she presented a narrow and risky path that few women would choose to embark upon (109). Other examples she discusses include Joan Wilder from *Romancing the Stone* (1984). Wilder survives

incredible adventures in order to learn that she is capable. *Romancing the Stone* was part of a series of romantic comedies of mid 80s action comedies that challenged the earlier expectations of female heroes. Joan Wilder serves as an important link between the "strong yet feminine screen personae" (Abele 109) and contemporary action female heroes. Other films of the same vein in the 80s era include *Desperately Seeking Susan* (1985), *American Dreamer* (1984) and (1987), and *Adventures in Babysitting* (1987). Female protagonists in these films manage to subvert the standard action narrative showing to rescue themselves rather than waiting to be rescued.

Abele also affirms that the commercial success of the action romantic comedies that presented adventurous action heroines, paved the way for women to appear in serious action roles in Hollywood films. By introducing the image of women as courageous, determined and creative these hybrid films, mixing romance, comedy, fantasy, adventure and action made the "new heroes palatable" (Abele 110-11). She quotes the examples of Jody Foster's *Silence of the Lambs* (1991) and *Contact* (1997), Sandra Bullock's *Murder By Numbers* (2001), and Jennifer Lopez's *Enough* (2002) as films featuring female hero that set the trend of female characters moving into action roles, after men in their lives prove ineffective and destructive.

Sherrie A. Inness in *Tough Girls* explores the changing representation of women in all popular forms of media including television, in order to see what these changing representations reveal about the changing mores of the world these women inhabit. She begins her investigation of the figure of 'tough girl' in American popular culture by analyzing the popular television series of the 70s; *Charlie's Angels, The Avengers*, and *The Bionic Woman* and continues through her analysis of women hero in the television drama series *X-files* and *Xena: Warrior Princess* (1995-2001). Her thesis is that although all these representations of female heroes show apparently strong women who can not only take care of themselves and are also capable of helping others their greatness is undermined in subtle ways which may go unnoticed by ordinary viewers who get overwhelmed by the extraordinary power of their characters. Unlike their sisters in the past, they are performing roles and accomplishing feats which in the past were reserved for men, these portrayals of tough women also undercut women's toughness. She contends that some of the powerful depictions of women perpetuate women's subordinate status, using toughness in complicated ways to break or bend gender stereotypes while simultaneously affirming them. She contends that the popular television has created the image of "pseudo-tough woman". Stating the example of

Charlie's Angels, Inness argues that "the fact that they are portrayed as prey, week after week reduces the Angels' tough image" (Tough Girls 44). Like Charlie's Angels, *The Bionic Woman* also on the surface seems to challenge the myths of femininity, but on a deeper level perpetuated the myth that women should be feminine and modest. The Bionic Woman's toughness is reduced as she frequently strips or tricks the villains and rarely uses her strength to catch the enemy (48). Inness concludes that the analysis of these television dramas reveals that we are confronted with ambiguous and contradictory messages about women's strength. These characters stated that being tough is possible for women. At the same time, they perpetuated the stereotype about femininity and womanhood. In this way it diminished the impact of women's toughness.

Julie D. O'Reilly's analyzes the representation of "superpowered" women, a term she uses to tag the type of female superheroes she studied in her work. Tracing the role of women heroes with supernatural powers O'Reilly comments that during the era from 1964-96 a few series such as *The Bionic Woman* (1976-78), *Wonder Woman* (1976-79), featuring super-powered female characters became popular on television. O'Reilly also looks at how female gender is depicted within its fictional realm. Her study also points out the inherent subtle contradictions which underlie women's roles on media such as Television drama. These female heroes were "guided and motivated by men in their lives" (2). She notes it as the subtlest form of women's oppression. During the 80s and 90s the super-powered female characters faced restrictions. For instance, they had to get the approval of the male authority figures "using their powers to serve others and fearing repercussions if their powers were revealed" (2). She terms the mid-nineties the golden age of the female hero with supernatural or superhuman powers, on television. She quotes the examples of *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* (1996-2003) and *Charmed* (1998-2006), as dramas which presented women with innate physical or mental powers. She notes that these and many other female heroes peopled the TV screen from the mid-nineties till 2011 showing women's empowerment and breaking stereotypes of the past where the domestic realm was the only space available for women to prove themselves on screen. She notes that through exercising extraordinary physical or mental abilities these women heroes show resistance to traditional gender roles but at the same time their power and rights are restricted through different "social mores and institutions" (O'Reilly 3). "Despite their potential to be symbols of resistance, these characters reinforce the same hegemonic power structures

that they challenge" (3). O'Reilly explains the contradictions inherent in the super-powered women's representation. Television's super-powered women presented a veneer of empowerment while facing constraints. Agata Luksza attempts to study the issues of empowerment and submission with reference to female vampire characters in television dramas such as *The Vampire Diaries* and *True Blood.* Her analysis of the female hero is imbedded in the debate of the issues of "female empowerment and post-feminist gender representations in popular culture" (429). She states in her article that "contemporary vampire fiction reinforces gender stereotypes and roles" (430). She investigates female identity and female agency in the vampire fiction on television by analyzing narrative aspects such as the "central position of the heroine, love triangles and the objectification of the male characters" (430). The obvious focus of vampire narratives on television, on female identity and sexuality has been regarded by Luksza as central to gender issues in Western societies. She argues that Cullen vampires in *Twilight* as "angelic ideal family" (431) suggest that "the female potential can be fully realized only within family frames in the role of a wife and a mother" (431). She dismantles the "gender politics" of "putting the heroine at the center" (433). The vampire fiction in television drama puts the female in the central position. It is always "her story" and other characters including the leading male characters are constructed around her in relation to the female hero. She has been "endowed with narrative agency" (433). The heroine stands out as the focal point of the drama. Viewers also are encouraged through this strategy to identify with her. But Luksza identifies that this "movement of the heroine from the periphery to the center" of the narrative holds significance with regard to gender politics and presentation. "…staying at the center does not automatically lead to female empowerment, particularly if the heroine is victimized" (433). She explores the "problematic centralization" of the heroine in vampire drama serials, which she claims have also come to represent the so called feminine genre like soap operas. She calls the centralization of the female hero in vampire drama an "illusive centralization" (Luksza 433). They present a female character at the center but "behind the female cover there is always a story of a man in crisis" (433). In short it is only "a female body presented in a disturbing way, but they fail to explore the female characters. The act of possession immobilizes the heroine, both physically and psychologically" (433). Even though the woman appears at the center of the narrative the actual action takes place outside her sphere and the female is nothing but "a passive medium enabling a hero's journe" (433). Luksza's observations

support the assumptions of the present study of the female hero with reference to objectification and the workplace drama serials. Her study centered on television dramas on the vampire females which confirm that the centrality and power of the female hero in vampire fiction is a façade. It serves to the interesting discovery of what viewers and feminist critics might take as their victory for a central place for women in popular media forms such as television drama series. Therefore, it remains a question open to inquiry whether in genres other than vampire narratives the female hero suffers the same lot.

Julie O'Reilly concludes that one of the ways to marginalize the super-powered women and constrain their power is done through surveillance by loved ones and enemies alike; friends, neighbors, family, husbands or lovers, press and agencies monitor and control these female heroes which exposes the influence of hegemonic power structures. She contends that even these super-powered women on television are "subject to both traditional and supernatural authorities that censor their autonomy" (O'Reilly 21). Her analysis of the television drama series of the past five decades, featuring super-powered women reveals that women's empowerment is constricted even in the fantastic roles that present them as most powerful, therefore serving as status quo rather than serving as empowering or liberating works (22).

O'Reilly also notes the treatment of super-powered women as objects whereby the agency of the super-powered women is relegated through their treatment as things, from "who"s" to "what's". This is disregarding them as individuals and treating them as objects (46). The relegation of women heroes from the status of person to thing limits their agency. O'Reilly quotes the conversation between Helena and Reese in the dramas series *Birds of Prey*: "When we first met you asked me who I was. But last night you asked me what I was" ("Prey of the Hunter"). Similar exchange occurs between Riley and Buffy. Buffy's boyfriend Riley, on witnessing the extraordinary display of her powers asks her "What are you?" (45), instead of 'who are you'. O'Reilly terms this as constraint on female empowerment which is one of the ways to circumscribe their power and confine them to culturally and socially acceptable gender roles (46).

Stephanie Genz's observations on the female superhero add credence to O'Reilly's thesis. She observes that "Buffy's physical attractiveness is, in itself, objectifying" (167). Buffy is "a diluted imitation of female empowerment" (Genz 167). The series gives mixed message about femininity and girl power due to its emphasis on "style over substance". Buffy's glossy exterior and "over-the-top girliness compromise

her feminist potential" (Genz 167). Apart from her physical attractiveness and girliness, her overwhelming feeling of loss and alienation also set her as less forceful an image of female hero. Her psychological and emotional isolation lead her to lament and even an attempt to kill herself and escape from her clashing selves – a teenager with dreams and a vampire slayer—in season five. Genz argues that Buffy falls short of successfully challenging institutional relations of power. Her toughness is weakened to mitigate the threat "posed by the strong and self-reliant woman" (168), thus reaffirming the stereotypes of "femininity/feminine vulnerability and inaction" (168). She concludes that this coding reaffirms the binary structure of masculine power and female weakness and underscores the potential of a female hero who possesses heroic and powerful stature.

2.6 Professional Women in Television Drama

Julia Hallam states that it was not until 1990s that dramas that focused on the lives and experiences of women characters began to achieve popular as well as critical success in the traditionally male genre of primetime crime series and "quality drama". Since the 1990's what is considered now as "quality drama" (256) on television not only received national and international acclaim but also spurred the academic and scholarly work on dramas representing female characters. She also contends that most academic work on television dramas and their characters and themes, tends to focus on textual analysis and issue of post-feminism with regard to these dramas such as *Sex and the City* (1994-2004), *Desperate Housewives* (2004-12), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003) (Hallam 256). These television shows were considered iconoclastic in their representation of female characters and offered an alternative mainstream media representation of women and their sexuality. Feminist critics find in these characters a new generation of feminists who seeks to challenge the orthodox beliefs and practices of the previous generation. The more recent era, from 2006-2011, O' Reilly contends, was dominated by male super-powered heroes or mixed-sex heroes. Some of the series that featured super-powered female heroes included *Medium, Ghost Whisperer, Saving Grace, Bionic Women* and *True Blood*. Female heroes in these series face the same challenges as their predecessors in terms of being "resigned to their limited social agency" (4). O'Reilly also notes that in the more recent era (2004-2011) the super-powered-women's extraordinary abilities were confined to the domestic sphere, bringing to the light the paradox: presenting the choice to them and at the same time

associating women with the same domestic sphere where they employ their extraordinary abilities in performing traditional roles (4).

A television drama series focusing on the life of a working woman that generated much scholarly critical debate in the late 90s regarding gender identity and female's role in the genre of prime time workplace drama is *Ally McBeal.* David Payson opines that the drama's title character is "simultaneously well educated, competent professional, and a neurotic, love-starved, provocatively dressed and strikingly thin woman…" (7). The drama became an epicenter of international debate on feminism and roles of women in modern society. He states that *Ally McBeal* challenges the issues of "gender roles and gender politics" (2). He also acknowledges the role and significance of the genre of primetime drama series in directing attention to myriad issues including gender and race stereotypes, problems of working women including violent and aggressive behavior in them. He argues that the show was concerned with professional women and their "conflicting emotions about satisfaction and anxiety about the choices that were provided to them" (Payson 2) in the society. It served as a touchstone in leading academic critics and researchers draw their attention to the study of women's roles in the contemporary dramas with reference to feminist concerns and the current position of both feminist theory and movement.

> The presentation of women's behaviors, desires and images in *Ally McBeal* has received more attention from popular press, media critics and the general public … Questions about the programs discourse regarding feminism sexuality in and beyond the workplace … the lead character's adolescent behavior and flights of fantasy, and the leading actress's weight have all been energetically debated in the public sphere. (Payson 10)

He calls the female protagonist of the drama a "representative character a sight through which large, emergent sociological questions may be raised and social reality altered" (11). The most debated issue is the juxtaposition of Alley's professional persona as an attorney with her adolescent appearance and professional behavior and what this juxtaposition reveals from feminist perspective about the representation of female characters on television.

Michele Hammers analyzes post-feminist values and female professionalism in *Ally McBeal*. The drama series ran from 1997-2002. It revolves around Ally McBeal, a law graduate working at a Boston law firm. The drama invites viewers to think about Alley and her female counterparts, in terms of their professional identities. Hammers

argues that *Ally McBeal* "(re)presents a different version of feminism, femininity, and feminine identity than its predecessors" (89-90). He analyzes the drama series for representation of female professionalism and the issue of female body as a site for identity formation. He states the drama serial as an example of popular culture's insistence upon showing "images of grown single women as frazzled, self -absorbed girls" (Hammers 90). Although Ally McBeal is presented as a professional woman, a lawyer, in her late 30s she "has been highly infantalized and is typically the object of a large expense of energy and attention by other characters" (94). This infantalization is both physical and emotional. Ally retreats to overtly feminine even childlike behavior and attributes. He states the example of Ally's refusal to attend a meeting where she fears she will sink in the oversized chair and feel insecure like a "little girl". Her refusal to undertake a professional duty reveals her insecurity and emotional immaturity expressed in her visual fantasy of physical diminution on an oversized office chair in front of strange men. He goes on to state that Ally's peculiar traits such as petite frame, large eyes, tendency to bite her lip, preference for teenage clothes and even dating teenaged boys, does not establish her image as a professional and mature woman but that of an immature girl and "undermine her viability as an adult" (94). Over the series progression into the next seasons Ally grows thin, resembling preadolescents than a full-grown woman. This image of a flat and thin looking teenager is accompanied by emotional immaturity. Hammer sees "this inferior status, unfortunately, falls short of current expectations for mature, professional woman" (95). Hammers argues that Ally's romantic idealism, emotionalism, girlish indifference and self-absorbed attitude towards manly attributes like logic, reason and law do not present her as strong character let alone a hero in professional realm. He argues that this representation is not at all positive and is a matter of concern from the perspective of feminists. Ally is punished for "female-gendered professional standards she represents" (95). Although she is successful in the courtroom she is not represented as a strong and confident woman or a capable lawyer. Her child-like, sensitive, romantic and self-absorbed personality does not let her achieve the greatness expected of such an accomplished and grown up woman. As he puts it "the television show romanticizes her overly emotional approach to the practice of law. Ally's value as a lawyer is her emotional nature not legal acumen" (95). Hammer terms this juxtaposition of feminine rather childlike disposition with the professionalism of a lawyer as a "clear message that she is practicing law like a woman" and not in the traditionally accepted—"masculine"—

way" (95). Ally, in a male dominated society and profession of law plays the "male-oriented game" like a woman but it makes her look somewhat foolish when she is compared with "existing standards for actual professionalism" (96). Hammer judges these eccentricities of Ally's character as comic and burlesque, undermining her identity as a capable and competent professional woman in the world of men. It mirrors the tension set between "competent male professionalism" and merely "interesting female emotionality—which is always, already linked by cultural association to her excessive femininity… [she] falls short of accomplishing complete success…because she is too much like a woman…" (96). Ally is a hero struggling to counter her personal disappointments through her work. She is romantically unhappy due to neurosis and lack of good judgement. She often withdraws into her personal fantasies to seek temporary escape from reality and responsibility often requiring the attention of almost everyone in the office when she is going through such a phase. He discerns that the message Ally sends to the audience is that single women who are romantically inclined must struggle at work that demands skills that women are incapable to display unlike men, hence they are doomed to suffer. "It also presents a departure from depictions of women as capable of professional success on par with their male counterparts" (97). He observes Ally as perpetuation of stereotyping of women and sees it "In light of the cultural associations that link women with their bodies and deny them the authority of mind" (96). Hammers observation reveals Ally's objectification. His study of the female hero in the legal drama *Ally McBeal* has focused on the ways Alley falls short of achieving the socially set up standards of professionalism and how her eccentricities presented through comedy and melodrama make her the "burlesque clown" although, with the intention of "purging the social order of its flaws; however, this purging takes place through the clown's utter humiliation and an outright rejection of the things that the clown comes to represents" (Hammers 91).

Laurie Ouellette and Susan E. McKenna in their essay *Female Representation and the Postfeminist Challenge* present a critique of *Ally McBeal*. The drama that received critical and academic attention due to its sensitive and compelling portrayal of a woman. They mention the response it generated from the critics in academia. "The program articulates many of the contradictory ideological assumptions that fall under the rubric of postfeminism" (121). They argue that seeing *Ally McBeal* as a postfeminist discourse would be overlooking ideological contradictions that the drama series tends to negotiate. "Ally is also positioned at the center of feminist debate over

manipulation and agency in the context of dominant beauty and body norms" (Ouellette and McKenna 121). These debates involved the leading character's weight and rigorous routine of exercise and also an alleged eating disorder. The character's habit of wearing short skirts like teenage girls and extremely thin body, has been debated with reference to feminism. Ouellette and McKenna explore the issue of female sexual objectification in *Ally McBeal.* "The gradual incorporation of certain feminist principles into the mass media (such as equal pay for equal work and female entry into formerly male professions) has intersected with a tacit acceptance of the continued, even accelerated, objectification of women in media imagery" (127). Ally McBeal a single and independent career woman in her 30s is concerned above all with her weight and appearance which is the reflection of her internalization of the male perspective. This they term as the continued sexual objectification of women in the media. Ouellette and McKenna discuss extra and intra-textual examples that throw light on the issues such as discussion regarding feminism, standards for female beauty, female sexual objectification and their social experiences. "Ally embodies dominant (and dangerous) ideals rooted in the internalization of commercial and patriarchal norms" (129). They point out that the show can be seen as instrumental in helping women develop critically informed perspectives on sexual objectification. *Ally McBeal* presents the issue of female objectification not only through its subject matter but the extra-textual discourses circulating around the drama series shed light on the issues of the female body, standards of beauty and attractiveness, women's sphere and male gaze.

Patricia Leavy explores the struggle and resistance on the part of women in a male dominated culture exploring Ally McBeal's character through the feminist lens in her essay *Ally McBeal as a Site for Feminist Resistance.* Where other critics have criticized Ally for her flights of fantasy as her detachment from reality Leavy considers it Ally's resistance to patriarchal culture and male norms exemplified through law, logic and practicality. "Ally McBeal breaks down dichotomies within patriarchal culture as she moves between the public and private spheres" (31). Ally seems to be struggling to keep a balance between her two personas—a single career oriented woman and a romantic dreamer in pursuit of love and personal happiness. This juxtaposition of rational and emotional selves has been criticized by critics like Hammers as well. Leavy considers it Ally's resistance mechanism against patriarchal order and cultural myths that perpetuate hegemony and restrict women's development. She argues that "rejection of rational-emotional dichotomy is a common feminist practice" (31) that aims to

challenge the hegemonic patriarchal foundations. She states that these peculiarities of Ally McBeal's character that resist and pose a threat to patriarchal forms of power have not been paid much attention to in the critique of her character. It is Ally's movement between real and imaginary realms that made her the target of much criticism but it is through this movement that she rejects “rational- emotional dichotomy which anchors patriarchal social orders” (Leavy 31). Other feminist critics have criticized Ally's anorexic, neurotic and hysteric tendencies on the grounds that it stereotypes women as irrational and emotional creatures and the label neurotic is used for women to execute social power and culturally oppress women. Leavy rejects this interpretation of Ally's hysteric condition and her constant movement between reality and dream world. “By physically embodying the role of hysteric Ally McBeal served as a bodily site of resistance to dominate methods available for interpreting cultural notions about autonomous women” (34). Ally has been repressed by gendered social power and her idiosyncratic behavior is a backlash on rational and patriarchal culture. She mediates a way through which she subversively resists normative conception that threaten women's autonomy.

Amanda D. Lotz in her essay *Ms. McBeal's Defense: Assessing Ally McBeal as a Feminist Text* recognize *Ally McBeal* 's contribution to stirring debates related to gender and identity. “In many accounts Ally McBeal became central to questions about the emergence of a new generation of women and the status of women in the U.S. society” (140). The drama led to the rise of female-oriented series, depicting women grappling with professional and personal issues single-handedly on television. The drama series that followed in the late 1990s and 2000 include *Sex and the City*, *Grey's Anatomy* and *The Good Wife*. She calls it a “prototypic example of feminist discourses and ideas” (Lotz, “Defense” 142). *Ally McBeal*'s female characters are single, striving for upward mobility at workplace, dedicated to their careers and are living without connection with family in a big city. She calls the women in the 80s and early 90s television series representing the symbolic code of “new woman”. Whereas Ally and her female coworkers set the stage for what can be called “new, new women” due to their divergence from the codes set by their predecessors in television drama series centered on female characters (142). She argues that the series presents women's experiences in a patriarchal world and its setting of a legal firm dealing with cases affecting women or those related to private sphere, a space concerning women. Ally represents a career woman struggling to meet the expectations of the society for a

working woman in men's profession, and with her anxieties regarding lack of love and romantic partnership in her life which show her failure in the personal domain. This depiction of a woman struggling to have both career and family reveals the struggles that women encounter in the contemporary culture where “most relations of power remain structured by patriarchy” (155). She mentions that the attention *Ally McBeal* drew for criticism and scholarship in feminism served not only to direct the focus of the academic critics to the genre of television drama centered around women, but also that of the creators of drama to address and present issues that women encounter in the postfeminist world. “The stories in Ally McBeal indicate an organic emergence of unspoken cultural undercurrents and it remains possible that its texts and the characters’ dilemmas have connected viewers in such a way to help initiate such organization based change” (56). The series initiated a discussion encouraging reconsideration of the status feminism in the and also that of women on various personal and political fronts in the contemporary world. She wrote that a few series other than *Ally McBeal* have dealt with women's lives in professional sphere, women whose lives remain entrenched in challenges posed to them in patriarchal and male dominated society. She calls for the need to access and analyze critically such stores in the genre of television drama that depict new options available to women—series depicting tough career women and women involved in more equitable roles. The scholarship on feminist criticism on such television series needs to be extended for the study of women's roles and gender relations in contemporary society. She suggests *Greys’ Anatomy* and *Desperate Housewives* also draw critics and viewers’ attention to feminist issues, the way *Ally McBeal* did, due to their depiction of strong female characters.

Negra and Lagerwey calling their aesthetics “cinematic” and their complexity “novelistic”, note that serials like *Homeland* add to “quality television” and are worthy of comparison with any other higher status cultural forms (127). Commenting on the role of the female character in the television drama they state that the centrality of masculinity has been thwarted by such television dramas burgeoning “a proliferation of sharply drawn, sometimes idiosyncratic female leads…” (Negra and Lagerwey 128). Women are problem solvers, as Negra and Lagerwey note, not in the domestic sphere which they occupied in sitcoms or daytime drama but in the public quarters of law, politics and public security (128). In their research on *Homeland* they also note that the peculiar dimension of the female hero, Carrie Mathison is her "mental illness and extreme emotionalism" since Carrie suffers from bipolar disorder.

2.6 Research on Objectification of Women in Media

Over the past several years, since Molly Haskell wrote her critique on women's presentation on screen, *From Reverence to Rape* (1973), many feminist theorists and cultural critics have debated on the issue of women's place, representation and roles in film and television. Haskell in her book charts the way women are presented in the Hollywood cinema, television and also in the European cinema. She offers a historical study of the images of women in film, revealing how they present a great challenge to the feminists' pursuits to liberate the "female victims" of sexism (Haskell vii). Haskell writes that our instincts and emotions are substantiated by the images of women we see in popular entertainment. She states that these impressions are inscribed in our consciousness. Heroines in the novels of "the most independent minded women novelists and screenwriters", rarely unpleasing to the eye are designed to appeal to men. For instance, virgin is presented as a positive figure, "honored and exalted beyond any merits she possessed as a woman" (viii) whereas the whore "was publicly castigated and cautioned against—and privately sought by men" (Haskell xiv) also presented as bad-girl on the screen. She notes that women were unconscious of their oppression—unwilling to lose their passive position to enter the ranks of competitive male activities. One would rarely find even in literature, a woman like Charlotte Bronte's Lucy Snowe, Dickens's Ada or E.M. Forster's' Margaret Schlegel, "a woman who was neither beautiful nor especially charming, who did not abide by sex role definitions, …and who pursued knowledge and truth for their own sake" (xv). She argues that even these subversive heroines or female heroes were rooted in the prevailing romantic conventions, according to a status quo which still was unchangeable. Although there are some challenging heroines in film as there are in the literature like Shaw' Joan and Ibsen's Rebecca West, women in films have remained rooted in nineteenth century romantic values that are now being questioned for the stereotyping and oppression of women (Haskell xvi). The incongruous idea that women, the half of the race and most of its nurturing power and yet its "servants and romantic slaves" has been reiterated in the Hollywood film. Through its myths of sacrifice and servitude the films manipulated "to keep women in their place" (3). She goes on to state that Hollywood was not ready to sponsor films showing heroines who were smart and ambitious. "A woman who could compete and convincingly win in a man's world … would go against the grain of prevailing notions about the female sex" (4). Films reflect society's accepted role

definitions. “A man is supposedly most himself when he is driving to achieve, to create, to conquer… A woman is supposedly most herself in the throes of emotion (the love of man or children)” (4). If a woman defies these social and cultural expectations, for instance, by adopting professional attitude she becomes undesirable—losing her femininity she becomes monstrous. Women are confined to stereotypical roles and circumscribed existence in films. This demarcation of roles of men and women, that men act, work and achieve whereas women serve as adorable and pleasing spectacle for them, points to the principle of film aesthetics as a visual medium that a woman in a film is an object of art, an idol and a visual entity.

Laura Mulvey, a feminist film theorist in her essay “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” (1975) presents the study of cinematic spectatorship and argues that various features of cinema viewing and the representation of women on screen lead to objectification of female characters. Her study focused on the problem of representation of women in cinema as the objects of male gaze. She contends that in patriarchal societies “pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female (Mulvey 11). Traditionally films present men as active and controlling subjects. Not only is the man powerful on and behind the screen but as the spectator as well because films typically are directed towards male spectators. Women on the other hand are passive objects of desire for men in both the film and in the audience. In this way films objectify women by displaying them for the pleasure of “the controlling male gaze” (Mulvey 13). Mulvey. for her main argument that films use women in order to provide visual pleasure to men, identifies two manners in which films produce pleasure: the first involves objectification of the image—the passive female, and identification with the subject—the active male. Woman is the image or spectacle and man the “bearer of the look” (11). Her influential essay turned the attention of the cultural theorists, film theorists and feminist theorists toward the visual media for the study of women's roles and representation.

Susan Douglas addresses this point in her critique of women's representation in media saying that “women much more than men have learned from ads, movies and TV shows that they must constantly put themselves under surveillance. In standard Hollywood movies, men act—they solve crimes, engage in sword fights, right social injustice, and swing from vines—while women are on screen to be looked at” (Douglas 16-17). She explores the treatment of women in media from 1950's to 1990s. She addresses the point that women through media learn to turn themselves into objects to

be scrutinized and being gazed at by men (17). Edward Guerrero notes that “All forms of cultural production in a patriarchal consumer-oriented society focus on the representation of woman as an eroticized, fetishized and generally commodified object that is presented for the enjoyment of a controlling male “look” or gaze” (27).

The second wave feminists focus their criticism on sexual objectification as they considered women's reduction to body and their presentation as an object of sexual pleasure an offense against women. There are numerous examples of feminist raising voices and protest against such practices for instances the protests against Miss World pageant. Also scholarly articles lash criticism on women's depiction on television, advertisement, videos and films as mere decorative or alluring figures whose self-hood or individuality is denied “legitimizing our society's view of the female as sex-object, by making the sexuality of the moving female body public” (Brady 41).

Many second wave feminists critique the oppression of women, basing their criticism on the writings of Sartre and de Beauvoir. Things other than consciousness including individual's body, were understood to be acted on. Sartre posited that conscious or human awareness was the source of choice, agency, and action. Consciousness was the subject and all else was object (Zack 46). Building on Sartre de Beauvoir defined women as Other—the object, and man as consciousness in Sartre's sense, having agency and choice. Simon de Beauvoir argues how women failed to attain transcendence as “choosing, doing, acting, conscious beings” (Zack 46). The feminist applied this account to understand and explain the effects of oppressive cultural norms on women. Zack points out the second wave critique failed to focus on how women could overcome their social position as objects or 'Other' and develop more active selves as subjects (Zack 48).

Iris Young in her essay “Throwing Like a Girl” discusses how women in a gendered society are expected to behave in particular ways. She concludes “Women in sexist society are physically handicapped. Insofar as we learn to live out our existence in accordance with the definition that patriarchal culture assign to us, we are physically inhibited, confined, positioned and objectified” (Young 42). The culture and society in which a woman dwells defines her as the Other, as the inessential correlate to man, as mere object and immanence. Woman, both culturally and socially, is therefore, denied subjectivity, autonomy, and creativity that are the defining traits of humans, which in a patriarchal society are accorded to men (31). She further discusses that a female

internalizes her existence as mere body or object that she learns in the patriarchal society which defines women as objects. In a sexist society, according to young the central part of being a woman is to be gazed upon as mere body, “a shape and flesh that presents itself as the potential object of another subject's intentions and manipulations, rather than a living manifestation of action and intention. The source of this objectified bodily existence is in the attitude of others regarding her” (44). Given that accomplishing tasks is basic to the structure of human existence, it serves as a better starting point for investigating female agency and autonomy.

Objectification of women is rampant in media representation of women despite the fact that Feminism is active for almost fifty years to liberate women from their exploitation. The consequences of objectification in regard to leading to negative perception about self, body image, self-injurious attitudes and depression have been discussed extensively by scholars. Apart from studying the ramifications and effects of objectifications on a personality and behavior other studies diverted their attention to objectification as a way of presenting woman as sexualized objects, consumed in the media as commodities having no self-worth (Grey, Knob, Sheskin, Bloom 1208-9).

The bulk of research that has been done in studying objectification has mostly looked at sexual objectification of women in media. There is scarcity of research on objectification from the perspective of seeing the concept in more broad terms i.e. objectification other than sexual or physical objectification. Nussbaum's notions of objectification refer to other ways through which a person can be objectified or dehumanized. It can be through controlling her freedom, and stopping her from exercise of her intellectual abilities and potentials. As Naomi Zack states “Mind control is part of the oppression because mind is objectified as a thing to be controlled” (48).

Kimberly Alsop Hobson has observed the consequences of objectification of women. He uses survey method to conduct his research to assess the discernment women have about media objectification and their perception about the efficacy of feminist movements in dealing with objectification. His study only seeks to find out women's awareness and attitude toward their objectification in media. As his results show that women are conscious of their objectification on media and view it negatively they also recognize that the continuation of female objectification on media shows the failure of the efforts women's movements launch for women's rights. His study however does not take into account the various ways in which women are objectified in media. Nor does his study look at the various types of media objectifying women rather he

uses questionnaire to elicit information on perceptions about women's objectification on media in general.

Kimiko Akita in her Essay “Sexual Commodification of Women in Japanese Media” explores sexual commodification, subjectivity and objectification of Japanese women. She argues that images and representation of women in media affect women's perception of the self and behavior and their lack of critical thinking and understanding of their abuse leads to continuation of such practices. “Japanese women may wear cute technological artifacts or behave in cute ways while using communication technologies or project themselves as appealing objects/images/symbols to comply with men who control the media and social system” (51). She goes on to state that women in patriarchal and male dominated culture become objects/images/symbols, not persons or individuals with subjective free will, this objectification in terms of loss of individual identity, she states is mediated through artifacts because it helps them present their “subservient, allocentric, and supportive socio-cultural roles” (51). This allocentric attitude is used to “*craft*” women's identity. As a result, women refuse to be subjective or to think critically and are either unaware of or are eager to be objectified (52). She contends that in order to support male norm women deprive themselves of autonomy and “free-willed subjectivities” (52). Hers study has yielded the results which indicate that the objectification of women not only turns them into physical objects but also deprives them of the subjectivity, individuality, critical thinking and self-awareness. As a result, they become consumers of the artifacts circulated through media and in turn, turn themselves into commodities to be consumed by men. “Japanese women's subjectivities are circumscribed, constructed, represented and, recrafted aesthetically through material culture” (52). She concludes that technology, media, patriarchal and capitalistic system, material culture all are interconnected in the commodification and objectification of women (53). Lack of critical thinking and lack of subjectivity on women's part thereby perpetuates objectification of women. As at the heart of objectification lies a pervasive disrespect and mistrust of women's intellectual or physical abilities, their right to exercise choice, their innate value, and their independence.

The present study also seeks to find out that how one such form of the material culture, i.e. television drama shows women's objectification. It intends to lay bare the ways and means employed by others—objectifiers in Martha Nussbaum's terms—that deprive women of their subjectivity and autonomy. The present study extends previous

research on representation of women in media, by providing information specifically about the objectification of the female hero studying representations in terms of her actions rather than appearance. Prior researches in most part documented sex role stereotyping and physical or sexual objectification of women in the mainstream media such as Hollywood movies, television commercials and advertisements and videos of songs. The researchers who have offered feminist critique of television drama have observed the role of women in soap operas or daytime drama or situation comedies, which are considered to be a female genre. The present study fills the gap that existed in the scholarship on feminist and media studies with regard to the role of female hero in primetime episodic drama which focuses on lives of professional men and women unlike the daytime dramas or soaps which focus on domestic life of women. The present study analyzes the role and presentation of female hero in a genre of professional or work place drama that is considered male territory where some instances of women heroes performing leading roles can be found. The study takes three such American primetime episodic drama series which project women in leading roles to assess whether they truly are independent subjects or are objectified to perpetuate the male hegemony.

Amanda Greenslade also notes that despite an increase in feminist dialogue since 1960s television shows constantly reinforce the objectification of women with "female characters becoming less complex and more stereotypical" (Greensdale 5). With reference to physical objectification many studies have drawn attention to the unrealistic images of extremely slim women in television dramas. Fouts and Burggraf in their study, a content analysis of 28 primetime television situation comedies, examined the ideal female body attractiveness stereotype presented in these dramas. Their study provides evidence that thin female is presented as an ideal in the primetime comedies whose audience, adolescents and young viewers observe modeling of thin female characters and internalize them as ideals (473-81)

Cathie Mathews in her essay pronounces that woman as object is a frightening notion. Objectification is a psychological device which precludes identification with, and thus empathy with an image. Identification means that we can perceive another as like ourselves. Since men have been the primary creators of images of women, women as viewers must learn to be discriminating in what they assimilate as representative of what is to be a woman. She states that "When women are depicted as fragmented,

slashed or mutilated, an image is created that is antithetical to the way in which women want to perceive themselves and be perceived" (Mathews 185).

Research on Objectification has examined the effects of objectification on women's self-perceptions. Nathan Heflick and Jamie Goldenberg in their research studied how objectifying a woman affects the way she is perceived by people. Their study shows that objectification leads to perception of women "as less competent and less fully human" (Heflick & Goldenbrg, "Sara Palin" 600). Their research was designed to collect empirical data from correspondents focusing on a female political candidate and actress whom they had to rate on the scale of competence. The results revealed that the participants rated the target as less competent when focusing on appearance. Their findings are consistent with Martha Nussbaum's philosophical treatise which states that objectifying women leads people to perceive them as less competent. Their research explored people's perceptions about such famous women who are liked by public on account of their physical attraction, such as Angelina Jolie and Sara Palin, although they have other talents and competencies which the researchers highlighted to the participants but the target population of the study was inclined towards perceiving these women more as objects and icons of beauty than perceiving their worth as humans. Their study endeavored to find out people's perceptions about famous and attractive women who through media have been singled out on the basis of their physical traits. They conclude that the findings of their research reveal "appearance focus, lowered perceived human essence and competence" (Heflick & Goldenberg, "Sara Palin" 600). Attractiveness reduces perceptions of women's competence, which they term as objectification of women as their other traits are diminished from people's perception and they are judged on the basis of physical attraction. Thus, their research examined "if focusing on a woman's appearance diminishes her perceived competence (600). The results suggested that it could. They conclude that when women are objectified it affects them not only on intrapersonal level but also interpersonally in ways which affect their chances of success in the real and professional world. Their findings shed light on the conceptual phenomenon of objectification from the perspective highlighted by Nussbaum, and not just the sexual dimension of the theory of objectification. It also draws attention to the practical consequences of objectification for women. Although they performed an empirical not a qualitative study, which corresponds to Nussbaum's theory and exposes that women's objectification undermines their abilities. But their research falls short on the account

that being a quantitative analysis it does not inform us about the ways in which these women were objectified i.e. are they perceived as inert, violable, lacking agency or lacking autonomy.

Kimberly Hobson's study on media focusing on objectification, highlights that women create "a false sense of reality" (6) by internalizing media images of objectification. His perspective was psychological as to find out how media images of women's objectification affect their perceptions about themselves. For instance, he highlighted that the standards of beauty media presents are inaccessible, and lead to negative self-perceptions and psychological disorders in women. He endeavored to explore the role and efficacy of feminism in regard to objectification on media. He linked the feminist theorists' perspectives on objectification to understand how far it has been able to curtail the trends on media regarding women's objectification as such images crate society's contempt for women and for themselves as well (Hobson 12).

Examples of female objectification in media would regress into infinity. The purpose of this study is to investigate how the female protagonist in the television drama has been objectified. Since a large body of research has examined sexual or physical objectification of women on television, film, advertisements and other forms of media there remains a gap in the scholarship on feminist media and television studies to look at the female characters from the perspective of objectification other than sexual or physical. This entails a study of the roles and actions of female characters in the television drama to examine how far their selves and personalities are granted power and independence while performing lead roles as women in powerful positions.

The examination of the body of research available on female hero in film and television drama reveals that the notion of objectification and female hero in television drama series is relatively unexplored area. First the less obvious hero of the primetime drama and secondly the notion of objectification other than sexual objectification need to be looked at through the feminist lens. In the following sections I explore the research and criticism available on the three selected drama series: *Grey's Anatomy, Castle* and *The Good Wife*. It helped in understanding how these drama series have been received by media critics and if academic scholars and critics have examined these drama series, what are the areas and angles that they have explored with reference to these dramas.

2.7 Grey's Anatomy

Most of the research on *Grey's Anatomy* focuses on the issues of racial politics and representation, due to its multicultural ensemble cast that its producer Shonda Rimes refers to as "race-blind casting" technique. However, Amy Long in her critique of *Grey's Anatomy* contends that this impression that the heterogeneous cast solves the issue of white supremacy is a muddy conception. Long contends that the show's characters and storylines fail to address the ways through which dominant discourses and institutions "structurally and systematically maintain inequalities through the reproduction of powerful gender binaries and racial hierarchies" (1068). Her argument is that *Grey's Anatomy* upholds the stereotypes and dominant discourses of race and gender at the same time it seeks to challenge these discourses. Amy Long through close reading of plot and tropes exposes the discursive presentation that reveals the extent to which the drama series contests and concurs with the traditions it (as claimed by its producers) set out to counter. "The show neither plays uncritically into normative constructions of race and gender nor consistently defies those norms" (1069). More characteristically it shows ambivalence towards rather than outright challenge to ways in which race and gender are constructed and represented in popular culture and media. Long contends that the use of fairy-tale trope in depicting Meredith and Shepherd's romantic relationship reveals how universal and traditional conventions appear to sideline the oppositional methods such as race-blind casting. The raced and gendered subjectivities are structured through hegemonic representational structures such as the use of fairy-tale trope which serves to place women in traditional social roles (Long 1070). Thus in this way the show maintains traditional racial and gender formations through less visible apparatuses.

Elana Levine has written a critique of *Grey's Anatomy* from feminist perspective. She argues that women in *Grey's Anatomy* challenge the conventional expectations of gender. She asserts that the drama plays with post-feminists' assertions that women's power and liberation rest in sexual attractiveness and flaunting femininity and sexuality. "In Grey's Anatomy empowerment comes when the women doctors are seen as medical professionals ahead of sexualized beings" (141). She quotes the example of Izzie a former model who wants her colleagues to take her skills as a doctor seriously, and does not want her skills as a model to prove herself. Levine goes on to state that in postfeminist culture, women who are ambitious about their careers pay for choosing career over home and family and this is often represented through their

“debilitated or dysfunctional personal life” (141). Whereas women in *Grey's Anatomy* are rarely punished for their preference of career over home. Cristiana is seen rejecting her partner's effort to encourage her to take time out for her personal life. Meredith Grey, the protagonist of the drama also insists upon being taken seriously by Derek Shepherd, as an intern rather than a lover. Levine states that these instances, apart from satisfying romantic lives of female characters in Grey's Anatomy challenge the postfeminist assumption that successful career women hardly enjoy satisfying personal lives. “The female characters in Grey's Anatomy are flawed, beset with troubles, and frequently unhappy, but their work as surgeons is never presented as a mistake or even as a particularly costly choice” (Levine 141). Levine also states that *Grey's Anatomy* makes the nonjudgmental representation of the career woman by presenting a fantasy world free of all kinds of discrimination. Although there is overt attention paid to some inequalities, it fades soon and the series spends very little time on addressing or acknowledging such issues. A few instances she notes of discrimination are, Cristina’s noting of gender imbalance among the resident surgeons, Meredith arguing with Alex on account of his sexist attitude, Izzie trying to prove herself a competent doctor rather than a model with attractive face and voluptuous body. Elana Levine discerns that the series' denial of gender discrimination underscores the discrimination in the real world that still exists. “In this respect the program offers a fantasy space—what we might think of as a feminist fantasy of a world beyond inequalities of gender, sexuality and race” (142). In this respect the drama series responds to the need of the society in fulfilling the role of popular entertainment offering utopian fantasies. She argues that the utopia created by such media forms of popular entertainment “leaves out real world dissatisfactions of class, race and patriarchy” (142). However, Levine observes that besides creating the fantasy space and concerning itself little with such obstacles there are certain episodes highlighting such inequalities. She states that these situations are set in the past, apart from the present action, i.e. Meredith's mother Ellis's relationship with her fellow surgeon, a person of color, Meredith's father and with Meredith herself in her childhood. This situation presents a dilemma for a successful and accomplished woman, where Ellis is confronted with a choice between a dysfunctional marriage and her responsibilities towards her child and her career. Ellis not only survives and has a thriving career as a surgeon, her daughter Meredith also follows her footsteps, bringing to the focus the idea of feminist struggle. Levine concludes her argument stating that the program's outlook may reflect the new phase in feminist movement, particularly in

postfeminist culture where it is able to let go of indictment and costs that more typically have accompanied media tales of women's empowerment and independence. This she attributes to the feminist's achievement that media may not yet fully present a perfect world for females but it does provide a fantasy world that serves as a welcome relief from a reality that is often hostile to dreams (Levine 146). Levine asserts that the program overtly resists gender inequalities by referring to the female characters who do not want to compromise on their jobs and are struggling to prove their competence at the workplace. Ellis, Meredith, Izzie and Cristina face hard times as women in situations at work, family or in love relations. What compromises they make and what difficulties they face because of the patriarchal or social order and mores will be an interesting study from the feminist standpoint as the status and position of successful women are taken for granted, as if they have crossed the barriers and inequalities and live in an ideal world.

Allex Strachan in an article acknowledges *Grey's Anatomy* for introducing the genre of the workplace drama serial, which until recently was dominated by male characters, a female centered show—a hospital show. "It was a show by, about and for women, when television networks were obsessed with chasing young men" (Strachan, "GA Come a Long Way"). Amy Long calls Meredith Grey "tent-pole" character (1070) pointing to her significance in the show. Melinda Houston in her article acknowledges the transformation of the female hero on television. The primetime dramas, she says, have introduced viewers to a new breed of heroines. "Lately the female hero has undergone a spectacular renaissance". (Houston, "Chicks in Charge"). She praises *Grey's Anatomy* for introducing to television drama a strong female hero. She contends that television shows like *Grey's Anatomy* and *Desperate Housewives*, present "Better, stronger, faster and much more realistic … new breed of heroines on TV" ("Chicks in Charge"). In the wake of the new millennium all television networks are generously endowed with a wonderful female protagonist. From *Wonder Woman* through the *Bionic Woman* dramas like *Grey's Anatomy* and *Desperate Housewives* have defined femininity and heroism in ways that attract a pretty even gender mix. "These leading ladies are strong characters, they're jumping through burning buildings, saving the universe, saving lives, burning down the neighbor's house, living double lives, and looking immaculately groomed—all in a day's work" ("Chicks in Charge"). For her thesis that the female hero on television represents a realistic figure of hero who has evolved across the genres including comics and cinema, Houston argues that "like any

form of popular culture television both drives and reflects change" ("Chicks in Charge). *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* by Joss Whedon has been credited for revolutionizing the idea of female hero. The first Buffy movie on television in the early 1990s provided the post-feminist generation something closer to their world on the small screen. His movie laid the groundwork for "both a new world of female heroes and a whole new audience for them" ("Chicks in Charge"). His legacy is carried forward by female heroes in television dramas. She states the complexity of the new breed of female heroes as exemplified in television dramas like *Grey's Anatomy* and *Desperate Housewives*, as complex, more interesting and more unpredictable. She quotes Professor Nadlianis's comment to support her assertion "The contemporary female hero doesn't fall into the stereotypes earlier female heroes did…they don't need a man but they do tend to need a group. Female heroes are more approachable. And that is true from fantasy right through to something like *Law & Order*" (Houston, "Chicks in Charge"). In her essay she goes on to explain how these dramas have introduced a new kind of female hero. "With any hero, the fundamental attraction is always the idea of strength, of having the power--mental, or physical, or both—to control circumstances, to change the world" (Houston, "Chicks in Charge"). Despite feminism's achievements in uplifting women's image and helping them find equal opportunities in the world dominated by men, women are underrepresented in public positions, as well as in working and private lives. Given this state of affairs in the world she finds it comforting that on television drama each night through popular culture, one gets to see "relatively ordinary women routinely achieving extraordinary things" ("Chicks in Charge"). Buffy and Xena were physically and (super) naturally powerful but the petite blondes who are also incredibly tough and resilient are also immensely inspirational for people. These female heroes show us that "things could be different, imagination is empowering. So female heroes are inspiring and uplifting" ("Chicks in Charge"). She includes Meredith Grey, the eponymous female hero *in Grey's Anatomy* in the list of "strong" contemporary female heroes in television drama along with Betty Suarez (*Ugly Betty*), Xena (*Xena the Warrior Princess*), and Stevie Hall (*McLeod's Daughters*).

James Roman discussing the hero in television drama says "The dynamic of the television hero is made up of distinct characteristics that have various similarities associated with different roles. Their heroism is based upon their deeds and the good will that they extend to others…they can have a profound effect upon other people's lives" (51). Roman's remark is based upon the accessibility of the heroes of the

television drama and their being true to life characters that the audience can easily relate to. Roman also advocates for the heroic figure of the protagonists in the medical drama. Since medical professionals are always viewed as reverential due to their ability to heal and save people (51). He includes the lawyer and detective also among heroic characters. “In the rhetoric of television, the roles of various professionals mediated by the narrative parameters of storytelling can create a heroic dimension to character portrayal. The medical and legal professions offered to television produce an opportunity to present a romanticized version of doctors and lawyers as heroes expressing virtues of healing and the heroics of courtroom drama” (xix).

Katherine Ann Foss’s study of *Grey's Anatomy* has taken into account the issue of responsibility and heroism of doctors in medical dramas. In the review of the medical dramas she notes that the dramas of the previous years, like *M*A*S*H* “reinforced the image of heroic white male doctor” (Foss 88). She argues that the health professionals presented in the medical dramas including *Grey’s Anatomy* are constructed as heroes, as they have exceptional abilities in curing their patients (135). These doctors are ready to risk their career and lives for their patients. Their exceptional abilities, the risks they take in treating their patients “and their abilities to treat patients despite personal obstacles exemplify how these professionals were constructed as heroes in medical drama” (Foss 136). They even go to the extent of breaking hospital protocols for the good of their patients. She cites the example of Meredith Grey (Season 2, Episode 17) risking her own life while removing an explosive device from the body of a man. Moments later the bomb explodes outside the hospital as a member of the bomb squad takes the explosive from Meredith. Because of Meredith Grey's action the person is saved and other health professionals remain unharmed in the hospital. “The storyline constructs Dr. Grey as a hero for clearly putting herself at risk to save the patient” (Foss 141).

2.8 *Castle*

The genre of detective drama is also associated with male heroes. In the present decade critics note the inclusion of female cop heroes in the genre as a positive sign that women heroes are cast in tough and unconventional roles. The concern of scholars however is with the contradictions inherent in the presentation of the female cop.

Ariadna Rico in her thesis on female detective draws upon feminist theory to study the popular culture. Her research is limited to the analysis of Kate Beckett the

female detective in Castle, to examine whether she presents a professional detective female role model with which women can identify or whether it conforms to or challenges postfeminist agendas. She traces the evolution of professional women's representation in media through the study of female detective genre. Mentioning the popular shows of 80s and 90s *Remington Steele* and *Moonlighting* she states that the formula of male and female duo in detective series resulted in too much dependence of the female hero on her male partner (Rico 25). Keeping in view Ariadna Rico's observation it will be interesting to note for the present study whether this observation is true for Kate Beckett as well. She further mentions "Contemporary representations of female investigators include independent women in mixed environments, but they most often find their independence and authority limited by romance plots or some form of victimization" (Rico 26). Observing the female hero Kate Beckett's outward appearance she concludes that Kate Beckett has rarely been depicted as an object of attraction or of sexual remarks (Rico 33). Ariadna Rico's findings are related to the appearance or presentation of the female detective hero. Whereas the present research goes deeper into the issue of female hero's representation as it endeavors to examine the treatment of female hero and the autonomy she has been given to utilize her capacities. This sets the present study apart from the research done on the female detective hero in popular culture.

The existing research on the female hero of the crime and detective genre of television drama highlights the potential in the study of the character of the female hero as existing research points out that these dramas foreground female characters as vulnerable and hysterical. As regards the crime detective drama series chosen for the present study there is a need to explore the character of the female detective hero Kate Beckett in *Castle*. Newspaper articles have defined and commented on Kate Beckett's role and character in ways which reveal that she is objectified and looked at as an object of gaze and pleasure for being a young woman. *The Telegraph* lists her on third number in a list of "small screen's best male lookers…who make us drool" ("Bedroom Babes"). It says that the crime drama *Castle* with its lead female character Kate Beckett "brings the right mix of kick-a** toughness and feminine vulnerability to her role of a hard-as-nails, career-driven cop…Her curves, her nerves, and her moves…short skirts, hip-hugging tiny dresses…" ("Bedroom Babes") all add up to making her an attractive figure for male viewers.

Actress Stana Katic who played Kate Beckett's role in *Castle* defines the character in a way that links it more closely to the third wave feminists' notion of femininity and "girl power" image. She defines her character as a strong, independent and career oriented woman who is not afraid to show her feminine side. "I believe a woman can be strong, intelligent, sexy and feminine" (Roy, "She Kick A**"). She further says that it is important to show female characters on television in that light since audiences also "find it refreshing to see a modern woman in such a positive and relevant way" (Roy "She Kick A**"). Kate O'Hare also defines Beckett as an "ambitious NYPD detective" ("Delany Storms").

The extent to which Kate Beckett is independent and free-spirited can only be assessed through a thorough analysis of her character. Although Kate O'Hare's comment shows that the actor performing her role perceives herself as a free-spirited modern woman, given the circumstances she faces in the drama and the people she interacts with will reveal her role in the drama series. In order to find answers to such questions and to verify the claims of those who see her as an emancipated and strong woman, one needs to look deeply into the portrayal of the female detective hero. The review of literature on *Castle* and other television dramas, based on the female detective hero, reveal lack of research in this aspect of the dramas in general and the female character in particular. A look at what the creators, actors and critics of the drama serial say is helpful in determining the character of the female hero.

Stana Katic, who performed the role of Beckett commented on the character by saying "It's a balancing act to make it sensual and keep it modest for network television…The other element is I am protective of the character. She's the romantic lead, but I don't want her objectified, especially since our audience is so heavily weighted with females. I definitely want her to be respected" (Hiltbrand, "Love Leaves Castle"). The creator of the show, Andrew Marlowe calls her "a smart, beautiful woman" (Hinckley "Meets his Match"). Apart from these positive remarks about the female detective hero in *Castle* some television critics in their reviews have also pointed to the character's flaws. David Hinckley calls her "beautiful, neurotic NYPD Detective" (Hinckley, "Why TV Police"). Hinckley's use of the word "neurotic" for the female detective hero is worth noting as he perceives a tendency towards some weakness in Beckett's character. *Castle*'s creator Andrew Marlowe remarks about his female detective hero who combines toughness and femininity. "She is a great, strong cop who can walk in a room and project authority. She also owns her femininity. And when we

need her to access those darker emotions, she is really incredible" (Hiltbrand, "Now with Romance"). Lindsay Steenberg and Yvonne Tasker in an article discuss the female hero Carrie in *Homeland*, another primetime drama featuring a female CIA agent, in the context of American crimes series, arguing that it articulates tropes of an unstable or unwell female investigator. Their observations about Carrie's representation are in line with the assumptions of the present study with reference to Kate Beckett's character. "Unlike the stoic and implacable women of crime television, Carrie frequently cries, swears, and becomes angry" (135). Carrie's character combines "the troubled female investigator" and "the hard-boiled noir hero" (Steenberg and Tasker 136). Apart from pointing out that Carrie's character as the female hero and investigator has been marked with a peculiarity, a bipolar disorder, Steenberg and Tasker also observe that "Carrie and other female characters in *Homeland* conflate sex and work" (137). They argue that Carrie's role as an expert investigator with mental and psychological peculiarities "complicates the female investigator's typical (even clichéd) coupling of professional toughness and emotional vulnerability" (135). Their research focuses on the study of *Homeland* as a representative drama of television crime and investigation genre. The key feature to their study was to observe the female investigator's role in the drama series with regard to the trope of vigilance and surveillance, revealing the character's personal and professional loyalties. Steenberg and Tasker state that her accomplishments as a competent officer are shown to be dependent on her illness, her "special" brain. Their study makes an important observation with regard to the flawed and unstable female investigator. They stress that Carrie's mental illness is juxtaposed with her competence at work however they do not delve into the issue of the study of the female investigator hero from the perspective which could reveal in what ways this peculiarity makes her a stereotypical female character.

Tom Shales in an article remarks about the police procedural drama *Castle*'s female hero "another brittle and bitter career woman who traded in her femininity for a job. In real life, this doesn't have to happen, but in TV shows, a woman with a career still tends to be portrayed as a woman with big fat chips on both her padded shoulders". He also calls her a "feisty flinty detective" ("Castle Lacks"). These reviews and criticism on the female hero in *Castle* reveal that the character is perceived both as tough and having some flaws. The creators of the show state that she combines beauty and strength. What needs to be studied in detail is how the female hero in *Castle* actually

represents strength and authority and whether there is any evidence about her weaknesses and limitations.

2.9 *The Good Wife*

The Good Wife, a Prime time drama series that won considerable critical acclaim and high ratings from the viewers and won Emmys offers "a glimpse of a kind of quality television (smartly written, expertly played, and crisply produced" (P. Smith 10). The drama series has been praised for reinventing prime-time series drama combining legal procedural, family drama, fiction and documentary. The series presents a house-wife taking up the job of a lawyer after her politician husband is charged with fornication. Jan Hoffman in his article "A Struggle for Identity" talks about Alicia Florrick, facing challenges both at home and work. Alicia is presented as a strong woman trying to make a place for herself in the hostile environment of a law firm and court which is dominated by men. At the same time, she is a jilted wife coming to terms with her spouse's failures and shortcomings by finding solace in and strength from her work. Noting the struggle of working women like Alicia Florrick, at work and home, Hoffman states "It is a heightened exploration of how several generations of fully realized female characters clamber for control and identity in the dense, slippery politics of home and office" ("Struggle for Identity"). Hoffman also points out that "Like many primetime dramas featuring women, *The Good Wife* looks at power in terms of sexuality and romantic relationships" (Hoffman, "Struggle for Identity").

Critics have noted how Alicia deals with situations in the male dominated work-place. Alex Strachan comments on Alicia's character, when her plans for leaving the firm Lockhart and Gardner were exposed, calling it shaky and apologetic in the face of her male boss. He mentions her stammering and her half-hearted apology to him stating she didn't mean any personal harm or harbored ill-feeling. This appears as a sign of weakness on the part of Alicia, in the face of aggression by Gardner whose "unchecked rage" (Strachan, "Good Wife") and hostile behavior takes Alicia off-guard and she appears defenseless as a woman.

Joshua Rothman praises *The Good Wife* for being an "entertaining and intelligent" ("The Greatness") courtroom drama presenting a female lawyer handling tough work and difficult marriage and preserving her marriage for practical reasons. With regard to Alicia's character he speculates that there might be a number of reasons for Alicia's decision to stand by her husband despite his infidelity such as her fear, or

love or her wish to take a moral high ground in marriage by forgiving her husband. He analyses Alicia's decision as the humility of a woman, "… when faced with a dispute, to put aside your own feelings and interests and come to an agreement" (Rothman, "The Greatness"). However, he also states that Alicia becomes more comfortable in exercising power as she climbs the ladder in the high powered world of law and litigation since she starts as a victim and a vulnerable woman and moves on to success in her professional life. Rothman also comments on the way professionalism affects selfhood. In order to succeed Alicia and other lawyers too must "modulate their personalities" (The Greatness). He feels it to be even harder for women to adopt personas in court, playing with myriad emotions and to "navigate the complexities of feminine theatricality" (Rothman, "The Greatness"). Despite Alicia's success and apparent control over her life she still needs something i.e. power and freedom; as she says "I want a happy life—and to control my fate". Rothman concludes his article by pointing to the issue of female freedom and autonomy. "Happiness depends on having freedom to think and feel in a natural way. Alicia may be taking control, but, with each step, she is becoming less free" ("The Greatness"). This analysis by Rothman also points to the need to see whether the apparently self-sufficient and confident looking working woman is autonomous and free in her decisions and life. If there are deterrents and problems that she still needs to overcome in order to fully achieve autonomy.

Elizabeth Wurtzel acknowledges *The Good Wife* for presenting "a rare female character" ("Mad Men"). She praises the drama for presenting a female character that is close to life and is a positive representation of women. There are a number of serials that have presented negative and stereotypical female characters as vamps or as dumb and beautiful housewives but Alicia is a real woman, not a caricature. Her rise from a disappointed wife to state attorney bears testimony to her smartness and skills. She states that *The Good Wife* is a show where a woman is defined by her job "that is supposed to be a bad thing, that we—especially women—are meant to be more expansive" but she calls it worse when "female characters are defined solely by their personal lives" ("Mad Men"). Accomplishment offers satisfaction and freedom and Alicia offers such an avenue to women where they have something to prove and have work that they are good at. In this way this drama is seen as an important step towards empowering women by showing a successful and competent woman.

Talking about the exploits of the female hero in a legal drama Kayla Upadhyaya makes a significant observation regarding the hero of *The Good Wife*. The hero in the

show almost always wins her cases. Sometimes she pulls a last minute win in the courtroom "awkwardly maneuvering the convoluted system. The lawyers in *The Good Wife* are more human than superhero. Alecia certainly slays in most courtrooms" (Upadhayaya, "Alicia Rehabilitation") like a warrior using her wit she figures out the right questions to ask and win the battle.

While other critics note the positive things in terms of empowerment and confidence in the female hero in the legal drama, Emily Nussbaum notes the subtle ways in which the female hero is confined within conventions and institutions. She gives her verdict on *The Good Wife* in these words. "The show might have looked like an empowerment procedural for the ladies, a "Lean In" fairy tale about a strong woman who would find her way. Instead, it revealed itself to be a sneaky condemnation of pretty much every institution under capitalism. Marriage is one of those institutions, of course. And so is television" (E. Nussbaum, "Shedding her Skin").

Rachel Craig in her research article examines *The Good Wife* from the lens of third wave feminism to examine the portrayal of female lawyers on television. She contends that the show undermines itself as a feminist discourse due to its complete lack of representation of women of minorities. "*The Good Wife* sets its feminist dialogue from an exclusively white standpoint- creating one voice for women on the show that is culturally homogenous" (Craig 6). Another aspect that Craig criticizes is the essentialist mode with which the show presents a female attorney, emphasizing her motherly instincts and compassion. "On the show Alicia is consistently the voice of compassion. Her job is often to "hand hold" the clients, a role she finds frustrating at times" (Craig 14). Craig argues that this idea of associating the qualities of compassion, nurturing and care-giving to women is essentialist and denies to recognize the difference among women, as not all women experience pregnancy and maternity in the same way. She backs up the third wave feminism's stance that conflicting identities exist among individual women and we ignore individual differences if we refuse to acknowledge this aspect. Rachel Craig's observations about the portrayal of the female attorney as the hero in a television show recognizes the loopholes that still exist in the representation and recognition of female lead characters who dominate the contemporary drama. The focus of her research was to examine if the show despite being about a female attorney represent her through an essentialist mode. Her findings are helpful for the present research in that they provide a critique of the drama that on its face is perceived as feminist discourse. The present study however delves in detail

to study the role of the female hero, not only an attorney but also a detective and a doctor for the perspective of objectification of personhood. It will explain more about the capacities and talents that these women heroes are let to discover and exhibit on the screen.

Suzanne Leonard explored how sexuality and scandal are mediated in the age of technology in *The Good Wife*. She examines the character of Alicia Florrick, “a wronged wife” (945) who takes charge of her life by entering into the fierce world of men and yet achieves sainthood or martyrdom. Leonard opines that Alicia is "a capable laborer, mysterious personality, and, at times duplicitous and opportunistic character in her own right” (945). She states that Alicia as a “good wife” both meets the clichéd perception of society about the female gender yet manipulatively contradicts such a stereotype. She thinks that the drama interrogates the gender roles rather than maintaining these. Leonard’s central concern was to study the nature of sexuality and sexual scandal in the contemporary world where communication mediums influence personal and sexual lives and people are dependent on technology for expression. Her work explores the female hero's marriage and scandal which are publically mediated by myriad technologies such as computers, cell phones, television etc. One significant observation that she makes in her research is that Alicia as the wronged wife of a politician facing sexual scandal, becomes a victim of “power games” in the world rooted in technology. Her name appears on a site devoted to “wronged wives who stood by their husbands” (Leonard 950). She argues that “such instances literalize the power dynamics of sexual scandal, processes that translate sexual selves into commodities of public consumption and reimagination” (950) terming it as a force that shapes Alicia's sexual identity. Another conclusion made in her study is that Alicia uses silence as a strategy to conceal her emotions as well as to save her husband from further humiliation. She terms her silence as “a strategy of power rather than compliance…preserving secrets is hence a feminist stance rather than a capitulation to patriarchal convention…” (Leonard 955). However, what needs to be explored from the feminist perspective is how far Alicia's silence is an empowering strategy and not the perpetuation of the hegemony of male rule and wrongs.

Kimberley Baltzer and Robert Apr comment upon the realistic depiction of a modern day working woman and her problems in *The Good Wife* calling her a woman that many women in the contemporary world can relate to (xi). Her decision to stand by her husband even after his cheating on her and the public disgrace and scandal, has

been looked at with great concern. There are questions raised regarding her intentions. Feminists in particular and viewers in general interpret her decision in terms of choices available to middle aged working women. Whether it was her cowardice or "was she stupid? Or was she simply being true to herself and doing what she thought best for her life situation are some of the speculations made about her decision. Baltzer and Apr claim that these questions are difficult to answer as "The Good Wife is a show that at least attempts to portray life in all its mess and grey areas. It doesn't just regurgitate the current morality or socially acceptable choice and lifestyle" (xi). With regard to Alicia's role in the drama series they state that she shows growth in character as a woman, a mother and lawyer. "This growth happens as she sheds false and unrealistic expectations of what a mother or a wife should be, as she realizes that her own wants should be important and valued, and she carves out her unique niche in the firm and in the practice of law itself" (Baltzer and Apr xi). In the process she comes to realize who she is, questioning the notions and rules she believes once as true and unalterable. Baltzer and Apr see her as a character in contemporary television drama challenging many preconceived norms about women and femininity. It remains to be studied in depth how far Alicia Florrick's character is successful in challenging and fighting against the stereotypical beliefs and roles assigned to women and in what ways she is still caught in the age old myths and mores of the patriarchal world.

Celine Morin observes in her essay that Alicia's character shows something more than a jilted wife suffering humiliation and redefining herself through work as a lawyer. She defines the hero of the drama as "a good woman, a good wife, who's tired of being walked all over, goes against the grain, and rebels. She is rebelling quietly and properly because she is a well-educated white, upper-class woman" (39 Morin). Alicia adopts a new lifestyle marked by independence which brings to light an interesting show of strength from the feminist angle. As the traditional patterns of service and obedience are changed when Alicia adopts an independent lifestyle (Morin 39). While exploring the philosophic underpinnings of Alicia's love and relationship with her husband, Morin notes that Alicia was a mere pawn for Peter who, wants his wife to forgive him even after his betrayal. Referring to their conversation in the episode "Boom" season four she states that Alicia doesn't believe Peter when he says he is changing and replies that, for her their relationship is over. To Morin, Alicia realizes that their relationship only benefitted Peter and that that was why he wanted everything to be normal again. "He was the privileged one in the relationship. He had the career,

the good wife, the children, money and success" (44). But it was all possible because of Alicia whom he never thanked and acknowledged for her support. In this way Alicia, Morin finds, feels as if she was a mere instrument for Peter in achieving what he wanted in life. The good wife "was doing all the work at home, she was supportive of him both in private and in public life, and that enabled and empowered him to succeed" (Morin 44). Morin points to the woman's situation in a relationship where she has been treated as an instrument on moral grounds. Even after his betrayal Peter wants to use his wife to save his public and political life. Morin states that Alicia "gave Peter something extremely valuable: the (accurate) image of a steady family and a sustainable aura" (44). To the concern of the feminists, Morin states that Alicia is redefining femininity not just by stepping out of the housewife's shoes into the cutthroat world of men in a law firm but also by "making changes in her love life... echoing major social changes of the last decades" (45). Morin terms it as emerging independent face of new feminism slipping out of cardigan and head bands and grabbing a lawyer's suit and briefcase defying her mother in law who stands for the older opposing notions of femininity, compliance and subordination to the patriarchy. She no longer wants to be a mere wife.

The survey of the literature on female heroes across various genres of popular culture including television drama series, uncovers new subject positions and spaces for the exploration of the female hero. It also reveals how previously antagonistic and unalienable identities expose an interaction between femininity and toughness, agency and passivity, submission and challenge. Thus, it is due to this gap between these dualities found in the representations of the female hero that the possibility of a more complex and diverse understanding of modern day woman hero and femininity and female exploitation is necessary.

Research is always collaborative and cumulative. In order to comprehend new approaches to research, an understanding of the prior arguments is always essential. In the following section I have discussed the criticism on television drama from the perspective of research methods and approaches adopted by critics in television criticism. The understanding of their approaches to the study of television drama and the study of female characters helped me in understanding the available methods of criticism and devising the method for my study.

2.10 Research Methods Used in Television Research on Female Hero

While the previous section dealt with the various angles the previous researchers used to to comment on the content of television dramas this section is meant to look at researches on television content with a view to inform the study of the way researches have been carried out. Thus the present study can use the knowledge of the various research methods adopted by television researches to shape the research method for the present study which will be described in detail in the third chapter.

A survey of the research done on female heroes in film and television drama helped not only in determining which areas of the current topic have been explored and examined by scholars in cultural studies; it also has highlighted which methods and theoretical paradigms were adopted for the study of the female hero. The review of research reveals that work on the female hero is somewhat constrained by the focus of the researchers on the more obvious female heroes such as action and superheroes. Also the research methods and theoretical paradigms applied are limited to the study of the female hero's agency in action and comparisons with male agency. The theory of objectification has been applied in order to examine the sexual or physical subordination of female heroes. Most of the research on television drama has been conducted in the fields of communication studies and psychology where the focus of researches had been either on quantitative content analysis or on studying audience behavior and effect, whereas meanings and content of these dramas have been largely ignored. In the province of literature and language the emphasis on the issues of rhetoric and treatment of issues and themes in television drama needs to be explored. Willard D. Rowland and Bruce Watkins expressing their concerns over scarcity of research in cultural studies on the medium of television and lack of methodological and theoretical grounding argue that in television studies and criticism "matters of content and meaning were largely ignored. The focus was principally on questions of persuasion, audience behavior, and effect" (16). They also point to the issues of theory and methodology concerning television studies. They say that the theory "methodology and division" (16) points to intellectual segmentation. Deeper cultural and ideological readings originated in literature programs for the study of television content whereas the communications programs adopted methodological approaches ignoring theoretical frameworks.

Horace M. Newcomb and Paul M. Hirsch have proposed a "textual-critical approach" for the study of television as a "cultural forum" (70). They argue that television is both a medium of communication and an aesthetic object through which a

society's culture is shaped and exhibited (58). As a cultural forum they hold that television "comments on ideological problems … We see statements *about* the issues and it should be clear that ideological positions can be balanced within the forum by others from a different perspective" (Newcomb and Hirsch 64). Using the example of the drama series *Father Knows Best,* they demonstrate the application of "textual-critical analysis". In this way they explain how television drama as a cultural form unites and presents to the audience ideas that are deeper and broader than mere communication and invite critical thinking by exposing ideologies inherent in American culture. They propose that the methods of analysis of television dramas must not limit themselves to genre studies. The focus of genre studies has been to discover similarities within a particular form such as detective dramas, soaps and Westerns. They hold that "submerged in any episode are assumptions about who and what we are. Conflicting viewpoints of social issues are, in fact, the elements that structure most television programs" (Newcomb and Hirsch 65). In *Father Knows Best* Betty Anderson breaks the familial and societal conventions by deciding to be an engineer. After facing great opposition from the family she finally gets an internship with a surveying company where she faces harsh and insensitive treatment by one of the male crew, resulting in her leaving the job. Later on she takes up with the same man who humiliated her and because of whom she had given up her ambition. The text raises many questions regarding gender roles, sex role discrimination, and problem of women's identity. Newcomb and Hirsch point out that the text can be seen both presenting and affirming male ideology, in which a woman is coerced and brought back to the submissive state and also as resisting the dominant ideology where the audience's sympathies would be with Betty who would see that her concerns are not unnatural and that she is a victim of power abuse. In this way many arguments can be made for a strong feminist perspective. Newcomb and Hirsch state that it is important to bear in mind that while performing textual–critical analysis a text, for instance a drama, can overtly challenge dominant ideology at the same time "television does not present firm ideological conclusions—despite its *formal* conclusions—so much as it *comments* on ideological problems" (64). The conflicts and issues observable in television drama are the conflicts going on in American society. In this way the rhetoric of the criticism of television drama is "a rhetoric of discussion" (64) and opens possibilities of multiple meanings and interpretations informed by the social, cultural, psychological and economic concerns of the people.

Newcomb and Hirsch argue that the observation of television critics and researchers, based on careful textual analysis must account for the "dense, rich and complex" (71) nature of the medium, it must account for what has not been studied or measured, or for the opposing meanings, for assigning meaning to images and symbols as well. The textual-critical analysis generates statements and forms meanings *about* the issues they encounter in those texts. "ideological positions can be balanced within the forum by others from a different perspective" (64). In this way Newcomb and Hirsch explain the multiplicity and depth that lies in methods, approaches and theories that can be adopted for the analysis of television drama. Since the genre of television drama presents mixed ideas to its audiences, they need to make sense of it all through their own experiences. As a cultural medium it presents to the audience a variety of ideas and ideologies embedded in the American culture. Newcomb and Hirsch consider that their model of textual-critical analysis is a simpler approach as it recognizes possibilities or multiple interpretations which, they argue, has been recognized by critics and researchers of television content who are concerned with "television's presentation and maintenance of dominant ideological messages and meanings" (70). For the textual-critical approach they refer to the interpretative strategies suggested by Stuart Hall in his essay "Encoding and Decoding in the television Discourse" where he suggests three basic modes of interpretation including "dominant" reading, "oppositional" reading and "negotiated" reading. In dominant reading and interpretation the analyst sees the dominant ideological structure. Oppositional reading rejects the prevailing ideological structure while "negotiated" reading creates a personal synthesis of ideas of both dominant and oppositional structures found in the text. Newcomb and Hirsch have demonstrated its application through the example of analysis of the television drama *Father Knows Best,* by examining Betty's position in the drama and her treatment by the men in the story. Through their application of the method of analysis they contend that every individual interpretation of television content could in some way be different. For that reason, the concern of the analyst or critic should be the ways through which interpretation and meaning are negotiated in society. Through this kind of analysis, we cite an array of wide-ranging responses to the text of television, bringing into play values, attitudes, concerns, beliefs and personal experience.

Joli Jensen advocates for the interpretative approach for the analysis of television content. She offers it as an alternative mode of analysis, as she notes that the

focus of research on television in mass communication was on the nature and worth of the cultural material, the programs, and their production and reception through content analysis or categorization (98). She locates the alternative mode for television studies, which she suggests is the interpretative approach. She argues that it is an intellectual approach to inquiry in which the object of inquiry, such as language, symbols and institutions create meaning. The "interpretative turn", Jensen argues, studies varieties of cultural meaning and does not seek context-free, reductionist or detached categories of meaning or truth. The critic of television sees the content as a cultural product of "shared meanings, practices, and symbols. We as investigators live within this world, and so in inquiry there is no privileged position, no absolute perspective, no final recounting. There are instead, interpretations of interpretations that illuminate a common world of meaning" (Jensen 109). This she states is the strength and richness of the interpretive approach that takes into account diverse perspectives avoiding reductionism. Qualitative analysis of cultural productions such a commercial television programs is the basis for understanding the world and the cultural practices. Such qualitative analysis must be directed towards seeking what is taken for granted, what is "unspoken not that which is idiosyncratic or personal" (Jensen 110). The interpretive approach to a cultural production will involve close and careful reading of beliefs, values, practices and ideas. The content of the cultural production is the arena in which meaning is negotiated. Such beliefs are articulated in practices through interactions and behaviors. This approach offers a study of the cultural forms and genres in terms of the study of beliefs and practices of people in a society.

Gary Burns and Robert J. Thompson, recognizing the varied potential meanings that the cultural medium of television carries, stress on the significance of textual analysis for research in television studies. "The proper task of television analysis is to discover and illuminate the polysemy within texts" (3). They argue that television criticism is a political intervention that encourages readings and interpretations of television programs "grounded in resistance to domination" (Burns and Thompson 3). "TV texts are evolutionary entities" they are not immutable artifacts containing a fixed meaning "waiting to be discovered through "correct interpretation"" (Burns and Thompson 3). Gary Burns and Robert J. Thompson advocate the use of textual analysis as a method to critique the newest forms of domination (19). For the study and analysis of the content and text of the television drama they support the multiplicity of meanings

and perspectives generated through such analyses that is democratic and discourages dogmatic thoughts.

Marsha F. Cassidy through her analysis of the popular American television drama serial *Dallas*, demonstrates the flexibility and efficacy of textual approach for the study of television drama. She argues that a television text is a "dialogic" text—one that is in a continual dialogue with other texts or forms of literature, art and culture—and the critic and viewer of television accepts, rejects and modifies what is offered to him according to the information he connects the text with. In her analysis of *Dallas,* she adopted textual approach which she terms as "reader-oriented criticism" (42). The text of the drama is analyzed as representation for the production and making of meaning in which the viewer makes sense of the text by "filling in the gaps" (Cassidy 42). She further elaborates upon the process of meaning making in textual analysis by stating that "the text on the television screen is a potential of meanings that can be activated in a number of ways … this potential is proscribed and not finite" (Cassidy 42). She analyses *Dallas* as an "ideological forum". However, in her analysis of the embedded ideologies through textual analysis Cassidy focuses on visual aspects of the drama and its plot and the serial properties. She brings in to her analysis the ideological codes that exist outside the text. The spectacle, action and plot are studied by relating these to emotional and moral dilemmas of the characters. She discusses how camera framing, movement and locations highlight moral conflicts among the characters. Her focus in the study of *Dallas* was to see how visual representations and the "stylized visual conventions" create dialogue and convey meaning "even when characters do not speak" (Cassidy 44). She concludes that episodic dramas are "open texts", and are morally ambiguous hence they allow for multiple meanings to be generated from their reading for instance about the women in *Dallas* she opines that they represent "frustrated expectations in patriarchal world" living in a conflicting present in the restrains of the patriarchal family (Cassidy 45-6). Cassidy's study informed how textual analysis can be applied to the study of television drama, a visual media that foregrounds the moral and ideological agendas that inform the actions of the characters.

Mimi White also discusses the scope offered by an ideological analysis of television drama. In her article she discusses the example of *Cagney and Lacey* an American crime drama featuring a female cop duo. Cassidy focuses on the visuals or mise-en-scene to describe how it is used to point to the particular concerns and position of women in the society. For example, she illustrates how despite being in the

apparently strong role of a cop, there are individual scenes and situations in the drama that present these women as caged or trapped, giving the impression of helplessness or weakness, even though the show presents them as active and strong detectives. The scenes that show Cagney alone in her apartment, being watched secretly by a suspect she witnessed against, and one where she is presented in the interrogation room, framed against the window, in ideological analysis can be seen as presenting women as weak, although strong and confident but vulnerable in the face of social constraints. The ideological criticism allows us to look at the position of apparently strong women restricted and controlled by the patriarchal society. Even though the program offers a portrait of strong, competent and professional women, the techniques of framing and visual narrative language restrict women's ability to control their own lives, thus reflecting on the position of women in the world governed by patriarchal conventions. White asserts that ideological criticism aims at exposing these "contradictions" that constitute the text's "*ideological problematic"* (182). She explains the ideological problematic in these words "the ideological problematic refers to the field of representational possibilities offered by a text and the structuration of issues in particular ways" (182). As far as the objective of the ideological criticism is concerned, she goes on to explain that it is less concerned with locating a specific meaning in a text than with laying bare "the range of issues and questions raised within" (White 182) a text or a program. She explains it by discussing the example of *Cagney and Lacey*, a police drama featuring two female heroes in lead roles. The show seems to present an enlightened view of women, working in the tough domain of crime, often associated with men. Although the roles played by Cagney and Lacey are not typical in the context of television in the 80s, they are hardly aberrant. Women in dominant roles are seen as a threat to male supremacy but positioning them from the male viewers' point of view, depicting them in typically feminine behaviors along with the domestic settings and issues of marriage, children and family, works to contain and restrict the potential threat of the female hero (White 185).

This overview of existing literature on female hero and her representation across films and television dramas will help in determining the various angles from which the female hero's character has been analyzed. Since television is a new medium as compared to literature and film, observing the female hero in film and television drama through various critics' and scholars' studies helped in determining which angles of review and critique of the female hero are left uncharted. The section also explored

existing critical literary scholarship on the notion of objectification with regard to the female hero. This has led to identification of the gap in the existing plethora of research on objectification of the female hero across various genres of popular culture in general and on objectification of the female hero, with reference to Martha Nussbaum's notions of objectification, in television drama series in particular.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter has been divided into two sections. The first section describes the theoretical framework of the study and the second section illustrates the method used to conduct the study. My dissertation focuses on the study of the female hero from the standpoint of objectification theory postulated by Martha Nussbaum. Nussbaum's theory of objectification will help in determining how the female hero's powers and independence have been restricted through instrumentality, denial of autonomy, denial of subjectivity, inertness, fungibility, violability and ownership. These concepts, as described by Martha Nussbaum show that the other aspects of the female hero's personality apart from her body, also play a significant role in the process of objectification. The methodology employed for the analysis of the female characters in television drama series encompasses textual critical approach that will be discussed in the second part of this chapter.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

This section details the theory of Objectification as presented by Martha Nussbaum. In this section I delve in detail on Martha Nussbaum's theory of objectification and the seven notions that form the main body of her theory. I shall discuss the theory of objectification as presented by Nussbaum. In doing so I shall focus on how Nussbaum's theory of objectification, which encompasses other aspects of human personality, is an extension of the existing theory of sexual objectification. Her definition of the term is multifaceted as people objectify others in not just physical or sexual terms but in a variety of ways. For the understanding of the framework of the present study it is necessary to distinguish the aspects in which Nussbaum's theory differs from the accounts of earlier theorists such as Andrea Dworkin and Catherine Mackinnon, and what it adds to the existing notion by drawing inspiration from them at the same time. I start the discussion of Nussbaum's theory by explicating how feminist objectification theory is indebted to Immanuel Kant's moral and philosophical postulations on human dignity and worth. Since Martha Nussbaum's seven notions of

objectification form the basis of the theoretical framework for the present study, Kant, Dworkin and Mackinnon's assertions will only come to play as a reference wherever Nussbaum acknowledges their influence on her theory.

I begin this section with the discussion of the theoretical framework of the study by stating how Martha Nussbaum approaches the issue of objectification. Then I move on to discuss each of the seven notions in detail, explaining what each of these mean in the context of the present study and feminism and how each is perceived as a means of objectifying people, especially women. Since a detailed description of these seven notions is not offered by Nussbaum, as she talks about them collectively to point out how one or more of these notions can be involved in objectifying a person, I have collected various feminist scholars' views on these notions in order to explain the theory in detail.

3.1.1 Objectification

Objectification refers to perceiving a person as object. The target of objectification is likely to be perceived as less human. Philosophers, psychologists and feminists have discussed whether focus on a person's body influences how his/her mind is perceived. Immanuel Kant's philosophic observation about human dignity and worth have been adopted by feminist scholars in their debate on objectification. Kant argues:

> Sexual love makes of the loved person an Object of appetite … Taken by itself it is a degradation of human nature; for as soon as a person becomes an object of appetite for another, all motives of moral relationship cease to function, because as an Object of appetite for another a person becomes and can be treated and used as such by everyone. (*Lectures on Ethics* 163)

Feminist theorists like MacKinnon, Dworkin and Nussbaum adopted and extended Kant's idea and argued that women as sexual objects are seen as mindless creatures or merely physical objects. This theory of the treatment of women as merely beings with bodies is termed as the theory of objectification. The crux of the objectification theory is that perceiving women as merely sexual objects shows disregard for their humanity that is reflected through mind. Focus on body causes one to disregard the mental and moral status of women (Dworkin, MacKinnon, Nussbaum). Nussbaum by outlining the seven notions of objectification draws attention to the objectification of the mind. Earlier research and feminist scholarship on objectification focused on physical or sexual objectification of women. Dworkin, MacKinnon and

Kuhn's studies on representation of women in pornography and films focusing on sexual objectification of women.

Nussbaum on the other hand outlines a number of components of objectification which show how a person's mental and emotional capacities are reduced to turn her into a thing stressing that treatment of a woman as sex object for one's pleasure is one part of the complex issue of objectification. These seven notions of objectification for Nussbaum are used to deny a woman her personhood or humanity through disregard towards her mental capacities and competencies. For instance, "denial of autonomy" which is failing to let a person exercise the right of choice and self-determination, "inertness" that is denial of agency and activity, and "denial of subjectivity" in which a person's feelings and experiences are not taken into account, lead to "reduced perceptions of mind" (Gray et al. 1207). This reduction to body or object-like status leads to perceiving women as mentally less competent, also it produces disregard for their feelings, emotions, experiences of pain and sensitivity, in short it leads to disregard for their human capacities.

The dehumanization and objectification of a person has many forms (Nussbaum, *Sex and Social Justice* 228) not just sexual or physical as stressed by Dworkin and Mackinnon. Nussbaum's contemporary theory of objectification owes a substantial debt to Immanuel Kant who dealt with the problem of objectification and instrumentality in the context of morals in *Lectures on Ethics* in his discussion about *Duties Towards the Body in Respect of Sexual Impulse.* According to Kant the most notable characteristic of human beings is their ability to reason and make rational choices. When this agency is denied and human beings are used merely as instruments or means to an end they lose the rational agency and are lowered to the status of animals or objects. According to Kant's philosophy human beings have "intrinsic worth, i.e., *dignity"* (*Lectures on Ethics* 163) rather than relative worth. Kant acknowledged that the essence of human life as opposed to animals, is the respect and recognition of humanity of others. "Treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never merely as a means to an end, but always at the same time as an end" (Kant *Lectures on Ethics* 165). It is this idea of human worth and dignity that Martha Nussbaum uses as a central notion for her argument on objectification of women. Women according to Nussbaum face multiple ways of denial of humanity and lowering of human dignity. "Likewise many contemporary feminists describe objectification as

the process of lowering or degrading a human being to the level of an object by not acknowledging his or her inherent dignity" (Rector 15).

Ann Cahill in her critique of Nussbaum's theory of objectification states how Nussbaum's notion of objectification is different and broader than the ideas presented in the moral philosophy of Kant and feminists' critique of sexual objectification, like that of Dworkin and Mackinnon. She states that Nussbaum's notion of instrumentality demonstrates her Kantian debt (Cahill 25). As Nussbaum states in defining instrumentality as morally problematic since it denies one his autonomy and humanity. Treating human beings as instruments is "always morally problematic; if it does not take place in a larger context of regard for humanity, it is a central form of the morally objectionable" (*SSJ* 289). Ann Cahill sheds light on the problem of objectification by highlighting how it is against human dignity and worth:

> The objectified person is treated as a body without the accompanying characteristics of personhood—without the assumption, that is, of individual worth, or the capacity for self-definition, or the freedom to have and express individual preferences. In objectifying a person, the objectifier refuses to recognize the person's subjective particularity: and so the objectified person is degraded. (Cahill 25)

The study employs the framework of feminism for its theoretical grounding taking the concept of Objectification as the principle idea. Martha Nussbaum's points on the notion of female objectification constitute the study's theoretical framework. This theoretical framework has been chosen because Nussbaum does not take objectification to be merely sexual objectification but talks about other ways in which women and men may be objectified.

i. Martha Nussbaum on Objectification Theory

Martha Nussbaum is a professor of law and ethics. As a proponent of human rights and legal rights, the guiding thought for Nussbaum's critical assertions and projects including her stance on objectification is "the idea of a citizen as a free and dignified human being, a maker of choices" (*SSJ* 46). Nussbaum acknowledges feminists' liberal views and affirmations of valuing women as persons, not as things—as "someone" rather than "something". Her ideas stem from what she calls a basic notion of liberal thought that all human beings have the right to enjoy "equal dignity and worth" (Nussbaum SSJ 57) regardless of their position in the society. This dignity

comes from “the power of moral choice" (Nussbaum SSJ 57) according to which they plan their life and take decisions or make choices. This moral equality in turn leads to fair treatment of a person by the society granting respect to humans and promoting freedom of choice as it recognizes the worth of persons by accepting their right to choice. She supports MacKinnon's stance against objectification that it denies women their right of self-expression and self-determination.

In *Sex and Social Justice* Martha Nussbaum details her take on objectification. “Objectification entails making into a thing, treating *as* a thing, something that is really not a thing” (Nussbaum SSJ 218). She states that the notion of objectification has been understood in a very narrow sense “We have not clarified the concept of objectification to ourselves, and that once we do so we will find out that it is not only a slippery, but also a multiple, concept” (Nussbaum, SSJ 214). She argues that there are seven ways of behaving introduced by the term objectification. She mentions “seven ways to treat a person as a thing” (218).

1. Instrumentality is the treatment of a person as a tool for the objectifier’s purpose
2. Denial of autonomy is the treatment of a person as lacking in autonomy and self-determination;
3. Inertness involves the treatment of a person lacking in agency and perhaps also in activity;
4. Fungibility occurs when a person is interchangeable with other objects, and
5. Violability is the treatment of a person as lacking in boundary-integrity.
6. Ownership is the treatment of a person as something that is owned by another which can be bought or sold and
7. Denial of subjectivity takes place when a person’s experiences and feelings are not taken into account. (Nussbaum 257)

According to Nussbaum a person is objectified when he/she is treated in one or more of the ways mentioned above. Instrumentality is the central and the most problematic notion of objectification which had been given much attention by Kant, MacKinnon, Dworkin and Green but her conception of objectification is broader than theirs. Following Kant these feminists focus on instrumentality and the physical presence of a person as an object that is “seen”. Nussbaum highlights other ways of

objectification which deal with the treatment of a person in many other ways than just an instrument that is the object of gaze or sight. In this lies the contribution of Nussbaum to the notion of Objectification and explanation of the questions of autonomy and subjectivity with respect to women. She states that "these seven items are at least signposts of what many have found morally problematic" (Nussbaum *SSJ* 219). She suggests that the notion of subjectivity and autonomy are of special interest because in case of things they are not important but with respect to human beings are of crucial importance. With regard to the issue of objectification it is necessary that not only do we see the treatment that is denied to a person as a human but also "the treatment that is accorded to them" (*SSJ* 219).

To treat a person in one or more of these seven ways is objectification. Whether each of these is a sufficient condition for objectification to occur or we need a cluster of these notions in order to have sufficient pretext for objectification is to be determined through the context and intensity. She terms objectification "a relatively loose cluster term" for whose application we sometimes treat anyone of these features as sufficient, though more often a plurality of features is present when the term is applied" (Nussbaum *SSJ* 219). She also sheds light on the connections between these notions. For instance, she states that "ownership does entail lack of self-determination and autonomy" (*SSJ* 220) as it is theoretically linked to absence since an item that is owned will certainly lack autonomy. (*SSJ* 220). Similarly, a person's feelings and experiences may be disregarded without treating them as instruments, without treating them as violable, without treating them as fungible and without treating them as inert. She goes on the explain the interdependence of the notions stating "Treating as violable, as lacking boundary integrity, may well also be consistent with treating as autonomous…" (Nussbaum *SSJ* 221). Similarly, non-instrumentality entails recognition of agency and activity and "the treatment of an adult human as an end in herself requires the recognition of subjectivity" (*SSJ* 221).

Nussbaum points to the complexities involved with the use of objectification by showing that it is a much broader concept not addressed by critics and theorists earlier. She focuses more on the other ways of objectification, as mentioned in the seven notions she presents, rather than sexual objectification. Not only does she draw our attention to other forms of objectification that women may suffer from and be reduced to being mere objects.

The present study takes into account Nussbaum's idea of how a person can be objectified in the seven ways and can be reduced to the status of a mere instrument lacking power. Nussbaum explains with the help of literary texts how these notions are at work in the treatment of a person by another in the text that she quotes from various authors, such as D.H Lawrence and James Joyce (*SSJ* 215). One more important thing to note is that in her samples she does not restrict her sample, for explanation of the seven notions, to males' objectification of women but also adds to the theory of objectification that in the larger social context, social power can be exercised in several ways (*SSJ* 215). This entails the theory that women can be objectified by women as well. Nussbaum's additions to the theory of objectification explain that the concept should be seen in a larger context and should not be limited to sexual aspect only. This angle of the theory of objectification as proposed by Nussbaum through her seven notions invites us to look at the idea of objectification in a new light.

Nussbaum's definition of objectification is of central importance in any study of objectification in feminist scholarship. Her definition of the term is multifaceted as a person can be objectified in a variety of ways and sometimes numerous ways can be used simultaneously. She states that the relationship between the actors and the context in with it occurs determines the moral value of the act. The notion that the present study takes from Martha Nussbaum's theory is that what different ways of objectifying a person are possible and how can they be at work in the treatment of a woman by other men and women. The study does not focus on the aspect of sexual objectification as a lot of work has already been done in this area, it takes objectification in other forms such as instrumentality—when a person is treated as a tool or is replaced once the purpose is fulfilled, denial of autonomy—when a person is denied independent action and her freedom or decision making powers are controlled or not granted.

Martha Nussbaum treats objectification in a much broader way than Kant, MacKinnon, and Dworkin. She highlights other dimensions of the concept of objectification by emphasizing that apart from sexual objectification a person can also be objectified mentally or emotionally when denied certain privileges as a human. The notions or conditions that Nussbaum describes are directly related to curtailing and deprecating women's talents and capabilities.

Although the notions Nussbaum describes can be directed towards any person regardless of their gender, objectification in the context of feminism has been described as a condition encountered by women. It is regarded as a mode of oppression that denies

them humanity and freedom. Dworkin and MacKinnon's works emphasize the sexual dimension of objectification with regard to their critique of pornography. They contend that the pornographic practices reduce woman to a mere sex object who has no worth of her own. Dworkin and MacKinnon's extensive critique of pornography brought to focus the idea of objectification for the feminist theorists as a mode of oppression that operates against women's freedom and attainment of selfhood. Jamie Goldenberg opines that "the idea of objectification is by no means limited to their pornographic representation. Objectification rather, has been said to permeate the everyday life and experiences" (74) of women.

Jamie Goldenberg and Nathan Heflick explain the other dimension of objectification which has not received much attention as much of the attention of the feminist scholars has been directed towards the sexual dimension of objectification. Goldenberg and Heflick use the term "Literal Objectification" ("Literal Objectification" (225) to refer to the type of objectification in which a person is denied selfhood due to lack of regard for her mental or emotional abilities. They explain:

> We define literal objectification as any outcome in which a person is perceived as…object-like, relative to humanlike. Manifestations of literal objectification include attributing people less of the traits that distinguish people from objects (e.g., warmth, competence), visual and neural markers indicative of perceiving objects relative to people (e.g., reduced neural activity". (Heflick and Goldenberg "Literal Objectification". (225)

Women are literally objectified when their personality traits are disregarded. "The ways in which this objectification is manifested include people's attributing women less of the traits that distinguish people from objects" (Heflick and Goldenberg, "Literal Objectification" 228). They argue that objectification does not only entail treating a person as mere body or sexual being. Another form of dehumanization can take the form of disregard for essential characteristics of humanity. "Literally objectification refers to constructing an individual as an object; by virtue of this targets of objectification are perceived as less fully human…people construe certain characteristics as more essential of fundamentally human; and that dehumanization can take the form of perceiving individuals as lacking this human essence" (Heflick & Goldenberg, "Objectifying Sarah Palin" 559). They use Nussbaum's notions to argue how literal objectification dehumanizes a person. They support her theory by stating that some of the possible ways of objectifying a person, suggested by Nussbaum "are

directly related to minimizing their competence: denying self-determination, agentic qualities and uniqueness of talents (i.e., they can easily be replaced). Other likely minimize the perception of the individual as fully human such as denying that their feelings and experiences matter and having less concern when they are physically or emotionally harmed" ("Objectifying Sarah Palin" 598). Women's competence, skills and attributes are undermined when they are objectified in this way since it is harmful for them. In order to exercise one's rights as a free person or enjoy basic humanity not only physical freedom and dignity but also mental and emotional freedom and choice are necessary. What most characterizes human beings is their ability to feel and think. (Gray et al. 1207). Mind has two primary faculties: thoughts and feelings. The ability to think has been related with agency and the ability to feel, with experience. "Objects and machines are attributed less agency and experience than humans" (Gray et al. 1208). Similarly, women are objectified literally as they are perceived as having less agency and experience (Gray et al. 1207). In this way objectification is harmful as women are perceived as having fewer traits that distinguish them from objects.

John M. Rector in *The Objectification Spectrum* states "The psychological process of seeing human beings more as objects than as Subjects and treating them accordingly is *objectification*...In other words when we objectify others, we misperceive them as being less that what they are in their totality" (9). Another important point that Rector highlights, about the notion of objectification is the degree or intensity of objectification that he says may range from mild to severe. He argues that the feminist scholarship speaks of objectification raising the argument that patriarchy reduces women to the status of things and deprives them of their human attributes and personhood. He supports Andrea Dworkin and Linda LeMoncheck's assertions that objectification is a form of discrimination and dehumanization. He devises "objectification spectrum" (Rector 21) based on Nussbaum's idea that objectification is a "loose … slippery … multiple concept" (Nussbaum 251). He mentions three degrees of the objectifications spectrum "casual indifference, derivatization (or emotional hardening) and dehumanization" (Rector 21). Supporting Nussbaum's seven dimensions of objectification he states "objectification represents a bidirectional continuum of misapprehension in which other human beings are seen as being less than they in fact are" (Rector 22). Rector's assertions regarding the degree of acts of objectification are significant for the theoretical perspective of the present study. As the form of objectification which is studied for the present study relates to the

first two levels of objectification mentioned on the spectrum of objectification by Rector the extreme degree that leads to dehumanization or violence is not observable in the present study. Rector also stresses the psychological dimension of objectification which is relevant to the present study as it is in a subtle way that others are objectified—through devaluing or disregarding their minds and personalities:

> Objectification represents a perceptual error in which the truth of others is either obscured or not honored. Instead of seeing others as Subjects composed of a unified psyche and soma—worthy of respect, dignity and reverence—we see them more as physical objects divorced to varying degrees from their interior, spiritual dimension. (21)

Iddo Landau also states that "The existence of objectification rests not on the mere presence of these features but on their presence beyond a certain degree concomitantly, for objectification to occur an objectifying feature need not occur to its highest degree. It must only exceed the degree appropriate for human beings" (Landau 313). For instance, one need not deny one's spouse's autonomy completely in order to objectify her for instance demanding sexual fidelity, directing his/her activities e.g. asking to accompany to a game or cinema. As Nussbaum has also explained "all types of objectification are not equally objectionable" (*SSJ* 228). It depends on our relation with the other person and the situation in which it occurs. Landau explains more about the less objectionable or permissible situations of objectification. For instance, "people are expected to treat their close family and friends as significantly less fungible than, say co-workers in another department" (Landau 313). He also elaborates upon the other exception that Nussbaum refers to and which is related to a relationship or degree of closeness with another person. For example, a certain degree might be objectification for a family member but not for a complete stranger. "Some differentiation according to closeness is considered legitimate" (Landau 313). With respect to Nussbaum's assertions Landau also maintains that achieving non-objectification in all circumstances and all the relationships is almost impossible to achieve and maintain. Thus for determining objectification in a situation and relationship all these considerations need to be taken into account. And such situations must be excluded as objectifying behavior which fall under the exceptions Nussbaum and also Landau point to. Landau states that the contemporary discussions on objectification i.e. Nussbaum's theory, state that non-objectification is realizable as it only focuses on negative objectification leaving out those circumstances where it is acceptable or pleasant. Landau states that employing

the words “wrong”, “bad” or “negative” with objectification will be redundant as in contemporary scholarship in feminism objectifications is seen as a form of discriminatory and harmful practice against women and addresses only those instances of its occurrence that reveal unjust treatment. Nevertheless, it is necessary to understand that objectification is a complicated phenomenon and the exceptions of behavior and treatment that Nussbaum also excludes from treatment of a person as object are to be distinguished from objectification. Nussbaum has argued that some forms of objectification are morally permissible. She gives the example of a lover resting his head on his partner’s chest and using her as a pillow cannot be termed objectification but a harmless rather pleasant part of the romantic relationship. Hence she states “the evaluation of any of them require careful evaluation of context and circumstances” (Nussbaum, *SSJ* 218).

Landau argues that this makes objectification a “descriptive notion”. As suggested by Nussbaum he states “we should distinguish between non-objectifying behavior, morally permissible (or even commendable) objectifying behavior, or morally wrong objectifying behavior” (Landau 314). The contemporary notion of objectification, i.e. Nussbaum's notion, is moral in that it relates to our relationships with other human beings. Buber further states that the moral legalistic nature of contemporary notion of objectification suggests that “if one is objectified, one should alter one's position and stop the objectification as well as react by condemnation, disassociation and perhaps retribution” (317).

a. Nussbaum's Seven Notions of Objectification

Since Martha Nussbaum did not shed much light on each of the seven notions separately and has described them collectively with examples to state how they affect a person’s status as a human and cause her objectification, I will discuss each of the seven notions of objectification separately, which include instrumentality, denial of autonomy, inertness, fungibility, violability, ownership, denial of subjectivity. With the help of the discussions other critics have developed on these notions, it will be easier to understand what each notion stands for not only for Nussbaum’s theory but for feminist scholarship and criticism in general. It will help in understanding what each notion refers to, and how are they significant with regard to identity and selfhood for women. As the attainment of selfhood and individual identity are regarded as “pathways to empowerment” (Rogers 346).

In both physical and literal objectification, there is disregard for a person's feelings and emotions. Research on objectification points out “that mind perceptions can be understood in terms of a single underlying continuum, where an entity falls somewhere between no mind (like an inanimate object) and full mind (like a normal human being)” (Gray et al. 1208). When objectification occurs a person is pushed “down the continuum, away from full-fledged personhood and toward inanimacy as a mere object—less agency, less autonomy, less capacity for subjective experience…” (Gray et al. 1208).

Rae Langton in her essay “Treating Someone as an Object” states that the Kantian idea of failure to respect humans and treating them as mere means or instruments gained new impetus in contemporary feminist philosophy. She mentions Martha Nussbaum's contribution to the theory of objectification:

> Martha Nussbaum draws together Kantian feminist ideas in an instructive study of what might be to treat someone as an object. Objectification is a cluster concept, on her way to thinking, in which the ideas of autonomy denial and instrumentality are at the core, but the cluster also includes the related notions of inertness, fungibility, violability, ownership and denial of subjectivity. (Langton 244)

In the following pages is given the description of the seven notions which Martha Nussbaum states are involved in denying a person her selfhood, leading to her objectification in a number of ways.

i. Denial of Autonomy

Denial of autonomy has been described by Nussbaum as a condition for objectification. “The objectifier treats the object as lacking in autonomy and self-determination” (*SSJ* 218). In order to understand how denying a person’s exercise of autonomy and self-determination leads to her objectification it is necessary to understand what autonomy is and what it means to the feminist thinkers with regard to women’s lives. The notion of autonomy is central to the debate on objectification in feminism. Autonomy by the feminist thinkers is understood as “self-government and self-direction” (Stoljar). Being autonomous means acting on one’s own motives, values and reasons. Feminists sought to reconstruct the notion of autonomy which in the past was considered with skepticism because it was associated with the masculine idea of

personhood that is of a self-sufficient person operating independently or separately from the social system or relationships. Brian Michael Norton discusses the stance of feminist moral philosophers on the traditional or masculine notion of autonomy:

> Autonomous subject—self-made, self-directing and self-sufficient—is an unmistakable *masculine* ideal, modelled on the social roles and fantasies of *men,* leading some to question its value for women. Such a conception of autonomy, moreover, has the unsettling tendency of promoting an abstract ideal of independence over our actual relationships with other human beings. (297)

This shows that feminist thinkers define autonomy in relational terms, however according to Kathryn Abrams, they "do not deny the possibility of self-determination or self-direction among women … They reinterpret or reconstitute these attributes in the context of a distinct understanding of the formation of the subject" (806). Such a definition of autonomy is problematic for the feminist theorists in that it is conceived as being detrimental to a woman because being a woman involves valuing relationships and taking care of their needs whereas being autonomous focuses on the needs and wellbeing of dependents such as spouse and children. In contemporary feminist thought the notion of autonomy is considered essential for the understanding of women's oppression and related concepts such as objectification.

Kant's moral Philosophy is the locus for autonomy theorists; in *Moral Law* he states "autonomy of the will is the property the will has of being a law to itself (independently of every property belonging to the object of violation)" (Kant, *Moral Law* 101). According to this principle he states that the will is not subject to law but it makes law for itself, "of which it can regard itself as the author" (92).

Given this definition of autonomy feminist thinkers attempted to appropriate and redefine the notion of autonomy in the feminist context. Feminists critique the Kantian notion of autonomy which they considered "automistic" (Mackenzie and Stoljar 4). They consider that this "substansive independence" (95) is inimical to the nature of a woman as it separates a person from social relations to which a person is connected. In seeking to strive for the need of autonomy for women to end their oppression they redefine the notion of autonomy which they argue is integral to women's empowerment. In order to make it compatible with feminist pursuits they have re-conceptualized the notion of autonomy. Mackenzie and Stoljar call it "relational autonomy" (94-111) as opposed to the absolute or automistic notion of autonomy proposed by Kant. It is relational in that it acknowledges women in relation to their

family and other social relations. The concept of relational autonomy denies absolute independent personhood and considers that an agent is embedded in a society and is not isolated.

Diana Meyers states that People are autonomous when "their conduct is morally permissible and is not indicated by any technical rule, and when they are doing what they, as individuals, want to do" (619). Autonomous conduct is crucial to the expression of true self. Much feminist debate has circled around the oppressive and subordinate position of women in society. Meyers supports de Beauvoir's assertions on denial of autonomy to females stating that "whereas men are capable of transcendence, women are trapped in immanence—a state of passivity and objectification" (620).

Simone de Beauvoir argues in *The Second Sex* that the omission of a woman from social life and inattention to her creative potential instills in her the idea of inferiority. "Social customs are far from granting her … possibilities on a par with those of … male" (155). Beauvoir explains that women are systematically represented as inferior to men. By rendering it impossible for women to achieve autonomous self, without the aid of a man her personal development is stunted. She relies on men "instead of attempting the difficult and uncertain conquest alone" (155). This is seen as a direct threat to the autonomy of a woman. Diana Meyers in her work *Being Yourself: Essays on Identity, Action, and Social Life* explains that autonomy captures "the agentic resourcefulness people need to cope with life's vicissitudes, ordeals, and upheavals" (Meyers, *Being Yourself* 49). Autonomy empowers a person in eliminating unexpected constraints, discover unique opportunities and improvise quickly in situations that need immediate responses without revolting against one's traits, values and desires (49).

Stoljar describes some conditions which reveal a person's inability to gain autonomy and which in turn will help in understanding the behavior that shows lack or absence of autonomy. These include: self-abnegation or unreasonable submission to others wishes, and "adaptive preference" (*Relational Autonomy* 285) in which individuals' choices are formed to comply with restrictive social conditions and adopting practices of gender oppression.

1. Self-Abnegation, submissiveness and docility are incompatible with autonomy. Excessive subservience and passivity implies that others, not the person herself, are the masters of her will and control her choices and decisions. As a result, the oppressive system for instance in patriarchy, women are expected to adopt conformity and

submissiveness which they begin to accept as the right conduct for themselves as opposed to men who enjoy independence and can take initiative.

2. Adaptive preference refers to attitudes where individual choices are subordinated to strict social norms. Individuals instead of wanting or striving for what they want adjust their needs and desires to what they can get in given circumstances. Martha Nussbaum explains the principle of adaptive preference in this way, "in deciding what is good and what is bad for a given individual the ultimate criterion can only be his own wants and his own preferences" (Nussbaum, *WHD* 124). Stoljar argues that adaptive or deformed desires are the result of oppression. The individual internalizes the oppressive ideology.

The idea of autonomy for Nussbaum also takes into account valuable association with others without compromising on the freedom of self-expression:

> The core idea is that of human being as a dignified free being who shapes his or her own life in cooperation and reciprocity with others, rather than being passively shaped or pushed around by the world in the manner of a "flock" or "herd" animal. A life that is really human is one that is shaped throughout by these human powers or practical reason and sociability. (*WHD* 72)

A number of feminist philosophers have placed the notion of autonomy at the center of the issue of equality. "Autonomy is both a characteristic of a human subject and a quality that inheres in particular acts or choices" (Abrams 805). This expresses the idea that women and men must be taken equally seriously in their capacities and achievement. Feminist arguing on the issue of autonomy as central to feminist philosophy call it "central element of a universalist concept of morality" (Docekal 135). Nagl-Docekal argues that autonomy is the central characteristic that allows individuals to claim equal respect (136). "If we are impeded without good reason from making a free decision in that sense we suffer an injury. Our genuine competence is being reduced or we are—in the worst case—robbed of it entirely … the core of these forms of being injured is that we are not treated as human beings" (136). The feminist position she states, is not that which seeks superiority but equality on the grounds of basic morality; as stressed by Kant in his *Moral Philosophy*, every individual must be respected in the same manner. "It must be recognized that human beings—women as well as men—have the ability to make decisions and act accordingly, as Kant puts it, the ability to choose their ends on their own" (136). This she states is a universalist concept of morality centered around the human competency of autonomy. In her discussion on autonomy Docekal also refers to Kant's moral philosophy like Nussbaum, Dworkin and

MacKinnon. People should be respected "as persons who themselves have the competency to decide and to act" (136).

Autonomy teaches us that we are to open up and disregard certain choices which are against a person's will and could be harmful to the self. Andrea Dworkin describes the idea of autonomy as a "capacity of persons to reflect critically upon their first-order preferences, desires, wishes, and so forth and the capacity to accept or attempt to change these in the light of higher-order preferences and values" (20). Nussbaum states that the absence of autonomy shows that "there is something wrong with not seeing oneself in a certain way, as a bearer of rights and a citizen whose dignity and worth are equal to that of others" (*SSJ* 113).

ii. Instrumentality

Instrumentality is the main feature of Nussbaum, Dworkin and MacKinnon's discussions on objectification both, sexual and literal. According to Nussbaum instrumentality occurs when "The objectifier treats the object as a tool of his or her purposes" (218 *SSJ*). Treating a person as a tool for fulfilling one's purposes is damaging to the person objectified. Nussbaum also refers to Kant's philosophic assertions when she talks about instrumentality as one of the ways of objectifying a person. Kant used the notion of instrumentality in the context of illegitimate sex. "Human beings are, therefore, not entitled to offer themselves, for profit, as things for the use of others in the satisfaction of their sexual propensities. In so doing they would run the risk of having their person used by all and sundry as an instrument for the satisfaction of inclination" (*Lectures on Ethics* 165).

Nussbaum argues that "there is something especially problematic about instrumentalizing human beings, something that involves denying what is fundamental to them as human beings, namely, status of being ends in themselves. From this one denial, other forms of objectification that are not logically entailed by the first seem to follow" (*SSJ* 223). She further explains that instrumentality is not problematic in all contexts. For instance, a person is lying with his/her lover and uses his/her stomach as a pillow, with his/her consent and without intending to harm or make him uncomfortable, it is done in the context of a relationship where he/she is not taken advantage of as an object. Therefore, it suggests that "what is problematic is not instrumentalization per se but treating someone *primarily or merely* as an instrument"

(*SSJ* 223). Nussbaum states that the overall context of the act is significant for determining instrumentality and other forms of objectification.

Nussbaum sheds light on the notion of instrumentality in *Women and Human Development* by stating, "…each person [is] a bearer of value, and an end" (*WHD* 73). She is influenced by Marx's philosophy and calls it a means of oppression, explaining the notion of instrumentality that "it is profoundly wrong to subordinate the ends of some individuals to those of others. That is at the core of what exploitation is, to treat a person as a mere object for the use of others" (*WHD* 73).

Harta Nagl-Docekal also refers to instrumentality and its implications and relevance to feminist theory, calling it a harmful practice for human dignity and worth. "Our genuine competence is being reduced or we are--in the worst case--robbed of it entirely" (136). She also refers to Kant's idea of basic humanity, "So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means" (Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals* 38). Human beings are to be treated "never merely as a means" this is equal to using them as objects against their will (Docekal 137). She sheds light on the concept of instrumentality by stressing that it is used to continue discrimination against women. This discrimination must be fought against as women must be respected in their self-determination in the same way as men (Docekal 138-9). A person's course of life, to a great extent is determined through his or her own decisions. Only because we are able to act freely as we want to can we develop an unmistakable identity. It is very crucial to the feminist perspective to unveil problems that result from assigning common identity to people. When viewed as instruments women's individuality and personhood is denied. In order to respect each person as individual they must be respected for their uniqueness (Docekal 139). She suggests that everybody must examine to what extent they are involved in the disregard and oppression of women and this in turn demands "prohibition against instrumentalizing other against their will" (139-40). Docekal goes a step further in criticizing instrumentally not only on the grounds that it denies a person humanity but also on the moral grounds that it is an obligation that as human beings we are obliged to help others as much as possible "when they are unable to realize their self-chosen ends"(137). Instrumentality robs off people's personhood and autonomy as well. "Our moral duty to take into account that human beings have the capacity to determine their ends by themselves implies, according to Kant, not only that we are not allowed to diminish the freedom of other without good reason" (Docekal 137). She

further explains the basis for resisting instrumentality as "…every individual has the duty of asserting his or her own worth as a human being in relation to others. In this manner the moral imperative implies that I have the right to resist others when they limit my self-determination without good reason" (Docekal 140).

Kaufmann argues how using people is a violation of human dignity stating that human dignity puts certain constraints on human behavior (Kaufmann 62). For instance, we neglect the constraints if we "neglect, insult or humiliate them" (60). He explains how using a person as a tool or a mere means to achieve one's goal is the violation of human dignity. "…when I use a tool or a person I am pursuing an end that is not essentially related to the thing that is used. Now what is questionable about using persons seems to be the fact that in using a person for my ends I am using a being that is capable of pursuing ends itself" (Kaufmann 63). In other words, by making someone serve our ends we bar them from pursuing their ends as free persons. By doing so we put ourselves above them in terms of human dignity and treat them as a tool, which is the violation of the constraints that one must respect and follow as a human being. That is how it evokes negative moral responses as such an interaction is the violation of dignity (Kaufmann 63).

iii. Inertness

Inertness means having no power of action, motion or resistance. If a person lacks agency or activity such a person is described as inert. For objectification inertness is treatment of others as if they themselves lack the ability to act or be active agents. Denial of agency is termed as inertness of a being. Nussbaum includes inertness among the seven notions that she describes and which may be used for objectifying a person. "The objectifier treats the object as lacking in agency, and perhaps also in activity" (*SSJ* 218). Denying a person agency or treating them as inert is the violation of humanity, humanity which demands being "respectful for each person's struggle for flourishing, that treats each person as an end and as a source of agency and worth in her worn right" (Nussbaum *WHD* 69). Nussbaum expands the notion of inertness by stating that "Part of this respect will mean not being dictatorial about good … at least in some core areas of choice and meaningful affiliation … this very respect means taking a stand on the conditions that permit them to follow their own lights free from tyrannies imposed by politics and tradition" (*WHD* 69). Inertness affects a person's liberty, opportunity and material well-being. In terms of freedom and equality every individual must be able to

exercise control over her actions and decisions and any other person who stops somebody from performing necessary functions, or renders her incapable of such ability in fact treats her as inert or immobile thing, hence turning her into an object. Nussbaum state that a person's humanity and quality of life is determined through what a person is "able to do and to be" (*WHD* 71). Certain functions are of central importance in human life for instance "what she is in a position to do (what her opportunities and liberties are)" (*WHD* 71). This Nussbaum states enables a person to function in a fully human way. One of the necessary conditions of justice and equality is to allow people a "certain basic level of capability" (*WHD* 71).

The idea of human agency Nussbaum holds, is central to human life and dignity. She states the example of a tragic hero beaten down by circumstances yet not letting chance "completely eclipse the humanity of a person … We see the person as having activity, goals, and projects" (*WHD* 73). Thus the absence or denial of the capability for actions or agency is damaging to the worth of a person as if "the person is not really a human being" (*WHD* 73). A life in which a human being is "unable to develop and exercise one's human powers [is] not worthy of the dignity of the human being" (*WHD* 72).

iv. Fungibility

Fungibility for Nussbaum is one of the ways of objectifying a person. She states that fungibility occurs when "The objectifier treats the object as interchangeable (a) with other objects of the same type and/or (b) with objects of other types" (*SSJ* 218). Nussbaum states that "certain functions are particularly central to human life, in the sense that their presence or absence is typically understood to be a mark of the presence or absence of human life" (*WHD* 71-72). When people are considered interchangeable with other things or persons, their individuality is threatened as everyone considers themselves to be different and unique than others. In this way fungibility comes to mean denying uniqueness of talents of a person. If a person can be discarded without regard to his or her talents or personality, he/she will be replaced by other people or objects. In this way a person's selfhood and unique identity is overlooked and they are objectified according to Nussbaum's notions.

Therefore, if people are treated as fungible objects or beings it reveals that, a) they can easily be replaced, b) denied uniqueness of talents. Nussbaum calls it one of the ways through which a person can be "turned into something rather than someone"

(*SSJ* 225). A fungible object is exchangeable or interchangeable with other objects of the same or different types. This marks the commodity like status of a person, who has no worth or value with regard to the fact that he is a human. This treatment of human beings is incompatible with what Nussbaum defines as "see[ing] human beings as having worth as an end" (*WHD* 73). Nussbaum states that "certain functions are central to human life and their presence or absence determines the presence or absence of human life" (WHD 72). She draws from Karl Marx's idea which states that the essential nature of human beings is realized when they are free to act upon their own will and can subordinate their will by their imagination, not by the demands of the other people. In the same vein she explains how the uniqueness of an individual if unrecognized does not let a person "develop and exercise one's human powers" (*WHD* 72) and is a blow to human and social life. If treated as fungible or replaceable with other objects or persons, such a life "is not worthy of the dignity of human being" (*WHD* 72). Fungibility at once lowers the status of a person as her worth is disregarded. It thus becomes a mode of exploitation and object or animal-like treatment of a person. "The core idea is that of human being as a dignified free being who shapes his or her own life in cooperation and reciprocity with others, rather than being passively shaped or pushed around by the world in the manner of a "flock" or "herd" animal" (WHD 72). This explains how this idea is related to human worth or dignity. Nussbaum borrows from Marx when referring to a human being "a bearer of value, and an end … it is profoundly wrong to subordinate the ends of some individuals to those of others. That is at the core of what exploitation is, to treat a person as a mere object for the use of others" (*WHD* 72).

V. Violability

Nussbaum defines violability as occurring when "The objectifier treats the object as lacking in boundary integrity, as something that is permissible to break up, smash, break into" (*SSJ* 218). Violability refers to infringement of or disregard towards others. Margret Grebowicz in *Beyond Orientation: On Sex, Poetry, and the Violability of Children* discusses the notion of violability with reference to exploitation of women and children. She states that it is not only pornography that shows objectification of women and children but it "permeates culture on all levels, not just the materials that are overtly pornographic" (Grebowicz 158). Women are seen "as passive and receptive, as an object of desire, but not a subject (158). She goes on to state that denying women

their boundaries and subjectivities is an assault on the bodies and psyche of women (159). She argues that female violability is an obstacle to their freedom. If the weak are to be empowered they must be lead to empowerment on their own terms and not those of the "oppressor, the one who grants freedom and rights" (163). Women must recognize their plight. She stresses that it is imperative that we stretch feminist discourse on objectification and agency beyond sexuality. A fully abled agent enjoys "privacy and freedom—things that women, children and other politically disenfranchised groups have precisely never enjoyed" (166). To her anyone can become violable due to being a political minority including women, children, poor, workers etc. Grebowicz also elaborates upon the notion of violability in the context of sexual objectification. Although her assertions bring to the focus the violable status of women in terms of their sexual or physical beings and its effect on their psyche, it is helpful in understanding how "This equating of violability is consistent with the patriarchal construction of the feminine" (166).

In her discussion on Juan Jordan's work she describes violability as "a marker of otherness" (Grebowicz 166). She mentions that women according to the patriarchal norms are considered outsiders. She also uses the word "refugee" to refer to women's exclusion in a patriarchal setup. "How can we, everyone, learn from these exclusions? How can we begin to change the way that sex is made normative to address the subjectivities of the outsiders, the "refugees", to address the connections between their particular sexualities and their freedoms?" (Grebowicz 166).

vi. Ownership

According to Nussbaum one of the ways of objectifying people, especially women is through claiming ownership over them. Defining this notion, she states, "The objectifier treats the object as something that is owned by another, can be bought or sold, etc." (*SSJ* 218). Nussbaum states that objectification is a cluster term (*SSJ* 228) and for objectification to occur any one or more than one of the notions may occur simultaneously. For instance, she states that ownership entails that a person is also denied autonomy. On the other hand, ownership does not necessitate the presence of the other notions of objectification such as fungibility, violability, inertness or instrumentality (*SSJ* 220-1). Elaborating more on the overlapping and slippery nature of the term and its notions Laura Brace states "That entanglement, though, does not mean that the different threads cannot be separated out…ownership 'probably' does

entail lack of self-determination and autonomy though an item may certainly lack autonomy without being owned" (Brace 74). Brace further explains Nussbaum's idea stating that she distinguished between the different aspects involved in the concept of objectification. Ownership along with inertness and fungibility can be a consequence of denial of autonomy. While talking about the most extreme form of ownership in objectification Nussbaum states the example of slavery. She argues that as a form of ownership slavery involves denial of autonomy and thus a person is used as an instrument that one may buy or sell or may replace with others. This imprisonment in terms of claiming ownership on a person "can reduce them to a set of body parts performing a particular task, and so become replaceable by another similar body or by a machine" (75). She goes on to explain that "treatment of a person as a tool results in failure to recognize their freedom, and denial of their right which they have a claim on as social persons" (75).

Nussbaum in *Women and Human Development* discusses further the idea of human freedom and rights. She identifies freedom as one of the central capabilities of a human being. A person must be "able to move freely from place to place, having one's bodily boundaries treated as sovereign" (*WHD* 78). She stresses the idea of the interdependence of human dignity and freedom by stating that human beings as free agents shape their own lives rather than being pushed passively as herds of animals by others. Human powers of "practical reason and sociability" govern free person's life (*WHD* 72). While stating this idea Nussbaum refers to Amartya Sen's *Freedoms and Needs* where he states that "human beings are people with rights to exercise, not as parts of a 'stock' or a 'population' that passively exists and must be looked after" (Sen 38).

vii. Denial of Subjectivity

Denial of Subjectivity that leads to objectification of a person has been defined by Nussbaum as a state in which "The objectifier treats the object as something whose experience and feelings (if any) need not be taken into account" (Nussbaum *SSJ* 218). It minimizes the perception that a person is fully human. Denying their feelings and experiences is considered less harmful than physical harm but Nussbaum lists it among the ways a person can be reduced to an object as her treatise is to draw attention to emotional and intellectual objectification where a woman is regarded as less competent or valuable.

Research in psychology and perception of mind indicates that the human mind has primarily two basic abilities: the ability to think which is referred to as 'agency' and the ability to feel which they refer to as 'experience'. These two traits are specific to human beings. "Objects and machines are attributed less agency and experience than human beings" (Heflick and Goldenberg, "Literal Objectification" 226). They also opine that regarding someone as merely a body or an object reduces the perceived competence of the mind. Overlooking someone's mental or emotional attributes leads to disregard of their sensitivity, emotions, pain and their moral status as human beings. Similarly, if women are thought to have less agency and experience i.e. thoughts, reasoning, perceptions and plans they are treated as objects. (Gray et al. 1207) Gray and Knobe indicate in their research that perceiving people as objects "reduces ascriptions of mind" (Gray et al. 1208). Referring to Nussbaum's' three notions; denial of subjectivity, denial of autonomy and inertness, they state that in all these regards objectifying people "leads to reduced perceptions of mind" (Gray et al. 1207). Sue Campbell theorizes it as being dismissed. This happens "when what we say or do … is either not taken seriously or not regarded at all in the context in which it is meant to have its effect" (370).

3.1.2 Conclusion

Unlike Kant, Dworkin and MacKinnon, Martha Nussbaum through her analysis of the issue of objectification identifies that apart from instrumentality there are six more notions involved in objectification. She claims that of all the notions involved in objectification, instrumentality is the most problematic as it may lead to other forms of objectification such as denial of autonomy, fungibility and ownership (Nussbaum 223) but focus on instrumentality alone may lead us to ignore the other ways through which objectification is possible. Although Nussbaum's theory of objectification stems from the Kantian view or moral critique of instrumentality. It is also indebted to Dworkin and MacKinnon's ideas on sexual objectification although her contribution lies in highlighting other forms through which a person can be objectified. Papadaki calls Nussbaum's assertions "pragmatic critique" (7) of objectification as it has broadened the concept by making it applicable beyond merely sexual and physical aspects of human beings. The seven notions point to the fact that a person can be emotionally, mentally or spiritually objectified. Objectification thus is the treatment of a person or her whole personality—the *being*, as an object—not just that of the body or the physical

self. Nussbaum's theory of objectification expresses how the problem of female objectification is related to social and moral concepts of human dignity. As she says in *Sex and Social Justice*, "these seven items are signposts of what many have found morally problematic" (Nussbaum 219). The notions and their boundaries are not watertight as Nussbaum explains that one may lead to another, or more than one of the ways may be involved in objectification of a person at a time or in one particular situation. As she explains how these features are connected for instance "instrumentality in a Kantian way to denial of autonomy and subjectivity, and in a related way to the possibility of violation and abuse" (Nussbaum *SSJ* 225). Similarly, denial of subjectivity does not entail that a person may also be treated as an instrument, as fungible or violable at the same time.

All these seven notions when employed either separately or collectively, in their extreme form with moral and human disregard in certain contexts, cause denial of humanity. Humanity for Nussbaum stands for an individual's capacity for rational choice and action. This is what distinguishes humans from animals or objects. It is this humanity that is denied in objectification when humans are forced to lose the "status of being an end in themselves" as Nussbaum refers to Kantian philosophy to emphasize the moral wrongness involved in objectification and denial of humanity "every human being has a legitimate claim to respect from his fellow human beings and is in turn bound to respect every other" (Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals* 209).

Keeping in view how the notion of objectification is understood from the angle that Martha Nussbaum defines it and differentiates it from sexual or physical objectification it becomes an issue of great concern for contemporary feminist scholarship that the new dimensions be explored in research. Previously the notion of objectification had been taken in a limited sense, as it was reduced to the treatment of a person merely as a body. With Martha Nussbaum's assertions a new dimension of objectification—objectification of human mind and assertion of other faculties has been brought to the forefront. Scrutinizing such dimensions of the theory helps to illuminate the unchartered aspects of the female characters' representation in media.

3.2 Research Method

In the section that follows is given a brief overview of the methodological approach I have used for conducting this research. The study contends that the female hero in the contemporary American television drama series faces objectification and

this curtails her power as a hero. In order to see what means are at work in the objectification of the female hero I shall use textual critical analysis and Martha Nussbaum's theory of objectification will form the theoretical backdrop of the study. The following part of the chapter discusses the methodology of the study by explaining the major critics' views and use of the textual analysis and the textual-critical approach.

3.2.1 Textual Analysis

The present study uses textual analysis as a research method to carry out the analysis and interpretation of the female heroes' objectification in the drama series. Textual analysis has been chosen as a method due to a number of reasons. Interactions in the form of speech, dialogues as well as their interactions and behavior with other characters in a number of situations and settings are used for textual analysis and wherever necessary the visual aspects can be brought into discussion as and when pertinent to the study.

i. Catherine Belsey

Catherine Belsey arguing about the significance and relevance of textual analysis states that "textual analysis is indispensable to research in cultural criticism, where cultural criticism includes English, cultural history and cultural studies, as well as any other discipline that focuses on texts, or seeks to understand the inscription of culture in its artifacts" (160). She sets out to explain the application of textual analysis through the analysis of a painting contending that the questions raised during the interpretation of the meaning of the visual as text are what we could raise while reading any text whether written or visual. In order to eliminate the tendency to make generalization and maintain objectivity she states that as a method of interpretation and criticism textual analysis "involves close encounter with the work itself, an examination of the details without bringing to them more presuppositions that we can help" (Belsey 160). The visual can be analyzed and interpreted as text for instance Belsey explains with the help of the painting by Titian, *Tarquin and Lucretia,* asking how the painting invites us to see Lucretia. Is she presented as a victim of rape or offered as an object of gaze, is where the textual analysis begins. It leads to more complex reading such as the role of gender politics and objectification of women. In order to make assertions about the text, textual analysis takes into account "extra-textual knowledge" (163) where the text is seen as an artifact of culture.

Since the study comprises the medium that involves texts in the form of visuals and audios, approaching it with the help of textual analysis as Belsey proposed, I will be able to make a more informed reading and interpretation of the text. “There is no such thing as ‘pure’ reading: interpretation always involves extra-textual knowledge. Some of this is general, part of the repertoire of knowledges that constitutes a culture, some of it is personal, a matter of one’s own interest or biography; and some is derived from secondary sources” (164). Keeping in view Belsey’s statement as to how a textual analysis can draw meanings that are informed and plausible I also intend to use strategies proposed by her for the analysis of the characters. Evidence from the text, the television dramas, will be supplemented with secondary sources such as researches by scholars and critics. In order to avoid being carried away by the opinion and ideas of others, I intend to analyze the evidence within the texts to find answers posed by my study, leaving what has been said already and arriving at my own interpretations. The secondary sources will be incorporated only in order to support my critical interpretations. As Belsey argues meanings are not static, fixed or single. “Meaning … subsists in the relations between people, inscribed in signifiers, sounds or images … meaning intervenes in the world, defining our understanding of values” (167). The text makes certain demands on the textual analysts. They cannot subjectively assign to it whatever meaning they like, in fact they must let the text participate in the process of meaning making and signification as “every utterance is an iteration” (168). Textual analysis has been used for the present study as a method to trace these “intertexts” through an attentive and focused reading “to establish the specificity of the text in question” (168). The purpose of detailing the strengths of textual analysis is to highlight why is it most suitable for the present study and why it has been preferred over other methods. I also understand and acknowledge that the textual analysis of the drama series from the perspective of feminism cannot be exhaustive as it does not embrace all the possible interpretations of these texts. Since the purpose of cultural criticism is to lead to the informed and critical reading of the texts, both visual and written, textual critical approach will account for what is not studied or has been missed in the reading of the texts under study.

ii. Elfriede Fursich

Elfriede Fursich advocates the study of television discourse as text and message and suggests textual analysis for the study of the content of the media. He states that

poststructuralism's influence made it possible that "not only written material but every cultural practice or product can be analyzed as a text" (240). Structuralists like Derrida, Foucault and Barthes, stressing on significance of language, materiality of discourse and death of the Author directed media critics' interest towards text or content (Fursich 240). Research in media no longer was taken as only objective examination of or quantitative research but as "reading", highlighting the role and significance of the researcher as "interpreter". It also established the autonomy of cultural artifacts or productions as "signifiers in their own right independent of the intentions of the authors and producers or reception of the audience" (240) He comments that in 1974 Raymond Williams suggested "pluralistic television criticism" for the study of television discourse. For Williams television studies should incorporate various aspects of cultural production including technology, economics, political and social factors and institutions that affect the medium. Fursich contends that incorporating all the contributing factors in research on television is an ambitious approach and only large scale projects have been able to use integrated or pluralistic approach to television studies "to present an integration of production, content, and reception consistently" (239). For the majority of research in media and cultural studies in the United States, "single site projects" (239) are more common. He contends that a single method cannot do justice to all the diverse aspects of the medium of television. For instance, to elicit the audience's response and reception of the program, communication and media scholars turn to content analysis. For the scholars interested in analyzing media 'content' textual analysis is a preferred method. He argues "that despite many advantages of large-scale research projects that integrate moments of production, content, and reception, only independent textual analysis can elucidate the narrative structure, symbolic arrangements and ideological potential of media content" (Fursich 239). Textual analysis as a method of research allows the researcher to determine latent meanings, implied patterns and the assumptions and omissions that the text makes. The following definition of textual analysis by Fursich explains how it is the most suitable method in the context of the present study of the objectification of the female hero in television drama series, where the objective of the research is not only to identify and read the latent meanings and patterns but also to expose the ideological biases and inconsistencies that underlie these messages. Textual Analysis is generally a type of qualitative analysis that, beyond the manifest content of media, focuses on the underlying ideological and cultural assumptions of the text. Text is understood as a

complex set of discursive strategies that is situated in special cultural context (Fursich 240).

iii. Horace Newcomb and Paul M. Hirsch

Horace Newcomb and Paul M. Hirsch also support using textual-critical approach for the analysis and criticism of television apart from studying the complexities of style, images, narrative, and metaphor the analysts also focus their attention on "understanding specific messages that may have specific effects" (561). They argue that television is a "cultural forum", an "expressive medium' that through storytelling 'unites and examines a culture" (Newcomb and Hirsch 561). Although it is a visual medium but if its criticism only focuses on visual aspects such as camera angles, lights, props and setting it will be concerned with measuring it only as art rather than communication. Through the examination of the cultural forum such as television, the critic arrives at the critique of the dominant ideology. The concern is for "dominant messages" embedded in the pleasant disguise of fictional entertainment" (Newcomb and Hirsch 562). His observations become a critique of the society since the popular medium of communication transmits and maintains the dominant ideology as it is aimed at the audience, who receive the messages. Newcomb and Hirsch acknowledge the multiplicity of meanings that television programs generate. The audience may share the meanings that a television critic or analyst arrives at or they may create some other meanings as well which "have not been examined, asked about, or controlled for" (562). They explain that since television is a complex medium that involves important issues of "business" and "technology" which affect the processes of production and reception, there cannot be a single mode of analysis that could do justice to reviewing, critiquing and analyzing the medium. They stress on the significance of communication process for television criticism arguing that "Communication is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed" (Newcomb and Hirsch 563). In this way communication through the medium of television is directed towards "persuasion, attitude change, behavior modification, socialization through transformation of information, influence, or conditioning" (562). They argue that their model of television analysis and criticism is grounded in a close analysis of television programs, based on the examination of its "cultural role" (563). As a cultural medium television "presents multiplicity of meanings" (564). It focuses on most prevalent concerns of the society, traditional views, repressive and reactionary views and

subversive and emancipatory ideas. The purpose of television analysis is to focus "on the process rather than the product, on discussion rather than indoctrination, on contradiction and confusion rather than coherence" (564). With this view the analysis of television text demonstrates that it is a cultural medium, which through ritual and art offers a "metalanguage" that can be examined to understand who we are and how values and attitudes are formed (564).

In the light of the directions offered by Newcomb and Hirsch for television analysis I also intend to explore the messages and meanings of the television text in order to lay bare the contradictions implicit in the representation of the female hero. The method of textual analysis takes into account Newcomb and Hirsch's assertion that the analysis of the texts of television can be based on the study of the "messages" such as characters' dialogues, thoughts and utterances, actions and their behavior and interaction with and treatment of other characters; and not just the "medium" such as the aspects of production, reception, and visual aspects of the program like, camera angles, light, and props etc. Newcomb and Hirsch emphasize that the research, criticism and analysis of television texts exposes how dominant ideology is disseminated by lulling the audience into a dream world or in order to maintain a status quo (565). They explain that "Traditional ideological criticism, conducted from communications or the textual analysis perspective, would remark on the way in which social conflict is ultimately subordinated in this dramatic structure to the personal, the emotional" (565). Newcomb and Hirsch explain the process of textual analysis that leads to ideological criticism, by stating the example of an episode of a television drama *Father Knows Best* (1954-60) in which one of the female character's act of rebellion, working outside the home in men's place, has been defused, contained and redirected by showing her quitting the job after a male colleague's criticism and then seeking solace in the same man as her sexual partner. The textual and ideological criticism exposes the woman's problem of identity and sex-role and the male dominant society's sex-role discrimination as the woman is controlled by a coercive measure and her rebellion is contained and redirected. Such an interpretation of television text leads to expose ideological issues and it is not only possible to launch such analysis with the help of textual analysis but it indeed is accurate as well (Newcomb and Hirsch 565).

Television drama series and soaps play a major role in influencing society and shaping perspectives about female heroes in the minds of men and women alike. Kellner in *Media Spectacle* highlights the significance of understanding "media

culture", which he opines provides ever more material for fantasy, dreaming, modeling thought and behavior, and identities" (Kellner 1). Sherrie A. Inness also advocates the study of popular culture and media representation of women by stating that television images affect the socialization process unintentionally by providing role models for its viewers in the fictional characters it represents as entertainment (Inness, *Tough Girls* 49). Portrayals of women on television are not meaningless discourses but an index to what it means to be a female in our society, within the available dimensions and options which the role offers to a woman. The types of roles assigned to women and the stereotypes associated with them convey the society's attitude toward women and its expectations of kinds of behavior they exhibit.

Using textual analysis for interpreting utterances, dialogues, actions and audio-visual codes, the study intends to provide insight into the manifestation of objectification of the female hero and its correspondence to mainstream ideology. Interpretive and textual critical approach allow in depth the analysis of chosen characters in the drama series. I intend to prepare descriptive and critical notes and draw interpretations evaluating the characters as if they are real people acting out their roles in different situations with people they work and live with. This is similar to the way anthropologists and sociologist analyze real life people. It is important to note that I will not take into account how the selected writers envisioned the characters or the way directors designed and portrayed them. Characters' personality, actions, behavior and decisions are taken as being independent of their creators. Although it generally and naturally reflects how women heroes are perceived, created and presented but the creator's motivations and reasons fall outside the premise of this study.

With the help of what Newcomb and Hirsch call "textual-critical approach" (70), questions about the female hero's autonomy, inertness, fungibility, violability, instrumentality, denial of subjectivity and ownership by another person were addressed. The textual critical approach helps in unraveling how the selected texts reinforce taken for granted beliefs or behaviors for women. The purpose is to reveal that such behaviors and beliefs are not normal or appropriate and the analysis will expose ways in which the drama series perpetuate patriarchy and masculine hegemony. Watching each episode, a number of times I shall categorize behaviors that reflect violation of the female hero in all the above mentioned aspects. I consider how these female heroes interact with other characters at the workplace as well as in their interpersonal

relationships. The analysis shall focus only on the roles, behaviors and interactions of the lead female characters with other characters in the selected drama series.

According to Nussbaum's theory of objectification I shall form description, interpretation and evaluation of these instances. I intend to investigate in what terms and through what ways the female hero is objectified so that the potential implications in term of how masculine hegemony is constructing and maintaining female objectification can be exposed. The close analysis will help in identifying various implicit forms of objectification. Through the analysis of the selected dramas I will interpret the messages they perpetuate female subjugation and how women are disempowered. It will help in determining how each character and the roles they enact, the actions and the interactions between and among characters, lead to objectification and support patriarchy or masculine hegemony.

3.2.2 Procedure and Research Methodology

The objective of the present study is to find out if the apparently independent and powerful looking female hero of the primetime dramas that present women in the roles earlier held by male heroes, are really enjoying freedom and have overcome objectification. I am concerned exclusively with identifying the seven notions of objectification defined by Martha Nussbaum. In order to investigate this, I aim to analyze the female heroes in television drama via their actions and dialogues and also by observing their interaction with other characters. For this purpose, I shall watch the selected seasons of these drama series a number of times.

Though much of the interactions and utterances of the characters that I analyzed and cited are straightforward interpretations to discern if they are objectifying the female hero in one or more than one ways that Martha Nussbaum has pointed out in her theory of objectification. I understand that others watching the same drama or scene could come away with some other interpretations, therefore I shall attempt to support my findings with the comments and conclusions of other researchers, writers and critics wherever available and pertinent. Even then I must concede that drawing ironclad conclusions about fictional works will be tenuous as the purpose of my interpretation and critical analysis is to provide insight into these texts to open new avenues of discussion and criticism, rather than proclaiming a single correct or watertight interpretation.

In order to analyze the female hero in terms of Martha Nussbaum's notions of objectification I concentrated on the lead female characters in the three selected drama series: *Grey's Anatomy, Castle and The Good Wife.* The selection of drama series was done in this way in order to give representation to the female hero working in diverse domains. *Grey's Anatomy* presents a doctor, *Castle* a detective and *The Good Wife* an attorney. The professions of these women bear significance for the study as they represent the presence of women in diverse professional arenas. Each drama was classified according to type of program. The types included medical drama, crime drama and legal drama. Medical dramas presented non comic problems surrounding a hospital or medical setting. Crime drama is concerned with law enforcement by public police or private agencies. Legal drama deals with criminal and legal issues revolving around law, lawyers and courtrooms. To ensure accurate and clear description of the selected dramas I will view each episode of the selected seasons of the three drama series on DVDs and supplemented my notes and interpretations with scripts of the drama series. I shall use Newcomb and Hirsch's model of television analysis and criticism that is grounded in a close analysis of television programs. The process of textual analysis lead to ideological criticism. I will explore the messages and meanings of the text in the drama series in order to investigate the contradictions implicit in the representation of the female hero. The method of textual analysis takes into account Newcomb and Hirsch's assertion that the analysis of the texts of television can be based on the study of the "messages" such as characters' dialogues, thoughts and utterances,

The procedure described above will contribute to my analysis of the character of the female hero from the perspective of objectification as defined by Martha Nussbaum. For the study of the objectification of the female heroes in the television drama series the lead female character from each drama series has been selected so that it could be determined as to what extent she is objectified in terms of Martha Nussbaum's notions of objectification.

CHAPTER 4

OBJECTIFICATION THROUGH INSTRUMENTALITY, DENIAL OF AUTONOMY AND OWNERSHIP

In this chapter I explore three notions of objectification; instrumentality, denial of autonomy and ownership, presented by Martha Nussbaum. In order to study the objectification of the female hero the presence and use of these three notions was identified in the three drama series. I developed the discussion and argument using the instances from the drama series wherever the instances that occurred caused the objectification of the female hero, through the use of Nussbaum's notions. The identification of the instances of objectification in the form of Nussbaum's seven notions will not be a mere labeling of these notions. It will not only shed light on the various ways of objectifying the heroes in workplace dramas but also reveal how these heroes are objectified. The identification of the instance will shed light as to how the apparently empowered female hero in her professional and personal lives faces objectification of the personhood rather than that of the body. The first notion that I have discussed with reference to the objectification of the female hero in the television dramas is instrumentality. Martha Nussbaum states that instrumentality occurs when "The objectifier treats the object as a tool for his or her purposes" (*Sex and Social Justice* 218). The person who is objectified is used as a tool to fulfill the agent's goals. In order to see how the three female heroes in the selected drama series become the tool of other people who use them to achieve their purposes and deny them humanity and personhood the situations involving the three female heroes, Meredith Grey, Kate Beckett and Alicia Florrick, have been cited and discussed in the following pages. In order to validate the argument references and comments on the notions of objectification and female heroes' roles and capacities have been incorporated. The analysis of the female heroes in the drama series will reveal how women depicted in strong roles as professional women are objectified in personal and professional lives. In studying objectification literary researches have generally focused on sexual objectification and its consequences for women. Objectification in interpersonal

relationships in the context of personal and professional relationships has not been discussed. Through the analysis of the female heroes' roles and experiences in the selected series I have explored whether the three heroes from different drama series face similar kind of objectification and whether it undermines their power and role as heroes. While identifying the instances of objectification in terms of Martha Nussbaum's notions I also take into account the instances where the female hero objectifies herself. Jessica M. LaCroix and Felicia Pratto in their review of Martha Nussbaum's seven notions of objectification explain that these notions are at work not only in the context of sexual objectification but also in interpersonal, intergroup and institutional contexts. In interpersonal relations the agents or objectifiers might be the family members or close friends who are not hostile agents. When benevolent agents fail to acknowledge the female hero's autonomy and need for independence and self-determination, they are objectifying women. "Agents use Others as tools to fulfill their own goals while overlooking aspects of Others' personhood" (LaCroix and Pratto 190).

In the following pages is given the analysis of the instances that point to the female heroes' objectification in terms of Instrumentality, Denial of Autonomy and Ownership.

4.1 Instrumentality

Martha Nussbaum defines instrumentality as treating someone as a tool for ones' purposes (*Sex and Social Justice* 218). Instrumentality is one of the ways that is used to objectify someone. It is negative because a person's value is determined on the basis that she is a tool to help the objectifier or the agent to fulfill his goals. Instrumentality is problematic in the sense that when a person is perceived merely as an instrument for one's advantage then the objectifier is overlooking the personhood and humanity and engaging in objectification.

4.1.1 Meredith—"A good luck charm"

In season one episode three of *Grey's Anatomy*, an injured biker is brought to the hospital and Meredith is responsible for his treatment. Rick flirts with Meredith as he feels that besides being a doctor she is a pretty woman. He attempts to kiss Meredith as if she might not have any objection to it as he himself is a handsome guy. To him she is more a charming woman than a doctor performing her job. The female hero is an instrument of luck for Rick, the bike racing messenger. He grabs Meredith and gives her a kiss. When he sees that Meredith is perplexed as to what brought it on, he says:

“That was for good luck” (“Winning a Battle”). This shows that to Rick Meredith is little more than a good luck charm. She is not a person, not even a doctor but an object that will bring him the good luck of finishing the race. Just as boxers rub a rabbit's paw against their face as a good luck charm Rick uses Meredith as an instrument to bring him good luck.

In another scene when a young patient under Meredith’s care begins to get convulsions Meredith starts panicking and needs Dr. Shepherd to help her. Although she tries to take charge of the situation, it gets out of control and she begins to panic and feel the need of an expert. When Dr. Shepherd arrives to attend to the patient he orders Meredith “Just go” (“A Hard Day’s Night”). These two words can be taken as instrumentality as when an instrument or object doesn’t work we get rid of it and use another. Shepherd’s refusal to let Meredith stay and assist him reveals the same. He scolds her and shoves her off and she has to go out and cannot disobey him.

On another occasion Meredith faces an explanation for her conduct at the open heart surgery. In the presence of the patient's husband she admits to rupturing the heart through the popped up finger nail. Dr. Burke had faced a similar accusation where five years ago he had closed a patient with a towel in his lungs but the incident was not reported at the time. It was only five years later that it was discovered and Burke was yet to face it. On this occasion when Meredith is defending herself in front of the authorities, Burke intervenes to defend Meredith and admits his involvement in a similar kind of case claiming it to be a human error. He tries to defend Meredith by focusing on the point that she has accepted her mistake and is not hiding facts in order to save herself. Burke seems to be helping a colleague but in fact he is saving himself and is justifying his own case by taking Meredith as an example. Meredith tells Cristina and Bailey, “Burke saved my ass in there” (“Shake Your Groove Thing”). Dr. Bailey is able to understand Burke's tactics as she says, “He was always gonna tell them about the towel. Just wanted to wait for the right time. Information is power” (“Shake Your Groove Thing”). This proves that Burke uses Meredith to cover up his own slipup and at the hearing he makes it seem as if he is defending Meredith. This is evidence of instrumentality as Burke the objectifier treats Meredith as an instrument for his own purposes.

In season seven, after Meredith and Shepherd have gotten married they agree that while Meredith concentrates on her work and research at Gray Sloan Memorial Hospital in Seattle he will not move elsewhere and keep working at the same hospital

with her while taking care of kids at home to support her. But despite this agreement when he shows interest in a job offer at Washington, Meredith feels it to be a breach in their promise and also begins to feel that his career means more to him than her career. Although Shepherd refuses the offer after Meredith's disapproval of his action and after considering that he should sacrifice his desire for the love of his family and children he later accepts the job when Meredith matter-of-factly tells him to accept the dream job and not act as martyr through his sacrifice. Shepherd's leaving Meredith alone to juggle with the responsibilities of children and job can be termed as instrumentality as he leaves her to take care of the children in pursuit of his career enhancing, high profile job. Meredith, although claiming that she will manage without him, faces difficulty in meeting the challenges at home. She hires a nanny for the children as she cannot attend to them full time due to her work commitments. But when she can stay at home and be with children she seems to be running away from them by staying late at the hospital and by staying in the company of her colleagues instead of kids:

BAILEY. Where are kids?

MERIDITH. Upstairs. Daycare. Nightcare. Whatever. It's open 24 hours.

BAILE.Y. You know it's only for surgeons on call, right?

MEREDITH. Bailey, Don't Judge me. Derek lives in DC.

BAILEY. No, I'm saying if they ask you, make up something about being on call.

MERIDITH: You all realize that printing this thing is gonna take, like five more hours? 7 ish. 7 hours and 20 minutes. 7 and a half.

BAILEY: I'm just saying you could go home, sleep, and then come back.

MERIDITH: Someone has to stay in incase the printer crashes. ("The Bed is too Big")

Shepherd wants to use Meredith as an instrument to take care of kids and she refuses the instrumentality by escaping that responsibility and focusing instead on her career like Shepherd. Explaining the notion of instrumentality in the perspective that Nussbaum uses it, is not just sexual instrumentality but for other purposes as well, Jessica M. LaCroix and Felicia Pratto state that power facilitates instrumentalization "whereby the needs, interests, and experiences of those with less power are subordinated to those of the powerful" (190). Shepherd being a man is more powerful

in his position as a spouse and as a surgeon. His decision of not giving up on a better offer to enhance career puts Meredith in the position where she is used as an instrument to raise the children and manage her career alone although she does not compromise on her career in order to prove that it is no less significant than that of her husband.

4.1.2 "Every artist needs a muse"

In the context of objectification, the role of the female hero Kate Beckett in the drama series *Castle*, also offers instances of instrumentality. Beckett's boss Montgomery describes her as "A tough but savvy female detective" ("Flowers for Your Grave"). She has been defined as a female detective who has toughness and experience combined in her. This seems a rare combination to him as he describes her as "female detective" not just as a detective as if it is hard to find tough and expert women in the field.

Beckett's boss, Montgomery calls her to his office to issue an order that he expects her to comply with. He tells her that she has to work with the novelist as he wants to do some research for his new novel. Beckett is upset at this and protests against the boss's order claiming that she finds Castle immature and childish in the last case where they had to work together. She feels his unprofessional and inexpert way of working completely unacceptable in dealing with cases of crime and murder. But her boss is taken over by the fact that the mayor is a huge fan of Castle and his novels and Castle has asked for the mayor's favor to let him assist in cases with Beckett for collecting material for his novels. Beckett's boss finds it a very good opportunity to please the mayor and the commissioner as winning their favor will secure his job and lead him to a promotion. It is worth mentioning that Montgomery does not acknowledge Beckett's contribution in solving the case in which Castle joined her and acted with autonomy, dismissing Beckett's order. Montgomery says "But he did solve this case" ("Flowers for Your Grave") showing that her boss gives the credit of solving the case to Castle, despite Beckett's protest and complaint that he is "totally incapable of taking anything seriously" ("Flowers for Your Grave").

Beckett's boss tells her that from that time onwards, Castle will take part in the cases along with her as he needs to get first-hand knowledge of crime scenes and will witness the cases to obtain material for his upcoming novels. This shows that Beckett is used as a tool for Castle to achieve his goal of producing best sellers. They are thus using Beckett as a means to an end. The female detective hero will be used as an

instrument to enable the novelist in creating his stories. She is used by Castle, representing the male species in order to obtain material for his stories and by her Boss for securing his job.

An officer in Beckett's office enthusiastically announces that a character in Castle's next novel is based on Beckett. To this Castle replies "Every artist needs a muse" ("Hell Hath No Fury"). This can be taken as instrumentality as Castle is using Beckett for his purposes. In the first place Castle joins Beckett in her investigations to do some research for the detective novels that he writes. Beckett is termed as a "muse", i.e. an inspiration since Castle needs inspiration in order to produce popular and bestselling detective novels. Here the female hero is objectified and Castle as her objectifier treats her as an instrument of luck and inspiration. Later when Beckett asks him what sort of a character he has framed after her he explains that the detective in her novel is "really smart, very savvy, haunting good looks, really good at her job… and kind of slutty" ("Hell Hath No Fury"). In other words, he identifies in Beckett all that is needed in a female character in his novel that will attract his readers and make his novel a bestseller. In the seventh season when Castle himself gets the license to practice as a private detective and he no longer needs to work under the shadow of Beckett, he announces to her "Much like my Nikki Heat novels were inspired by you, my new series will be inspired by me. I'll be my own muse" ("Private Eye Caramba"). It is evident from Castles' statement that as long as he is unable to work as a detective without Beckett's help he uses her as a tool to achieve his objective. As a common citizen he cannot work as a detective he uses his connections, to seek a place with Beckett to gather material for his detective novels. He based his major female characters on her when he is told that he can no longer continue to work with NYPD without having employment here he takes a private detective's course and gets his own license. After becoming a private detective, he does not need her help anymore and can work independently since she is no longer of any use to him for his writing career. That's why he announces that his new series of novels will be based on his own experiences as a private eye and he no longer needs Nikki Heat, the character he has based on Beckett.

In episode nine "Little Girl Lost", Beckett comes across Sorenson with whom she has been in a relationship in the past. When Castle comes to know about it he considers it a good opportunity to add some spice to the life of his upcoming novel's lead character whom he has framed after Beckett. He deliberately snoops into the past

of Beckett and Sorenson. On finding an opportunity to talk to Sorenson about his feelings for Beckett he manipulates the situation to accuse him of hiring Beckett for a particular case because he wants to see her again. In fact, Castle does so to rekindle the flame so that he can get some stuff for his novel. Beckett and Sorenson's affair will provide him with interesting material for his novel and he deliberately brings up this topic in the conversation to ignite in Sorenson's heart the feeling which existed once. This can be termed as instrumentality for Castle is not sincere in bringing two estranged lovers together, he just wants to see how things turn between them so that he finds some romantic episodes to incorporate into his novel around his detective hero's Nikki Heat's character. This is instrumentality as Castle as objectifier is using Beckett as an instrument for his own purpose. He is setting her up against her own wishes with a man whom she left some time ago. What is important for Castle is to find a story and romance in the real situation to produce another bestseller. And if it is at the expense of setting Beckett up against the person she does not want to be with, Castle can play tactfully by enticing Sorenson.

In one episode Beckett asks Castle to give his ideas regarding the particular case that they are dealing with and Castle replies that he has no idea about the suspects. Beckett tasks him to give a clue as he has always been good at finding clues and suggesting unusual theories that in fact help Beckett in solving cases. Castle's reply in this instance is interesting as he says that he does not yet have any theory "But I will once you identify who met Paul at the park" ("Kill Switch"). Castle wants Beckett to give him a lead before he can give her a clue. Jessica M. LaCroix and Felicia Pratto argue that when agents use others to fulfill their goals, overlooking the Other's personhood they objectify them, using them as instruments (190). LaCroix and Pratto also explain that one need not be hostile in one's attempts at instrumentalizing others. If benevolent agent also "fail[s] to acknowledge that women have autonomy over their lives, they are objectifying women" (LaCroix and Pratto 189). In this instance Beckett is relying on Castle to give some clue in solving the problem whereas Castle feels that he can only come up with a solution by making Beckett act for him i.e. she should find out for him who Paul had met before he was murdered as this information will lead him to propose a theory for the solution of the case.

After getting the license of a private detective Castle works independently on the same murder case that Beckett is investigating. The professional rivalry and competition has increased as Castle gets his license without the knowledge of Beckett,

who does not share any information of the case with Castle and both want to resolve the case before the other does. Beckett turns up at Castle's office when he is about to interview a woman regarding the investigation and the latter asks Beckett "…would you care to sit in on my interview?" ("Castle P.I."). Castle stresses on "my interview" implying that since Beckett did not let him work with her team, he is doing it on his own and she is not the boss as he is independent now. Later he has difficulty finding out why the victim of the murder made the trip to Randor University and he resents Beckett holding back this information which can give him a lead into the case. "I just wish I knew what Beckett had" ("Castle P.I."). He does not want Beckett to know anything about what he is doing in solving the case but he wants the crucial information from her. He doesn't wish her to help him rather he wants the information from her. In this way Beckett's value is merely that of an instrument for him. Just like the previous instance of instrumentality where he wants Beckett to find out about Paul's last meeting then only would he give her a clue or a theory. Here also he needs Beckett to give him the information that she can have access to through NYPD, and which he is unable to get on his own showing that he wants to use Beckett for his own purpose. LaCroix and Pratto explain that people may use their friends, family members, or romantic partners as instruments for achieving particular goals and such relations may include instrumentality (190). However, they say that in such relationships for objectification to occur the degree of reciprocation and mutuality is important. "If one party uses the Other to its own ends ***and*** disregards, the Other's autonomy, agency, and/or subjective experiences, then we may label the behavior objectification" (191). In this particular instance Castle as the romantic partner of Beckett does not regard her feelings, but needs from her the specific information to be successful in his first case as private investigator.

On a number of occasions Beckett assumes only instrumental value in the series and for Castle as well. In "Sleeper", Castle wants to solve the mystery of his abduction and the two months that he has no memory of, when he went missing. Since his recurring dreams are giving him clues to his past he wants to find the person he sees in his dream. Castle resolves to solve the mystery of his absence himself. Beckett has no significant part to play in resolving this case. Castle takes on the role of the investigator himself but needs Beckett to find certain information for him, using her resources as an NYPD detective. "I am going to track him down I'm going to need you to do a background check on him" ("Sleeper"). He does not take Beckett along to solve the

case and find the missing links but needs her only to give him details from the records that she has access to at NYPD. In this way she is used as a tool for his purpose instead of sharing and working with him as equal partner.

A similar situation occurs where Castle wants to find answers to solve the mystery of a murder he witnessed when he was young and for that he asks Beckett for help. He has suffered the agony in silence for years and now wants to end the misery he felt ever since he witnessed the crime but could not do anything to stop it then. He needs Beckett's help to check the thirty years record to find some traces to the murderer. "I have to find this guy, Kate. I need to end this" ("Hollander's Woods"). Although this case is closer to Castle as he personally feels bound to resolve it being the witness of the crime, it also would put an end to the agony he suffered all these years for not being able to resolve it. Beckett notices that Castle obtains the cues from what she and her team found out, and wants to resolve it without involving them, she reminds him "Look Castle, we want to solve it as much as you do" ("Hollander's Woods"). She tries to make him realize that the case might be more relevant to him as he had witnessed a similar kind of murder in his childhood. She wants to assure him that she and her team are interested in seeking its resolution and that Castle must take them along and must not treat them as the means to his ends.

4.1.3 "Brand Saint Alicia!"

In the opening of the drama series *The Good Wife* the female hero, Alicia Florrick has been described as "the good girl—the good girl who became the good wife, then the good mom … devoted, struggling not to outshine her husband" ("Pilot Outline"). Alicia Florrick, the wife of a politician, State Attorney Peter Florrick, who is facing charges of misconduct and fornication, is literally made to stand by her husband in the first episode of the drama series. The wronged wife who suffers the blow of her husband's infidelity accompanies him to the press conference following the news of charges of corruption, bribery and fornication against him. As a face saving tactic Peter needs his wife to stand by him in the public to prove his innocence. Alicia is lost in her thoughts even as she stands beside him as he addresses the press conference. The anguish of being cheated on by her husband and the loss of trust are evident in her expression. While standing beside him she sees a piece of lint on his sleeve and raises her hand to remove it, as if she cannot ignore her duty of being a caring and faithful wife. She is to remove the blemish that tarnishes her husband's reputation by standing

by him in public to show to people that all charges are false and no matter how much she suffers she does not show it. When Peter finishes the press conference he grabs Alicia's hand and quickly moves inside avoiding the press and almost dragging Alicia. Alicia stands by him at this time when she herself needs consolation and time to recover from this shock. She is being used as a tool to protect his reputation and her being there shows that she is an instrument of his innocence. As a politician he cannot afford to lose public opinion which will affect his votes and chances for winning the next term.

Peter and his lawyer Daniel Gold tell Alicia that they need her to testify at his upcoming bail hearing. They want Alicia to show in the court that she is eager to welcome him home. Peter knows that Alicia is not happy about it and is not ready to welcome him and reestablish the relationship that has gone awry due to his straying. For his appeal hearing they come up with the strategy of presenting Alicia as a testimony to save Peter. She is being used as an instrument to get Peter's bail. Peter's lawyer tells Alicia, "We need you to do something that we didn't expect. We need you to testify … to show that Peter was lying to protect you … from the affair" ("Fixed"). Alicia does not resist being used as an instrument despite her wish not to do so, she testifies for her husband as it is the only way he can save himself. She testifies for her husband in the court in the bail case at his lawyer's instructions. In another hearing where Alicia is absent, Peter's lawyer scores some points in the case and tells her later that had she been there as a witness they would have done a lot better. Earlier he tries to bribe Alicia by giving her presents to make her agree to being a witness in the case and aid them in winning the case.

Not only in a court of law is Alicia needed to save her husband and serve as an instrument but to save her husband's political career also she is used as an instrument. Peter's political advisor and campaign strategist Eli God suggests to him that securing Alicia's support is crucial for his political comeback. Alicia is annoyed to see Eli Gold who has come to see her in her office to convince her to support her husband's political campaign. "Peter can't win without you. You know that. Peter only wins with your good housekeeping seal of approval. Voters need to see you together up on that stage holding hands" ("Running"). In order to rebuild his image in public and to regain their confidence he thinks that Peter must use Alicia. If Alicia stands by her husband, Peter's image will be restored as it will give the message to the public that Peter is a martyr and has suffered not because of his own faults but due to the political schemes of his foes. Once again Alicia is used as a tool to save her husband who is intent on saving his

political career and ambitions. Alicia tells Eli that she will think about it but she cannot prevent being instrumentalized.

Peter is upset about Alicia's speech against him due to which he loses the votes of the African Americans. He criticizes her for calling him a racist for her political gains. Alicia's reply confirms that she is an instrument for Peter for his political advantages:

> PETER. You don't personally think I am a racist. But there is a political advantage in calling me a racist.
>
> ALICIA. Let's just get through this then we'll get back to you using me politically". ("Red Meat")

Alicia is aware of Peter's strategy and also the way he has used her to save his reputation in public, still she cannot stop herself being used as an instrument. Here she does not cover up for her comment about Peter but she makes him understand that if he sees her move as her political strategy, she also has been used by Peter for his advantage.

In the sixth season of *The Good Wife,* Eli suggests to Alicia to run for State Attorney. He sees her as a potential candidate who will be successful as a politician as she has everything that the voters look for in a candidate. "We need a woman and people like you. They respect you … you are a brand …. saint Alicia…" ("The Line"). It suggests that Alicia is looked at as a 'brand'. The brand is that of a loyal wife who stands by her erring husband, a politician—and thus helps him in his career. Now that the voters and the general public especially women recognize Alicia as a 'good wife' and love her for her sacrifices she will sell well as brand. It is important to consider that Alicia is not praised for being a lawyer here but for being a faithful wife who stands by her husband and stoically bears the pain. This will sell in politics and get her votes. He is thinking about promoting Alicia as a candidate who will sell like a brand in the political market. Her sacrifices for Peter, standing by her husband despite his infidelity, raising children by taking up responsibility of work after Peter's imprisonment; all these will earn her a vote of sympathy as she is labelled 'Saint Alicia' in press and on social media. Eli wants to take advantage of this and that's why he tries to convince her to accept the offer and run for State Attorney. His suggestion stems out of his own interest as her husband's political strategist he wants to benefit his political party. He tells Peter "I am the only one trying to keep Alicia on board". He advises Peter to consider using Alicia, since she has topped the popularity polls against Castro. "For not having Alicia

run you should listen to him" ("The Line"). He realizes that Alicia is crucial to her husband's political career. Peter was initially reluctant to let Alicia run for the seat but when he realizes that his other options are terrible he asks Eli to talk to Alicia. He wants to use her as a final card against his opponent. When Alicia asks Eli about the candidate that Peter is supporting she is shocked to know that it is Castro. Eli reveals to Alicia that if she refuses to run for the State's Attorney then Peter has no choice but to support his rival Castor. "James Castro is the only one who can win and Peter needs to back a winner" ("Dear God"). Alicia terms it as Eli's strategy to convince her to run against Castro. She tells him he is trying to make her say yes to his offer. Eli replies "No Alicia. Not everything is about you" ("Dear God"). This remark clearly states that it is not about Alicia's talents, competence or enigma in the public that Peter and Eli want her to contest but it is Peter's political ambitions and his party's advantages that will benefit if Alicia agrees to their wishes. Therefore, Eli's remark confirms the fact that Alicia is an instrument for helping Peter and his party and has no intrinsic value.

Alicia is under a lot of pressure from all sides to run for State Attorney. She is getting phone calls from newspapers and television channels, going round for dinners and receptions; also she meets people who congratulate her on her running for the post which she denies every time she gets a compliment. In the next episode "Dear God' Alicia comes across people who introduce themselves and tell her that her husband, the state's governor has sent them to her. They come to see her to convince her to support the minorities and people of color. She denies running for the seat but they tell her that Peter has assured them that she is running and will entertain them. Alicia finds it hard to avoid the pressure. She denies campaigning for the post whereas Peter and Eli circulate the news about her campaign. Thus she is driven into politics against her wishes. At the same reception where she meets the representatives of African Americans who assure her of their support she is caught off-guard by a leading feminist spokesperson Gloria Steinem, who tells her that she is pleased to know about her decision to run for the office. Alicia denies agreeing to run for the office of the State Attorney saying that her husband's chief of staff suggested to her to run. "It wasn't my idea. My husband's chief of staff wants me to run" ("Dear God") thus affirming that her husband's campaign manager has more authority over her. She tells him that she is confused but he is sure about her chances of winning against Castro. Steinem tells her "People respect you…we need more good women to run" ("Dear God"). Everyone tells her that being a woman she can be used and cashed in. They do not recognize her

qualities and tell her that she is popular being a woman and more importantly because of being a loyal wife to an unfaithful husband. Her praise and popularity have nothing to do with her qualities or heroism. The renowned feminist Gloria Steinem persuades her to take over the cause of women's rights since the public sees Alicia as the wronged wife who has been stoically bearing all the humiliation and heartbreak owing to her husband's scandal. She can utilize this emotional attachment of the public for the movement of women. She tells her "Alicia I am tired. I need you to take over for me … I am serious do run" ("Dear God"). Alicia cannot prevent herself from being objectified. She becomes a tool not only for her husband's political campaign through Eli but also because the feminist leader wants to use her as a linchpin in their movement for women's rights.

Alicia cannot create her own image. For her campaign for the State Attorney's position Alicia is directed by her team who design her image according to what they consider will appeal to the voters. Not only is she made to submit to the job but she also has to act, speak, dress up and behave according to what her campaign strategist and his team suggest. During the mock debate session in preparation of the upcoming election, when her opinion does not match with that of her team she has to alter it. In this way she becomes an instrument for Peter who has pushed her to the job and is directing and controlling her speech and actions through her campaign team. The way she is tutored to prepare for her interview, act in her ad campaign, participate in the mock debate all show that she is being used as an instrument.

Alicia's campaign manager Johnny wants her to speak against Peter. Eli on finding this out forbids Alicia from doing so. He warns her of dangerous consequences if she trashes Peter whereas Johnny tells her to go after Peter with no mercy, Alicia goes with Johnny's advice and criticizes Peter. It is a testimony to the fact that she is an instrument for the people who are building her up as a politician. She just does what she is told to do and has no power to decide things. This shows that she is so used to being owned and denied autonomous decisions and actions that she has stopped thinking for herself. Johnny, due to his clash with Eli, tells her not to have any mercy for Peter, as Eli has threatened him that if he makes Alicia talk against Peter in her campaign he will take away his job at California. When Johnny tells Alicia to do as he is telling her to, he is under the influence of drink, yet Alicia takes his word for it and pursues it, not thinking autonomously.

When allegations of election tampering come to the surface Alicia is in hot waters. She is unaware if the tampering has been deliberately designed by her party. She asks Peter whether he is aware of this fraud in tampering with the voting machines with the help of a hacking device but he denies doing so or having any information about it. Ernie Nolan tells Alicia that since she did not take his money she has to face the music. Her party asks her to step down. When she asks about the consequences if she does not withdraw she is told "The party will destroy you or the governorship" ("Winning Ugly"). She is used as an instrument. She does not cheat but she is asked to sacrifice to save those who do. When she meets the lawyer, Randolph, who represents her, she is overwhelmed by him as she admires him. She accepts the lawyer assigned to her and shows her confidence in him as he is a renowned and experienced lawyer. In the court she is prevented from speaking the truth and her lawyer betrays her by saying the opposite of what she intends to say. The lawyer speaks against Alicia in front of the court instead of defending her. He accuses her of lying to him. She follows him outside to ask him why the man she revered for his professional acumen let her down. But he does not explain anything to her. When she accuses him of betrayal he advises her to be a good Democrat and step down. Her attorney also is dictating to her what she should do. Not only is Alicia denied autonomy to speak and act as she feels but she is also used as a pawn or a tool by her party.

Alicia's bosses also objectify her and use her as an instrument for their advantage. When Jonas Stern, the founding partner of Stern Lockhart & Gardner faces the charge of Driving Under Influence. He visits the office of the company and asks Will Gardner and Diane Lockhart that he needs Alicia, who impressed him by winning his daughter's case. He tells them he is thinking of defending himself but will need Alicia as a front:

> STERNS. Is that her? The state attorney's wife who defended my daughter? I want her. I want her as a front. I'll defend myself through her.
>
> DIANE. This is a bad idea Jonas.
>
> STERNS. I want her to represent me". ("Threesome")

Jonas Sterns wants to use Alicia as a front in the case that he intends to defend himself. The way he tells them that he wants Alicia shows that he is asking them to use her as a tool to achieve his goal. He does not greet Alicia when Will tries to introduce her to him, showing she is not important to him. Later when he tells Will that he wants

her to represent him, it confirms that she is no more than a tool for him. Kalinda, the in-house investigator, also tells Alicia that Sterns is using her as a tool:

KALINDA. So, Sterns still treating you like a puppet?

ALICIA. Here is my script. (“Threesome”)

Jonas Sterns wants Alicia to represent her but wants her to proceed with the case the way he wants to. He hires her to make her do what he wants hence he is using her as an instrument.

Also in the eleventh episode “Infamy” season one, Alicia is told to take up the divorce case of her husband’s nemesis Glenn Childs. Carla, Childs’ wife knows that Alicia’s husband is facing a sentence due to her husband Child’s rivalry and plotting. Now that she needs a divorce from Childs on her own terms she wants to use Alicia to make him settle for what she wants. Carla tells Alicia straightforwardly what the divorce lawyer hesitates to tell Alicia:

DAVID. Carla thought you’d be sympathetic.

CARLA. David is being euphemistic. Given how Glen is acting I thought I need a secret weapon”

ALICIA. Now it would be me?

CARLA. Yes. (“Infamy”)

Carla clearly tells Alicia that she wants to use her as a tool to meet her goal: that is to make her husband Glenn Childs agree to her conditions for divorce. She has threatened her husband that she will share secret information with the Florricks if he does not agree to give children’s custody and the house to her. She tells Alicia that Childs wiretapped her husband’s calls and she saw the recording on his computer. Carla is able to get what she wants in the end by threatening Childs and hiring Alicia as her attorney. When Alicia asks her “You are using me as a leverage”. Clara tells Alicia “Use me back” (“Infamy”). Carla’s strategy pays her off but Alicia can do little to save herself from being used as an instrument.

Alicia desperately needs to secure the job at Lockhart & Gardner. She says to Diane, “Tell me what you want because I can’t lose this job” (“Unplugged”). When the competition between herself and Carry reaches the decisive point she approaches Diane on Kalinda’s advice. Diane praises Alicia and tells her that she is better than Cary, although Cary also has potential but he does not have the connections that Alicia has. It surprises Alicia for Diane is hinting at Alicia’s position being firm in the company only if she agrees to use her political connections that will benefit the firm whose

finances continue to founder. It is a sort of bargain that Alicia makes with Diane that if she agrees to make use of her contacts for the benefit of the firm she has Diane's vote secured:

DIANE. Your name your connections. You have been reluctant to use them.

ALICIA. You want me to use my connections?"

DIANE. I want you to want the job. ("Unplugged")

Diane knows what Alicia's connections as a politician's wife can bring to the firm so she manipulates Alicia's position knowing well that she cannot afford to lose the job and refuse her. Diane is objectifying Alicia by using her as a tool to save her company that is going through a financial crisis. Alicia approaches Eli Gold for a favor in order to follow Diane's offer and asks him to send some clients to Lockhart and Gardner. This also means that she will agree to Eli's offer of helping Peter in his campaign. She cannot deny being an instrument. If she does not use her connections to bring clients to the firm, she will lose her job as Diane wants her to bring her husband Peter's high profile contacts as clients to their firm to increase its repute and revenue. Being pressed with mounting bills at home while Peter faces imprisonment she cannot avoid being used as a tool.

When Diane and Cary decide to take David Lee as a partner in the firm that they own with Alicia, Alicia is not taken into confidence regarding this decision. She confronts Diane and Cary for excluding her from the decision making process. Diane tells her that she was contesting for the State Attorney's position to save Cary who faced drug charges because of the current State's Attorney Castro's malice. Diane's comment proves that there are many factors that lead to Alicia contesting for the office. On the one hand it is to save Peter and to benefit him in his political career that Eli pushes her to run and on the other hand it is the firm's partner and colleague Cary Agos' life that is to be saved by making Alicia take over Castro's place. Saving Cary is important as he is facing charges of drug dealing that will affect their firm's repute. They all think how useful Alicia is for them in achieving their objectives. Diane and Cary want Alicia to save Cary from the charges but on his acquittal they ignore her while making an important decision about the firm. Peter's political strategist pushes Alicia to run for the State Attorney's office to benefit Peter, his party and himself as well. Although in reply to Diane's charge that one of the reasons for her running for the office is to save Cary. Alicia tells her that she is doing it because she can win. It may

seem that Alicia is showing autonomy as previously whenever she was asked by people why she was running she couldn't come up with an answer. It is only now that she tells Diane that she is confident of winning that's why she is running for the office.

4.2 Denial of Autonomy

Martha Nussbaum states that one of the seven ways to deny a person her humanity and treat her as an object is done through denying her autonomy. For denial of autonomy "The objectifier treats the object as lacking in autonomy and self-determination" (*Sex and Social Justice* 218). Women are hardly ever presented as autonomous characters. Their representation as side kick or mere sex object status in media shows they lack autonomy. In the context of the present study where the female characters have been assigned the role of heroes in the dramas it is worth noting how much autonomous these female heroes are. Nussbaum states that "negating the autonomy that is proper to them as persons, also leaves the human beings so denuded of humanity" (223) that she seems ripe for other forms of objectification and abuses whether physical, spiritual or emotional. The analysis of the female heroes from the perspective of denial of autonomy will reveal whether and to what extent they are denied autonomy. Also it is worth noting whether it is others who deny her autonomy and the right to make decisions or the female hero herself, who denies autonomy to herself. Martha Nussbaum points to this aspect by stating that women who are dominated, learn to turn themselves into objects. Thus objectification can be "asymmetrical: On the one side the objectifier, on the other side the volunteer for object status" (SSJ 225). In the discussion that follows, I have discussed the examples of denial of autonomy of the female heroes in the selected series.

4.2.1 "It's the chase"

The very first exchange between Meredith and Shepherd shows Meredith's objectification in terms of denial of autonomy. In the first episode Meredith's denial of autonomy is evident when Shepherd counters her imperatives to leave her house with imperatives of his own. He negates the force of Meredith's imperatives and objectifies her by denying her autonomy. Meredith does not want to have a conversation with Shepherd. The only thing she wants is to get him out of her house but he issues a host of statements and questions that clearly show that he does not think Meredith's wish that he leaves the house, to be important. All he wants is to get her into bed with him again. "Come back down here. We'll pick up where we left off" and later he says "We

can do anything you want" ("A Hard Day's Night"). This shows the power he exercises over Meredith. Also the imperative mentioned above is Shepherd's response to Meredith's imperative sentence telling him to leave. The use of the imperative shows that he does not think Meredith to have the ability to determine things for herself. She has decided that he has to leave but he does not value her decision. Meredith's objectification lies in that Shepherd does not give her the right to determine things and tries to force his decision on her.

Shepherd strikes up a conversation which Meredith does not want. He also counters the force of Meredith's imperatives by questions. He tries to evade Meredith's orders by trying to strike up a conversation. Meredith's lack of autonomy becomes evident as she is forced to divulge personal information to a stranger: she has just moved from Boston, and it is her indisposed mother's house. She is living in the house but wants to sell it. For someone who does not want to talk, this is a lot of information and shows her objectification. Shepherd does not respect her right to decide for herself whether she wants to talk or not. He makes the decision for her and the female hero cannot help but be objectified.

When Meredith finds Shepherd chasing her at work she wants to distance herself from him, knowing that a workplace romance with her senior will lead to trouble for her. Exasperated due to Shepherd's doggedness, Meredith feels herself being preyed upon like some bird. She counters Shepherd and asks him, "It's the chase isn't it? The thrill of the chase … It is fun…this is a game to you" ("Winning a Battle"). She terms it as a "chase", "game" and "fun" and denies her involvement in whatever are the pursuits of Shepherd, who is adamant in making her submit to his wish. Meredith's calling it a "game" and a "chase" has the connotations of hunting and involves a hunter hunting for a weaker prey. Shepherd considers Meredith weak and vulnerable owing to the fact that she is his junior and new to the workplace. This superiority allows him to take advantage of her. Meredith's calling Shepherd's following her a "chase" also highlights the violation of boundary integrity. Shepherd is aiming at a weaker prey, his subordinate, in the form of Meredith whom he considers vulnerable due to her position at the hospital as a fresh trainee doctor. She retorts by saying that he has "something to prove" ("Winning a Battle"). Meredith's refusal is based on the principle that he is her senior and it is a violation of hospital rules hence she feels uncomfortable and thinks it is not right to pursue a relationship with her boss. "You are my boss, you know it's against the rules, you know I keep saying no" ("Winning a Battle"). Keeping in view

their professional status there is a boundary which Meredith respects but she finds it hard to keep this boundary intact because Shepherd is violating this boundary. Meredith's use of the word "chase" for Shepherd's actions reveals the position Meredith finds herself in. Despite being the female hero in the drama, Meredith finds herself in the role of a victim. This connotes that as the hunter in this game and chase it is Shepherd who claims ownership on her and has the right to control her. This analogy of hunting and preying upon also shows denial of autonomy as it is the hunter who decides which object or animal to choose as its prey and the object has no choice or autonomy to refuse or escape.

Near the end of the episode Shepherd meets Meredith in the dressing room and tries to entice her again, by referring to her "tiny, ineffectual fists and … hair" ("Winning a Battle") in order to make her submit to his wish. To this Meredith responds again with a refusal and Shepherd is confident that he will finally make her do as he desires. As is evident in his reply that he gives, soon after this Meredith says she is still not going out with him. "You say that now" ("Winning a Battle"), as if he knows she cannot refuse him and will eventually submit. Shepherd's insistence on making Meredith comply with his feelings is evidence of the female hero being denied autonomy. Shepherd then abruptly issues a command to her "Go out with me" ("Winning a Battle") when he feels the discussion is getting heated up and he accuses Meredith of her laxity. He then moves to ordering when he feels she will not have any chance to resign or resist and a plain and curt "No" from Meredith makes him revert to convincing through emotional sympathy blackmail. He tells her "You know, I almost died today ... How would you feel if I died and you did not get a chance to go out with me?" ("Winning a Battle"). Here again Meredith's choice or preference is not taken into consideration. Shepherd phrases his thought in words in a way that makes Meredith feel guilty. Though she does not want to have a romantic relationship with her senior, he coaxes her into believing that she belongs to him and he owns her and also that she is treating him inhumanely. Actually if he had died without materializing his wish into reality and seducing Meredith, he would have had a wish unfulfilled whereas in asking Meredith "How would you feel if I died and you didn't get a chance to go out with me?" ("Winning a Battle") the question is intended to make her feel not only guilty of denying him the fulfilment of his wish by being cold and aloof but also to assert that it is she who feels the need to feel comforted and complete through the acceptance of a man's offer to seduce her. Here Shepherd as the objectifier is denying Meredith

autonomy, as if she is incapable of choosing for herself and making decisions. By making her feel guilty he is denying her the free exercise of her right to decide and choose what she wants for herself.

Shepherd keeps asking Meredith why is she upset when she does not feel like talking to him and wants to spend some time alone. Meredith is upset as she feels that her negligence could have caused the death of the patient who had had open heart surgery. Shepherd despite Meredith's refusal to discuss her problems with him keeps asking her questions and imposes his decision of going out to dinner. Meredith is denied autonomy as Shepherd, when she refuses to go with him says that she is refusing him because she has a party at home the same night. Meredith is amazed at how he knows that she never told him. “Your friends will be at the party. You and I can be alone somewhere else” (“Shake Your Groove Thing”). Meredith does not want to talk to him at the moment and wants to be alone, whereas Shepherd's insistence on making Meredith speak and imposing his decision on her reveal that the female hero is not given autonomy and Shepherd as her objectifier is making decisions for her.

There are innumerable instances where Meredith is denied the right to make decisions for herself. It underscores the female hero's worth as she does not seem powerful and in control of her life. Meredith is objectified at the workplace by not just men but other females too, whether the interns like her or her seniors. In one instance Dr. Bailey comments on Meredith's personal life when she is assisting her, referring to Meredith's affair with Dr. Shepherd. Instead of feeling embarrassed or intimidated Meredith blazes out a series of statements which reveal that she would not let anyone dictate to her what she needs to do or to control her life. As a reaction to Dr. Bailey's overt references to her personal life Meredith shows her ability to take an aggressive stance against anyone who seems to intimidate her. Thus she is refusing denial of autonomy and boundary integrity. Also when Meredith feels that Bailey is not respecting her boundary and is intervening into her personal space she shows resistance and stops her from doing that. “I made a choice, and I know you don't respect me for that choice. But I'll live with the consequences” (“The Self Destruct Button”). Meredith's stance and attitude reveal that she is aware of the fact that the choices and decisions of her life are what she has opted for, she can make others feel that she is not an object or instrument or that they can use her for their advantage. Meredith's assertion of power and personality here is significant as it is here that she actually acts like a hero; taking responsibility for her actions and their consequences too and not letting anyone

else decide the course of action for her. This is what the female hero needs to exercise more often as it is found that on other occasions especially in her interaction with men e.g. Derek (Dr. Shepherd) she gives in and cannot hold her ground as a powerful and autonomous hero.

Meredith is in a relationship with Dr. Shepherd and feels that she deserves to know some details of her partner's life. She resolves not to let Shepherd take advantage of her until he considers sharing things with her. The female hero resolves to stop her lover's advances and does not want to be treated as a plaything. Shepherd doesn't feel the need to reply to or explain these things to Meredith and brushes aside her inquiries and insistence on knowing things by saying that she has to be patient and flexible and also it is more exciting that she doesn't know anything about him. "Hmm. I've got to go. We'll find these things out. That's the fun part. You know? That's the gravy" ("Save Me"). Shepherd does not feel it appropriate to let Meredith come close to him whereas he himself has probed her about her life and home. Meredith realizes that she is being used as an object of desire and if he does not care for her feelings he does not consider her as his partner. "That is what I'm talking about. I don't want to be your gravy" ("Save Me"). Shepherd's treatment of Meredith evokes the question of Meredith's worth and place in his life. If their intimacy is limited merely to a physical relationship, then Meredith is an object of desire and is being used as a plaything. When Meredith insists on being given the right of relating to Shepherd on an emotional level by sharing other personal aspects of his life she is taking a step to stop herself from being used as an object. She feels that the man does not value her subjectivity and her feeling of disappointment at Shepherd's detachment results in giving her the strength to stop herself from being objectified and denied autonomy.

Meredith finds it difficult to believe that Shepherd, despite their friendship and romantic relationship, does not consider it appropriate to discuss any personal matter and details of his life with her the way friends and partners usually do. She takes it as an offence against herself and insists on making Shepherd tell her what she thinks she, as his lover, has the right to know. After refusing to accept Meredith's point of view a number of times and telling her that she is being touchy about a trivial matter Shepherd finally reveals the details that he has kept secret. It may seem that the female hero has won over the opposing force and has been able to get for herself what she was denied but in fact here too the female hero has been objectified in terms of denial of autonomy. After telling her a few things about himself that Meredith asked for, Shepherd says,

“That's all you've earned for now. The rest you're just ... just gonna have to take on faith” (“Save Me”). This shows that Shepherd feels that Meredith has no right to make decisions for herself. It is he who will do so for her. He decides when to tell Meredith the details she wishes to know and also how much is to be revealed. His utterance clearly shows that she deserves no right to know more at this time and he tells her what he likes to share with her. Since Meredith has refused to give up on asking what she does not know about Shepherd, he has to satisfy her in order to pursue the relationship and to remove her soreness for the sake of keeping the relationship going smoothly. If we get an impression that the female hero has won by making the man submit before her despite his reluctance, one must not ignore the fact that the man guards his right to tell as little to the woman as possible and not to let her feel the freedom and autonomy in making decisions for herself. Shepherd clearly states that the rest she has 'to take on faith' which means that he does not want to let her exercise her autonomy in deciding matters which concern him.

In the premiere of season seven there occurs a disagreement between Meredith and her husband Dr. Shepherd where Meredith opposes Shepherd who accepts an offer to work in Washington DC. Shepherd is not satisfied with his job at Grey Sloan Hospital and when he is offered a place at the National Institute of Health in Washington he accepts it and finds a job for Meredith at James Madison Hospital. But it is not acceptable to Meredith who feels that Shepherd is breaking his promise that he will take care of their children so that she can focus on her research and work for a year. When Shepherd, after much consideration, finally decides to stay with Meredith and their kids and refuses the job offer, she tells him that she never wanted him to give it up for her. She calls him and tells him to take the job at Washington. Meredith’s act of first opposing Shepherd’s move and feeling it to be a breach of their pact and then fighting with him on his refusal reveals Meredith’s inertness and lack of autonomy. She cannot make decisions for herself, and quickly changes her mind from one decision to another. Recognizing Meredith’s lack of autonomy and her inertness her close friend Cristina Yang also tells her at one point “You are a gifted surgeon with an extraordinary mind. Don’t let what he wants eclipse what you need” (“Fear of the Unknown”). Meredith’s friend realizes her weakness and warns her to guard her own interest and autonomy and not be swayed by what someone else wants. Like her name suggests, Meredith Grey tends to see things in shades of grey. She is a smart, competent and gifted surgeon as endorsed by her colleague and friend Yang but Meredith is also indecisive and can

easily be distracted. In this confrontation with her husband also Meredith's inertness and lack of autonomy can be witnessed. First she could not hold her ground when she was upset at Shepherd for planning to move to Washington despite the agreement they had had. Later, on noting his violation she gets upset and asks him to refuse the offer. When Shepherd finally refuses she argues with him and gets upset at his turning down the offer. This is why he accepts the offer in the end. Shepherd violates the agreement showing disregard for Meredith's autonomy and subjectivity. Meredith through her weakness and inertness also makes herself violable.

In episode eight "Risk", Shepherd argues with Meredith over treating a patient. He demands Meredith and Pierce to allow him to operate the patient as he knows better how to handle this patient. He does not agree with Meredith and Pierce's diagnosis and their way of treating the patient. He even tells Meredith to let him tell her how to read the scans. To this Meredith says "I know how to read a brain scan, Derek. I learned from the best, remember?" (Risk). Shepherd's mistrust at Meredith's ability to treat the patient and his trying to patronize her over the procedure shows he is denying her autonomy. As a professional she has the right to make decisions and act accordingly. They again have the argument over the treatment of the same patient. Meredith tells him that she and Dr. Pierce agree on the treatment of the patient whereas Shepherd is bent upon treating the patient his way. Meredith tells him that Dr. Pierce has sought her opinion and she agrees with the ways he has come up with for the procedure of treatment. Meredith is irritated at Shepherd's constant nagging and unrelenting attitude and feels that he does not value her opinion and is imposing his decision on her. She asks him "Derek, why are you pushing back on this?" ("Risk"). Shepherd through his constant intervention stops Meredith from exercising autonomy as well as agency. LaCirox and Pratto argue that when a person is denied autonomy the objectifier treats the person as if they cannot set their own goals and tasks (196). For Nussbaum, denial of autonomy is objectification and leads to loss of humanity as a person's full potential is underestimated and she is denied exercise of her abilities and talents. Marilyn Friedman exploring the social aspect of denial of autonomy states that the fear that women's autonomy will make them socially independent and they will rely less on interpersonal relationships is one of the reasons that people in powerful positions deny them autonomy.

> Whether or not any particular woman benefits or suffers in virtue of exercise of autonomy depends on how she is positioned in relation to it. When a woman is connected to someone else whose autonomous pursuits disrupt their relationship, the immediate effect on her is likely to be simply a loss—of whatever benefits she derives from their relationship. (Friedman 45)

Friedman further states that the concern is that autonomous people will disrupt and desert valuable social and shared relationships and their own autonomy will be challenged.

Shepherd asks Dr. Richard for a second opinion over Meredith's diagnosis and decision of operating the patient. Meredith is annoyed with him for treating her this way and feels it to be an insult. "Why did you call Richard today for a second opinion? If that had been any other surgeon… Dr. Bailey… would you have done it?... It doesn't matter whether it's a surgical consult or a coat. You don't trust me" ("Risk"). Thus Meredith realizes that Shepherd denies her autonomy by not trusting her decisions.

Denial of autonomy consists of deliberate imposition of one person's will on another. Meredith is denied autonomy not only by those in authority like her seniors at the workplace or only by men but also by other interns like her friends. The coworkers who are residing in her house throw a party and she is told that it is going to be small party whereas it turns out that they have called many friends and guests without bringing it to the knowledge of Meredith. Being the owner of the house she should have been consulted but not only do they arrange a party without taking her consent but at the same time they did not let her know the size of the gathering at her place. It is significant to note that Meredith is objectified at her workplace which may be due to her being subordinate and new to the job and also because of men like Dr. Shepherd who consider her vulnerable as a woman. However, it is not just men or seniors at the workplace who objectify her; she faces objectification even by her friends and women. The instance where the friends arrange a grand party at her house without telling Meredith about it is evidence of her objectification by people belonging to her own gender and status. When she finds her house packed with people she exclaims with surprise, "This was supposed to be a meet the boyfriend get-together little thing" ("Shake Your Groove Thing"). Meredith's asking a question regarding the party that is arranged in her house shows her objectification. She is denied autonomy and the right to make decisions for herself as her friends have decided about the party without thinking what Meredith's reaction would be showing that her friends also deny her

power and autonomy. Meredith is unaware of her objectification and thinks that the hospital owns her as they have just started their practice in the field. “We are interns, Hanks. Hospital owns us” (“Shake Your Groove Thing”) whereas it is not just the hospital that owns her, but everyone around her. It is evident in her friends’ decision to arrange a grand party at her place without letting her know. They did not give it a thought that it will annoy and hurt her that she is not given any importance in this matter and is just a spectator on the occasion.

Meredith is denied autonomy even in matters that relate to her personal life; her seniors at the workplace as well as her colleagues, time and again comment on and remind her of her actions which they term as mistakes. In an interaction with Dr. Richard in the hospital Meredith is told that she is making a big mistake and had her mother been in the hospital where she worked, she too would have disapproved of Meredith's relationship with the resident doctor, Dr. Derek Shepherd. Richard's comment on Meredith's personal relationship shows that he is objectifying her and denying her autonomy. She reserves the right to make decisions about her life and does not need others to tell her to behave in a particular way nor does she feel that they have any right to intervene into and explore her relationships and judge these as wrong or “big mistakes”.

Not only Shepherd and her seniors and colleagues but patients also objectify her. When the injured biker Rick, whom Meredith treats, is leaving after signing the form he grabs Meredith and gives her a kiss despite her unwillingness and reluctance to submit before him, after kissing her he says to her “That was for good luck” (“Winning a Battle”). The man again terms his act as a goodwill gesture for Meredith rather than admitting that it was what he wanted. The man imposes himself on Meredith and she can neither say nor do anything to stop or resist him. While leaving he says “Don't worry darling, you will see me again” (“Winning a Battle”) showing that Meredith is powerless and the male patient as the objectifier treats her as if she lacks autonomy and self-determination. Meredith also displays lack of autonomy as she submits and complies with his wishes. When Meredith seeks his permission to perform some tests, she is unable to get his consent. “Look you really have to let me take you for some tests” (“Winning a Battle”). The patient being a man is strong and unrelenting whereas the female hero even in the strong role in the doctor patient equation is weak and vulnerable. It shows Meredith lacking autonomy and self-determination. Meredith as a doctor wants to stop the man from leaving right after getting treatment saying “you

are leaving against medical advice, and that I strongly urge you to stay" ("Winning a Battle"). But the man is adamant in ignoring her advice and doing what he chooses.

Meredith's character can be seen as a representation of a contemporary woman who has an enviable career, and talent but is hampered by weaknesses that hold her back from gaining complete autonomy and resisting inertness. L.S. Kim makes a similar observation about another female hero in the 90s primetime drama,*Ally McBeal***.** She argues that even though Ally is a strong working woman, a Harvard Law School graduate, working in a Boston law firm, having financial independence and her position as an independent woman is incapacitated by her constant feeling of loneliness and pining for a man. Kim calls Alley's state as "pseudoliberation" (321) as due to her lack of autonomy and confidence she appears to be a "self-objectifying, schizophrenic woman" (332). Kim argues that in this way Alley although contesting for the female hero's ground and territory in the world of professional and strong men is a "falsely empowered image" (323) of contemporary woman. Similarly, Meredith also has been presented as emotionally weak, assigning her neurotic and infantile characteristics which are reflected through her asking others questions, her mood swings and self-talk etc., she like Ally McBeal fits what L.S. Kim terms as pseudo-liberal or falsely empowered woman.

Meredith's affair with Derek leads her further into a position where her colleagues and friends objectify her on the basis of her being different from them. They feel envious and develop rivalry that is not just professional but personal too. It shows that Meredith as a female hero is not only objectified by men but also by women. Also it is not only the heads and seniors at the hospital who objectify her and deny her autonomy but interns like her also do not miss any chance to treat her as an object denying her subjectivity and autonomy. Dr. Bailey does not show respect for Meredith's personal life and intervenes into it by making slighting and condescending remarks about Meredith's affair with Shepherd. As an objectifier, her boss although a female, disregards her boundary integrity and considers Meredith a violable creature. She calls Meredith's behavior inappropriate, overtly hinting at her relationship with her senior colleague. She is domineering as she is Meredith's boss and in-charge at the hospital but judging her professional behavior with reference to her personal life is inappropriate. She questions Meredith about her affair directly "You care to tell me what you think you're doing?" ("The Self Destruct Button"). This clearly is an evidence

of denial of the female hero's autonomy where she is forced to justify her actions to somebody and that too another female at workplace.

It is not only men with power—given to them because of their status in the organization—who objectify Meredith; she is so weak that even patients—who seem to be powerless and in need of medical care and who one assumes are likely to be subservient because they need the doctor—objectify her. In "Winning a Battle" Meredith attends to an injured biker from the bike race, *Dead Baby Bike Race*. In the case of the biker with abdominal injuries it is his being a T-man which gives him power to disregard Meredith's personal space and herself. Meredith is violable even in her interactions with the patient and her being a doctor doesn't change the situation or grant her power or dominant position over her patient who is a man. In this equation the man despite being a patient doesn't seem weak or dependent, because he is a man. Rick is dominant in whatever position or situation he is. Meredith is attending to him as a doctor but his behavior towards her shows that he sees her just as a woman—open to flirtatious behavior, not a doctor. He starts hitting on her: "You've got a nice touch" ("Winning a Battle"). Rick teases Meredith when she doubts his being injured saying, "I'd like to think I've a shot everywhere" ("Winning a Battle"). Meredith's protest at being flirted with, goes unheeded and he comes back with a compliment to her beauty "And by the way you are a rocking babe" ("Winning a Battle"). He also asks her to meet him at the party that will take place after the race, saying "Do you want to meet me there?" (Winning a Battle). Here the man puts his thoughts in the form a question as if it is Meredith's desire; instead of saying that he wants to meet her there he poses a question before Meredith. The formation of the statement expresses the man's desire and shows that the woman is not given autonomy to decide what she wants for herself. The question shows the will and intention to make Meredith believe that if she agrees to meet him it will be her choice whereas it is clear from the situation that the man's desire is what he wants Meredith to believe as her own wish.

In another episode in season eleven, "I Must Have Lost it On the Wind" while performing a surgery with the team of residents and interns Meredith Grey faces rude and impertinent behavior from her juniors; she asks Dr. Pierce to be ready for another surgery but Dr. Pierce ignores Meredith's call. Meredith reminds her by saying:

MEERDITH. Dr. Pierce I am talking to you.

PIERCE. And I am ignoring you". ("I Must Have Lost it On the Wind")

Pierce actually blames Meredith for ignoring her suggestion of performing echocardiogram for the patient which she thinks led the patient to cardiac arrest. Pierce does not show any regard for Meredith, who is her senior and tell her, "No matter how important you are around here Dr. Grey. I have a duty to help this patient, not kiss your a**" ("I Must Have Lost it").

Meredith as a senior does not enjoy respect and authority. Her autonomy is challenged even by a junior doctor and by another female in this instance. Dr. Pierce by ignoring Meredith's call and also by arguing with and shouting at her shows disrespect and denial of autonomy of Meredith. She charges at Meredith with rage and disrespect instead of showing compliance with her and ignores the reminder she just gave her about another surgery awaiting her. When the kidney is found missing due to the negligence of one of the residents Dr. Pierce lashes criticism at Meredith again because Meredith had said that Pierce had started ordering around and distracted the attention of the resident responsible for holding the patient's kidney. "Are you blaming me for your resident's incompetence?" ("I Must Have Lost"). This confrontation with another female doctor shows Meredith's autonomy is challenged. Although Dr. Pierce is the new in-charge of cardio Meredith is senior to her and also the head of general surgery at Grey Sloan Memorial Hospital and therefore demands respect. Dr. Pierce's violation of Meredith's autonomy reveals the female hero's objectification by another female. Another male doctor intervenes to stop the squabble between Meredith and Pierce. He speaks in a loud and authoritative voice at which Meredith is silent. Her power as a doctor in charge of the operation is overshadowed by these people, one who disobeys her and another who orders them to "settle down" ("I Must Have Lost it On the Wind"). In the second episode "Puzzle with a Piece Missing" Pierce charges again at Meredith accusing her of not informing her about her patient. Since the patient had needed emergency treatment Meredith had had to make a quick decision but Pierce challenges Meredith's autonomy by finding faults in her work and by laying unreasonable charges on her:

PIERCE. You put a central line in my patient without
notifying me first.

MEREDITH. There wasn't time

PIERCE. There was time to ask a nurse to tell me.

MEREDITH. Doesn't work like that Pierce. I don't need your
permission to keep her from dying Hunt: She is right Dr.

Pierce. (“Puzzle with a Missing Piece”)

When the patient goes in emergency again and Meredith is attending to her, Pierce swarms in and pushed Meredith side and takes her place forcefully. She claims that since Marjorie is her patient she has the right to help and Meredith should not attend to her. Meredith gets aside at Pierce’s shove and cannot do much but utter that she is not helping the patient and that the patient needs shocks if her life is to be saved. Meredith helplessly sees the patient dying as Pierce does not let her use defibrillation. She knows that Pierce withheld proper care but she could not do anything to stop her from doing so. In front of Pierce, Meredith is inert and lacks the capacity to act the way she wants to. Meredith, as the head of general surgery, can take a decision for the patient’s benefit. When Pierce forces her authority on Meredith it seems an attempt at denying her autonomy. Another doctor on the scene also reminds Pierce that her complaint is unreasonable.

Meredith’s autonomy is questioned by Shepherd’s sister, Amelia Shepherd as well. After Shepherd’s death she questions Meredith how she could take the decision of removing his catheter. She wonders how Meredith knows and decides that it was time to give up all hope of saving Shepherd. Amelia unleashes her anger at Meredith for making the choice and decision of giving up on saving Shepherd. Meredith’s autonomy in this regard is challenged as Amelia questions Meredith’s judgment and decision. “How could you unplug him without letting me know” (“She’s Leaving Home”). Amelia thinks that being a neurosurgeon she would have been in a better position to decide about Shepherd, as if she thinks Meredith’s experience as a doctor is not reliable. She might be infuriated, as being Shepherd’s sister she was not informed nor could she do anything to save him but Meredith as a doctor as well as being Shepherd’s wife had the authority to take the decision that she did. Amelia by questioning her decision is challenging her autonomy.

In certain instances, it is observable that Meredith objectifies herself by treating herself the way others treat her. So strong is the influence of being objectified that she starts treating herself the way others do. Meredith’s voice over in “*Shake Your Groove Thing”,* as he is leaving for the hospital for her first heart surgery, comprises of her rumination on the differences in life as a child and an adult. As a child, adult life seemed promising but she has found adult life to be “totally overrated” (“Shake Your Groove Thing”). It is “no fun” because of the strain at work, the responsibility of attending to her mother and above all in making decisions. She is denying herself initiative and feels

that she does not have the energy or the agency to take charge of the affairs of her life. She is so used to following orders that she cannot act when there is no one to decide things for her. She leads her life according to the demands and commands of others instead of being able to do what she wants for herself. She has reached this conclusion about life as she feels that she is denied the right to make decisions for herself and lacks autonomy. On almost all the fronts in her life; whether it is the workplace where Shepherd's influence always makes her give up on what she wants, or the house where the mates sharing her house bother her; eventually she gives up and begins to do what they want, whether it is the matter of her family or inheritance she is helpless before people and their demands require her to fulfill certain responsibilities as heir to her mother's property, Meredith is unable to decide for herself and lacks the ability to assert herself. Meredith's view that if an adult cannot lead her life according to her plans and is told what she is supposed to do, the adulthood loses its charm. This view throws light on the status of the female hero being denied autonomy. Apparently she seems to be going about her life as if it is her choice to lead it this way, the other interns also look at her as if she is superior to them, more in control of her life, as she is the daughter of a renowned doctor, owns a house and is having an affair with one of the attending doctors. But a close observation of her role and status shows that the issue of denial of autonomy surfaces to confine her in a specific role where she does not enjoy any freedom.

In a scene where Meredith is called before the chief regarding Mrs. Patterson's case she confesses to rupturing her heart with her fingernail, she contemplates her situation and the statement she utters reveals that she is objectifying herself as her expression shows she lacks determination. She seems to be giving in before the situation and does not show a resolve to commit herself to her goal. "Tomorrow morning. I could get kicked out of the program. I could, right?" ("Shake Your Groove Thing"). Her uncertainty and lack of confidence is evident through her questions as she herself cannot determine what she should expect.

Meredith cannot resolve the tension that relates to the revelation of Dr. Pierce, who claims to be her sister. Although it is making it difficult for her to concentrate on other things in her life and work she cannot make any decision to resolve it. Alex takes charge of the situation and resolves the problem that she needs to fix herself. It shows that she lets him deny her autonomy: it should be her decision what she needs to do about the problem and if she really needs to solve it, but instead of that Alex does it for

her, showing that Meredith lacks the power to decide for herself what she wants. He therefore, pushes her to face the truth and allows it to be over as he too is being pestered by her frustrations as his friend. Just the same way as in *Castle,* Beckett steps aside and Castle takes control to resolve issues which she finds difficult to handle.

Meredith and Shepherd face excessive tension in their marriage due to Shepherd's interest in a job in Washington, DC. Shepherd approaches Meredith in the hospital and tells her that the fight is over. She is already upset at his making decisions on his own and not taking into account her feelings and needs. This time too she feels that his announcement of truce is denial of her rights in a partnership. "God, Derek, you don't just get to do that, decide when we are moving, decide when a fight is over. What if I'm not done fighting?" ("Only Mama Knows"). Shepherd decides matters and expects Meredith to comply denying her autonomy and objectifying her. Shepherd's behavior of dominance can be seen as ownership also. He thinks that it is not wrong to impose his decision on Meredith. Carol Pearson and Katherine Pope talking about the idea of ownership in marriage state that "In the common view, women are expected to be obedient, yet they are also held morally responsible for their actions. According to societal myth, women are to be obedient; they are also to be restricted" (212). Shepherd in imposing his decision on Meredith and by making her comply with his wishes leads to her objectification. Not only is he denying her autonomy and treating her as inert, but also treating her as if he owns her. She has less power and less freedom than her husband.

In Episode six, season eleven,"Don't Let's Start" Shepherd tells Meredith to invite her sister Dr. Pierce over dinner. Meredith does not like the idea and questions him why she should invite her. He tells her she is her family and that that is why she should do so and by without letting her complete her words, leaves, saying what is more like an order. "Dinner tomorrow night. It's what people do" ("Don't Let's Start"). He does not take Meredith's consent for his idea of inviting Pierce over for dinner nor does he listen to her reply as to why she does not want to invite her sister, instead he leaves after advising her what she should do and why.

After spending a day with Alex Karev, Meredith owes an explanation to Shepherd. It frustrates her that he wants her to explain her actions to him. Shepherd knows that Alex and Meredith are friends for a long time and in her troubles and moments of anxiety she confides in him. It is denial of autonomy when Shepherd questions Meredith's choices and does not allow her space to recover from the tensions

that she is facing. She tells him that she needed a day out so she took it and spent it with Alex. Shepherd says “That’s fine. I just need to know why” (“Only Mama Knows”). She realizes that he was waiting for her to acknowledge and pay him back for the sacrifice he has made for the family, after refusing a high profile job. She feels frustrated that he blames her for the choice he made and at his interference in something trivial and personal. “How am I supposed to do anything with you pressuring me and hovering over me for a decision that you made?” (“Only Mama Knows”). Shepherd’s questions and probing about something very trivial shows that the female hero lacks autonomy even in the simple matters of her daily life and personal wellbeing.

Through these examples it is evident that Meredith is denied autonomy at the workplace by her seniors, men and women alike and also there are instances where her colleagues, junior to her or of the same rank also objectify her. In her romantic relationship with Shepherd and then in marriage also she lacks autonomy and Shepherd dominates in decision making. Another important aspect is that Meredith also shows lack of autonomy and allows others to take control of her life and situations.

There are innumerable instances where Meredith is denied the right to make decisions for herself. It underscores the female hero's worth as she does not seem powerful and in control of her life. But there are also some instances where she asserts herself and does not submit to the orders of others. Meredith is objectified at the work place by not just men but other females too, whether the interns like her or her seniors. At one instance Dr. Bailey comments on Meredith's personal life when she is assisting her, referring to Meredith's affair with Dr. Shepherd. Instead of feeling embarrassed or intimidated Meredith blazes out a series of statements which reveal that she would not let anyone dictate to her what she needs to do or to control her life. As a reaction to Dr. Bailay's overt references to her personal life Meredith shows her ability to take an aggressive stance against anyone who seems to intimidate her. So she is refusing denial of autonomy and boundary integrity. Also when Meredith feels that Bialey is not respecting her boundary and is intervening into her personal space she shows resistance and stops her form doing that. “I made a choice, and I know you don't respect me for that choice. But I'll live with the consequences”. (The Self Destruct Button) Meredith's stance and attitude reveal that she is aware of the fact that the choices and decisions of her life are what she has opted for, she can make others feel that she is not an object or instrument that they can use for their advantage as they like. Meredith's assertion of power and personality here is significant as here she actually acts like a hero does,

taking responsibility of her actions and their consequences too and not letting anyone else decide the course of action for her. This is what the female hero needs to exercise more often as it is found that on other occasions especially in her interaction with men e.g. Derek (Dr. Shepherd) she gives in and cannot hold her ground as a powerful and autonomous hero.

Meredith may be submissive and less assertive when it comes to her interaction with men but when she is interacting with another female, her boss, she shows some metal and backbone to defend her autonomy and does not let them violate her boundary integrity. She is ready to take up the challenge as well as responsibility for her actions. Meredith is neither defensive nor embarrassed about what she is doing. Her taking a stand against her denial of autonomy and violability when she is faced with charges by Dr. Bailey which demean her as a woman as well as a doctor she takes a position to defend herself and her autonomy. “I'll jump through hoops if you want me to. But what I do when I leave this hospital is my business … I made a choice, and I know you don't respect me for that choice. But I'll live with the consequences” (“The Self Destruct Button”). Meredith’s reply to Dr. Bailey shows that she will not let others deny her autonomy at least in the matters that relate to her personal life i.e. her relationship with Dr. Shepherd.

4.2.2 “She’s a little girl”

The drama series, *Castle*, opens with the voice-over summing up the popular elements that lead to the success of the detective mystery novels of a famous writer Richard Castle. “What is it about a hard-boiled detective, the femme fatale?” (“Flowers for your Grave”). The drama series revolves around Kate Beckett—a female detective. The reference to “femme fatale” in the voice over hints at the crucial part of the female hero's identity. In Beckett the “the hard-boiled detective” and the “femme fatale” become one. Femme fatale is the archetype of literature and art. She is akin to an enchantress and seductress who uses her physical charms and feminine wiles such as beauty, guile and sexual allure to achieve her secret motives. Hence the reference to the *femme fatale* at the very outset of the drama is significant. Before we meet the female detective hero the notion of *femme fatale* works to build up the identity of the character. "The woman is made to inhere even more closely to the body" (Doane ii). Talking about the power or freedom of the femme fatale, Ann Doan further states that the *femme fatale’s* power blurs the opposition between activity and passivity. Her persona is

associated with evil and she seems to confound power and subjectivity and agency with the very lack of these attributes.

Castle is introduced as "the master of the macabre" ("Flowers for Your Grave"). It is interesting to note that what is referred to as the "Macabre" is in fact the life of the female hero, Kate Beckett. Macabre evokes the feeling of grim and ghastly atmosphere. The connotations of the word macabre evoke negative feelings since it is the professional life of the female hero, a detective, which is referred to as macabre rather than as something pleasant. As a female detective she has taken up a challenging job and plays with death. Hence it is not something dignified or glorious but grim and desolate.

Beckett is shown as a smart working woman, competent and independent in her domain. One sees her issuing orders, analyzing mysterious situations and solving complicated cases. In the second episode "Nanny McDead" Beckett issues orders to her coworkers but as soon as Castle arrives she loses her composure, seems shaky and nervous, and also takes a wrong turn for the exit. She feels uncomfortable working with him as he has acquired a place for himself in Beckett's team, through his contacts with the city mayor, and is not a detective but a novelist seeking material for his novels. Castle shows skill in solving a case and Beckett's experiences as the detective are not taken into account as Castle dominates her decisions and actions. The female hero is treated as if her experiences and views are not as worthy and practical as those of the man. Feminists argue that objectification "cuts women off from full self expression and self determination—from, in effect, their humanity" (Nussbaum, *SSJ* 250). Beckett's displeasure at working with Castle stems from the fact that she loses her autonomous position when Castle starts assisting her in cases that she used to solve independently.

Beckett inquires about the character in the upcoming novel that Castle has based on her. He explains to Beckett that the female detective in his novel is "Smart, very savvy, haunting good looks, really good at her job … and kinda slutty" ("Hell Hath No Fury"). This is Castle's description of Beckett; the detective he is using as an inspiration in his novel. He defines her as an object and he starts with adjectives that refer to her physical appearance as being smart, savvy, good looking and "slutty". This is Castle's estimation of the female detective hero. What the female detective hero herself wants to assert is not taken into account by Castle. Presenting the female detective might reflect negatively on her as her competence for her job and her maturity and experience are not given any importance. The objectifier observes that the apparent charms in the

female hero and her description might fit a damsel or seductress rather than a person capable of feats of strength and daring. The traits Castle associates with the female detective hero of his novel that he has based on Beckett might reflect negatively on her as he is not taking her feelings into account. Beckett tries hard to prove her competence and strength in the nasty world of crime and deception that she deals with as a detective. Castle's description of the character he has based on Beckett, predominantly focuses on creating an image of a woman hero who fits into the clichéd definition of a heroine of romance novels.

On the occasion of the book launch when Beckett discovers that the name of the character Castle is basing on her is Nikki Heat, she gets infuriated; takes Castle aside and asks him to change this name as it sounds inappropriate to her. “What kind of a name is Nikki Heat? It's a stripper name” (“Hell Hath No Fury”). Beckett feels insulted to be associated with such a name. She asks Castle to change it but he is adamant in his refusal. It is important to note here that Beckett does not request Castle to change the name of the character. She in fact orders him to do so immediately but Beckett's order falls flat on Castle as he refuses to do as she wants, claiming not to give up on his artistic integrity.

The treatment of the female hero where she could exercise little influence in convincing someone for what she wants reveals the artificial veneer of women empowerment. Beckett is shown to be helpless in the face of authority and influence of men or authority figures. During the investigation of the abduction of a little girl where Beckett is employed by FBI to assist in the investigation with chief Sorenson, who is her former boyfriend, we find Sorenson denying subjectivity to Beckett. Showing disregard for Beckett's feelings, Sorenson does not let Castle enter the interrogation room. Although Beckett says “He will be fine, Will” (“Little Girl Lost”). Sorenson replies curtly “Kate, I don't care how big a fan of his you are. He doesn't come in the room” (“Little Girl Lost”). He shows disregard for Beckett's feelings and expresses it without any fear of offending or hurting Beckett. Beckett and Sorenson are not just colleagues but have shared a romantic relationship but Sorenson curtly refuses to accommodate her request and does what he likes instead of being nice to her or showing regard for her request.

When Beckett comes to arrest Castle for disobeying the law, it seems that the female hero shows her power and acts on her free will but her decision has no impact as she is not allowed to do what she wants to by Castle. “You are under arrest for felony,

theft and obstruction of justice" ("Flowers for Your Grave"). The female hero feels that she has the right to take decisions for herself but that power seems a façade of authority. In reality the order that she issues is not heeded. A number of times she issues the order to Castle not to intervene in the procedures of investigation but her commands are not taken seriously by Castle showing that Beckett is denied autonomy. Although she is the hero and detective in charge of the case her authority seems less than effective in the presence of a man who shows no compliance to the female hero's orders. He not only refuses to obey her orders but also does not stop from interfering in matters that she asks him to stay away from, thus denying her autonomy.

During the investigation of a murder, Beckett finds out that the suspected killer is the brother of the deceased. She proves that she is smart and competent in her job as a detective. She discerns through the behavior and responses of the man that he in fact is the murderer and she reveals to Castle that she has learned this through experience. "In my experience innocent people do not prepare alibis" ("Flowers for Your Grave"). To this Castle replies "So I was right" ("Flowers for Your Grave"). Castle's reply reveals that he does not acknowledge that Beckett has done a good job or that she is smart enough to read the clues and solve the mystery rather he takes the credit for solving the mystery of the girl's murder by claiming the he had pointed out earlier that somebody with a specific motive had committed the murder and not the serial killer that the police have arrested. Castle's response shows that the female hero is made to realize that she cannot act on her own and is not competent enough to take decisions and solve problems independently. In this way her autonomy is compromised and she appears less independent and more of a subordinate to the man accompanying her.

Instead of offering advice or suggesting something to Beckett, Castle issues commands that sound authoritative and show evidence of the fact that the female hero is denied autonomy. In "Hedge Fund Homeboys" when Beckett receives a call Castle says to her what sounds like a command the next time she must put the call on speaker. Castle controls Beckett's actions and decisions hence denying her autonomy and independence at work. Beckett lacks control over things. She cannot work autonomously not because she lacks confidence but the presence and control of the objectifier threatens her autonomy. Her independence is compromised and she cannot say no to the pressure that she faces due to Castle's presence. Due to the threat to her autonomy she feels indecisive and lacks the capacity to act on her own. She is controlled by what Castle thinks and does in the situation where he is accompanying her and she

adapts accordingly. Jane Dryden states that autonomy has always been associated with masculine gender and gender division underlies binaries such as autonomy and dependence (26). It is observable in the analysis of the female hero, Kate Beckett that she feels difficulty in making decisions and taking control of situations on her own.

Castle holds so much control and influence on Beckett's life that most of his suggestions to Beckett seem more like commands. During the investigation of a boy's murder in episode three he asks Beckett to put her phone calls on the speaker. “Next time put it on speaker phone’ (“Hedge Fund Homeboys”). Beckett is the hero in the drama, and Castle accompanies her to collect material for his novels. Castle’s denying her autonomy is more a command than a suggestion or a request. Beckett has landed in this situation where Castle does not hesitate to ask her anything; even in matters where Beckett's professional expertise and experience must be given importance, she is given orders by men.

In season seven episode seven, Castle and Beckett after their wedding are back to work to solve another murder case. Despite the fact that their personal relations have changed and they are husband and wife, this does not allow Castle authority over Beckett at the workplace. Beckett is still the detective in charge and Castle her associate. In investigating the murder of a young girl Castle suggests that they go to Arizona and also tries to entice Beckett for an “impromptu honeymoon” (“Once Upon a Time in the West”). Beckett disagrees with his idea of having a honeymoon on a ranch. When he sees that Beckett is unrelenting he tries to stimulate her emotions by citing the quest for justice for the dead girl. He cleverly makes Beckett agree to his idea of the Arizona trip where he plans to solve the case and have an adventurous honeymoon. “I know you want to see justice brought to this young woman’s killer. And … this …. this is the only way” (“Once Upon a Time in the West”). Finally, Beckett gives in to his idea and Castle announces triumphantly “Saddle up, honey, because we are honeymooning out west” (“Once Upon”). The female hero surrenders her autonomy as she cannot make Castle agree to her idea and gives in before him. Castle also makes her believe that this is what she also wants as providing justice to the victim is always her priority and she will not refuse on account of her duty. Agents can resist Others’ autonomy using the rationale that it is the Others’ best interest (LaCriox and Pratto; Jackman; Pratto and Walker). Beckett’s autonomy is compromised since she believes in what Castle presents to her as her most dire need i.e. providing justice to the girl. This is significant as Beckett is the hero as well as the chief detective. Castle’s influence

on her decisions and intervention in her tasks denies her the autonomy that she must exercise as a hero. A similar instance of denial of autonomy occurs in episode eleven "Castle P.I.". Both Castle and Beckett are working independently on the same murder case after Castle gets his private investigator's license. Following the official protocol, Beckett does not want to share any information of the case with Castle but wants some lead from him. Similarly, Castle needs the information that Beckett has in order to succeed in his first case as a private eye. Both try to coax information from each other in a relaxing moment at home. When Castle discerns that Beckett will not give in, he tries to use emotional tactics and asks her "Are you really going to let a couple of silly rules stand in the way of bringing Shana justice?" ("Castle P.I."). He knows that Beckett will not give up on her principles but he also knows that to her, providing justice to the innocent victim is more important and the only way through which he can extract any information from her is by evoking her sympathies for the dead girl. And he succeeds in doing so when Beckett gives up her power and autonomy and cannot stick to her principle of loyalty to her service.

Castle wants Beckett to write a poem, following the tradition of his family. Beckett has to follow his family traditions whereas Castle need not do any such thing. When looked at from the perspective of the objectification theory it shows that Beckett lacks autonomy and serves in compliance what she is asked to do. In most cases it is Beckett who has to sacrifice her autonomy whether at work or in their personal relationship before marriage and also when they are wedded. Beckett's situation, when compared with that of Castle, reveals an obvious contrast. She has to follow the tradition in the Castle family but he does not need to follow the protocol at work when accompanying Beckett. He even defies her orders when she wants him not to cross a line in his investigation.

Even though Beckett solves the case in "Private Eye Caramba" she trails him along. Castle collects many clues and proves Spaulding's innocence by collecting his DNA and exposing the setup. This shows that Beckett does not have much agency as Castle is doing most of the hard work for the case. Castle is absolved of denying her autonomy. Marilyn Friedman contends that women often give up autonomy due to their dependence on men. They are trained to believe that their well-being depends on men, their wisdom and benevolence, who control their lives. In patriarchal set ups, women's autonomy is curtailed due to its potential to threaten and disrupt hierarchy and dominance of patriarch (Friedman 46). Beckett's compromises on her autonomy, in this

light, can be seen as a discursive strategy to uphold patriarchal superiority. If given full autonomy the female hero will challenge male autonomy. “It would be self-defeating, at the same time, to reject autonomy altogether as a value for oneself” (47).

Beckett’s autonomy is also curtailed by Castle’s interventions in her life and decisions. In season seven,“Hong Kong Hustle”, Beckett decides to spend time with Zhang, a female detective from Hong Kong police department, but Castle tries to stop her from going out with her. He treats Beckett as if she lacks the ability to decide what she wants for herself. He tries to deny her the right to make decisions for herself. He dismisses her idea that since she is working with Zhang in the case it will be good to know her more and because Beckett is impressed with the competence of Zhang and thinks she will learn more from her. Castle disregards her idea and says “You think that’s a good idea?” (“Hong Kong Hustle”). Ryan also criticizes Castle for trying to stop Beckett from doing what she wants. Although Beckett exercises her right to do as she desires Castle’s action shows his attempt to deny autonomy to her in her decisions and actions.

Episode nineteen, “Habeas Corpse” season seven Castle commits with Gates for a performance with Beckett at the annual talent competition when a celebrity performer drops out of the show. She asks Castle for a replacement celebrity and he agrees to a dance performance with Beckett without asking Beckett if she would like to perform with him. When Beckett comes to know what Castle has decided she is astonished at his decision in which he did not take her thoughts into consideration. “Don’t you think you should have … asked me before signing me up for this?” (“Habeas Corpse”). Castle denies her autonomy and the right to make decisions for herself. He makes decisions on her behalf believing she will have no objection to what he decides about her. Beckett confronts Castle over his decision and does not approve of what he wants her to do. Esposito also tells Castle that he is making a big mistake if he is making decisions on her behalf and does not consult her. Explaining Nussbaum’s notion of denial of autonomy LaCroix and Pratto state “Agents deny Others’ autonomy, by presuming that Others’ goals are the same as the Agents goals” (196). In this way self-determination is denied and a person is objectified. This supposition that the other person’s goals and thoughts are the same as those of the agent of the objectifier is not an interpersonal matter only. Although Beckett is Castle’s wife and the relationship has changed from coworkers to marital relationship, it does not allow Castle to make decisions on her behalf, altogether dismissing her opinion. Believing that others lack

autonomous goals or capacity for independent action restricts the other's self-determination and autonomy. Later Beckett expresses to Martha about her anxiety regarding the performance Castle has signed them up for. She fears performing in front of public and strangers. "it's more like song fright. I mean, my heart just starts palpitating and I start sweating and my throat just chokes up" ("Habeas Corpse"). Castle by denying her autonomy has also denied her subjectivity as her feelings are not taken into account and she is nervous and uncomfortable at performing before an audience.

In "Dead from New York" season seven, Castle intervenes in a conversation between Beckett and Valentine, a famous actor whom they are investigating for a murder. When the actor shows greater interest in Beckett praising her as a cop, it makes Castle uncomfortable. He interjects into their conversation as if Beckett has been swayed by the flattery and praise of the actor. "We are investigating a murder. (to Beckett) Right?" ("Dead from New York"). Beckett's reaction shows that she is confused and embarrassed at the flattery of the actor since it sounds like flirtation. Castle, acting on her behalf in stopping the man from crossing the line, shows that Beckett's autonomy and self-determination has been compromised. Castle acts as if Beckett cannot act for herself and the man would be a threat and that she cannot decide on her own what to do about him. It may be that Castle is possessive and overprotective of Beckett as she is his wife but she is also a mature and competent woman who can handle situations. As a detective she has faced crooked and dangerous men but Castle does not seem to trust her ability to make decisions for herself and objectifies herself by denying her autonomy.

It is not only Castle who denies autonomy to Beckett in her work and takes control of the investigation without asking for Beckett's approval or order. After all she is the boss and he is her assistant. There are other characters like her subordinates Ryan and Esposito, who violate Beckett's authority and deny her autonomy. In episode eighteen "The Close Range" season seven, Kevin Ryan is searching for clues to discover who murdered Carolyn Decker, the wife of a presidential candidate to whom Ryan was providing security. When he comes up with a breakthrough in his search for clues, he does not call Beckett, his boss, but instead calls Castle. Beckett confronts Ryan on reaching the place where Ryan and Castle are having a discussion:

CASTLE. Ah, Well, Ryan was working all night and he texted me.

BECKETT. You texted Castle and not me?

RYAN. Well, when you have a crazy theory you don't call the

voice of reason. (“The Close Range”)

Ryan’s calling Castle, instead of his boss, shows that Beckett’s authority as chief investigator has been undermined. She is his superior officer and by ignoring her he is denying her autonomy and thereby objectifying her. Later when Ryan wants to take another run at the suspect he does not ask Beckett but consults the big boss, Gates. Beckett is denied autonomy in her work since Ryan does not think it appropriate to consult Beckett on finding a clue, and later again violating the hierarchy at work; instead he goes to the big boss, bypassing Beckett’s authority totally. Beckett expresses her astonishment and displeasure on finding out that Ryan did not consult her and had instead texted Castle. It is evident that the female hero’s autonomy is curtailed and she is considered less resourceful than somebody else who is preferred over her expertise and authority.

Beckett is easily influenced by others and seeks their opinion. She shows her inability and lack of autonomy when she asks questions just as Meredith does in *Grey's Autonomy*. Beckett does not like Castle working with her on cases. “Exactly how much longer do I have to expect you to shadow me on cases like this?” (“Nanny McDead”). Asking him rather than telling him that she does not need him to assist her in the cases shows her lack of power and autonomy. She cannot tell him that she wants to work independently.

Instead of Beckett solving the cases or taking the lead in reaching to the crime scene, or finding a clue to an unsolvable mystery involving the crime, it is Castle who comes up with ideas, solves puzzling cases or suggests solutions to the female detective hero. Castle taking lead over Beckett can be interpreted as denial of autonomy of the female hero. She takes the back seat despite being the main investigator of the crimes. Castle holds so much influence over her that her ability to think, decide and act independently has been compromised and she relies on Castle's help and judgment:

CASTLE: Something wrong?

BECKETT. I can't find it.

CASTLE. Find what?

BECKETT. The answer.

CASTLE. It was Sam. Everything fits. It's a good ending. (“A Chill Through her Veins”)

It is evident that Beckett herself also denies her autonomy when despite disagreeing with Castle’s decision to perform at the occasion of annual performance he

decides to go for it. She is not comfortable in facing the audience and expresses her anxiety to Martha but at the same time states that she would do it for Castle. “Oh, I don’t—I don’t want to let him down. He wants this so badly. I want to give it to him. But I just … I don’t know that I can” (“Habeas Corpse”). For Castle she is ready to push herself to doing something she does not want to do, which shows she disregarding her own feelings and is sacrificing her subjectivity for the man she wants to please. Whereas Castle has disregarded her fears and feeling by opting for participation in the competition.

In season seven episode fourteen “Resurrection”, after Castle has got his license as a private detective and is no more allowed to work with Beckett at the NYPD, Beckett is told by her boss Ms. Gates to investigate a case. Beckett asks her boss to allow Castle to help in this case. “You could bring in Castle to consult in this case” (“Resurrection”). It is interesting to note that when Beckett has been given the opportunity to work independently and autonomously she allows for her own objectification by giving up on her autonomy. Despite her boss’s refusal to allow Castle to be a part of the investigation team in this case of murder she insists upon letting him join the team. She argues for his participation in the investigation stating that he knows almost every detail of this case as it is connected with a previous case that Castle dealt with. “He could be a huge asset” (“Resurrection”). It is evident that when given a chance to work on her own and take charge of the situation as a hero and detective Beckett herself curtails her autonomy by showing dependence on a male figure. She has greater confidence in Castle’s skill instead of her own. Bowdoin Van Riper argues about the freedom and the confinement of the female heroes in film and television. She states that although the female heroes in active and aggressive roles since the 2000s brought a renaissance of the female hero, by presenting apparently “a vivid model of female heroism” and vesting them with “authority, autonomy and agency” (Riper 192) while tying them in unexpected ways to traditional gender roles. She finds this status of the female hero simultaneously “freeing and limiting” (Riper 192). Freeing in the sense that now they are not seen in traditional and passive roles of only mothers and housewives but despite being free of stereotype casting they haven’t yet been able to enjoy freedom fully. The apparently heroic and adventurous roles also limit women’s agency and autonomy in subtle ways. Riper’s assertion can be seen as valid in Beckett’s case as well. Although she is apparently an active central character in the drama but

this instance where she longs for a man's companionship and assistance shows that there are still discursive ways at work that contain women's autonomy and agency.

The statement of Beckett's boss, Ms. Gates is significant as evidence regarding Beckett reducing her own autonomy. In episode fifteen "Reckoning" when Beckett has been kidnapped by Niemen and her male accomplice, Castle tries to figure out her whereabouts and Beckett's boss, Gates tells him something to make him concentrate on the case the way he always does. She tells Castle that Beckett once told her that "He sees the story. I see the evidence, where it leads, but he sees the story" ("Reckoning"). This statement of Beckett is important as it reveals her dependence on Castle. She admits that without his help she cannot reach the evidence in solving complicated cases of crime and murder. According to LaCroix and Pratto's conceptualization of objectification outside the realm of sexual objectification, one may also self-objectify oneself … One must also simultaneously curtail his or her own autonomy, agency, or subjectivity" (LaCroix and Pratto 201). In this instance too Beckett the female detective, by showing her dependence on Castle is involved in self objectification. Although she has been given opportunity to work independently and on many occasions proves her metal but in cases where she works with Castle she lets her autonomy be compromised and Castle enjoy authority and dominance over her and the situations.

There are instances where Beckett exercises autonomy; for instance, while talking to Castle she always comes up with some witty reply that is sharp and pungent. This shows her intelligence and wit. Beckett retorts about her being his inspiration. "Yeah, well, your inspiration might strike you sooner than you might think" ("Nanny McDead"). This can be observed as a regular feature throughout the drama. Beckett does not hesitate to express her feelings. She does not feel intimidated by Castle. But her exercise of autonomy is limited to her personal conversations and interactions with Castle. In official matters she gives in to Castle's influence and authority and loses her autonomy. The female hero is endowed with power and autonomy only in the more limited domestic or personal sphere. In the professional and practical domain her autonomy is challenged and threatened by her male counterpart. Discerning from her attitude that she carries, Castle comments on Becket's personality "You're both controlling and disapproving" ("Nanny McDead"). He deems her fit for marriage and refers to himself as a failure proving that Beckett exercises autonomy and has agency in a particular realm.

4.2.3 "Playing the Breadwinner"

Alicia goes through a rough and testing time in her life and fights to reclaim her autonomy. Todd VanDerWerff commenting on Alicia's character states that "She's attempting to figure out just why she abandoned a promising law career to support a man who ultimately betrayed her. And she's trying to step out from under his shadow in a world where his shadow is very large indeed" ("The Good Wife"). When Alicia goes to meet her husband in prison he offers her tips for the case that she is dealing with. Peter's advice and pointers offered to Alicia is denial of her autonomy as she does not seek his advice regarding how to go about her first case. She in fact does not even tell him about the case. As he shows his experience and insight into cases as attorney is stronger than Alicia's, who has been out of practice for almost thirteen years he shows a patronizing attitude as if Alicia herself cannot come up with strategies to solve the case. When she is about to leave he says "Thanks for playing the breadwinner" ("Pilot") showing that he feels it to be his ordained duty and Alicia is doing it temporarily. Peter shows his superiority by reminding her of the bread earner who supports the family, indirectly stating that Alicia is not capable of handling it on a permanent basis. When Peter is sent home from prison and is under house arrest, seeing Alicia going to work he tells her "It's weird isn't it. You're going to work and I am staying home" ("Bang"). His staying home could be weird but if he thinks that Alicia's going to work is also weird he is supporting the inert status of his wife, who had left her career after their marriage. Peter views earning for the family as his job; Alicia through work has not just found a means to provide for the family but she also has been able to find her independence and develop her confidence in herself after the trauma she faced due to Peter's betrayal. Peter here is supporting the stereotype of a man as active and woman as passive and is finding it hard to accept Alicia's agency and resisting inertness although Alicia, like Ibsen's Nora, has forsaken her own human journey for the sake of her husband.

When Peter is released of the charges he is facing, that very day he goes out to dinner with his family to celebrate his exoneration. At the end of the dinner instead of Alicia, Peter pays the bill marking the confirmation of his role as a genuine bread earner for the family. Through this meaningful action he is taking back the caretaker's job that was temporarily assigned to Alicia. Now that he is free he has reclaimed his position as head of the family, breadwinner and finance manager. Alicia has but a little and temporary autonomy and as soon as Peter is free she has to step down and let him

control this department. When Alicia was managing finances of the house and bills and payments she was shown to be in great misery and frustration. It was hard for her to pay the bills that were mounting and multiplying. On one occasion she is shown with bills and receipts spread on the table before her and she looks at them with tears in her eyes, frustrated as to how she would manage all this in her income and especially when the job of junior lawyer seems to be slipping away in case the bosses in her firm prefer Cary over her.

Alicia asks Peter to sign off the loan for Cary Agos' bail but Peter refuses to sign it off as it will put his reputation at stake as governor of the state. Cary is facing charges of involvement in a drug deal and Alicia wants to save him as he is partner in her firm. She thinks that Peter will sign off for the loan for Cary's bail but not only does he refuse to do so, he also prevents Alicia from getting involved in the case. "I can't sign off on your loan … and neither should you. It's not a smart move" ("Trust Issues"). Peter does not want to put his reputation at stake in helping Alicia save her firm and also tells Alicia not to get involved in this case. He had asked a number of times for Alicia's favor when he was detained but when she needs it he prefers his governorship and reputation over his wife's ambitions of saving her law firm at the same time denying her autonomy by telling her not to make this move.

The misunderstanding regarding Alicia's joke about her daughter's teacher puts Alicia in trouble. Her opponents use the joke out of context to accuse Alicia of harboring violence against Grace's teachers. Her campaign team suggests that she should offer patronage to the teachers to cool things down and to win the teachers over to her side. Alicia refuses to do so as she believes that it was not her fault; she had quoted lines from a serial and the note was meant to be a joke. Peter offers the teachers patronage to put this issue to rest despite the fact that Alicia is angry at this intervention but Peter denies her autonomy and disregards her opinion.

The premiere of the sixth season of *The Good Wife* shows Eli Gold, Peter's campaign strategist, suggesting to Alicia to run for state attorney. Alicia has always hated the dirty politics and its machinations but she finds it hard to avoid being directed by others such as her bosses, husband, his lawyer and strategist. Eli directs her towards her husband's field and she suspects that he is doing so at her husband's directions. He sees in Alicia a potential politician as is her husband. "I have been watching you for the

last five years. You'd be perfect. We need a woman and people respect you. They like you. You are a brand …. You are Saint Alicia" ("The Line"). In the next

episode “Trust Issues” he secretly leaks the poll about Alicia’s candidacy for State’s Attorney, in which she scores seventy-five percent votes against Castro, and tells Alicia that it is Castro’s move. He does so in order to make Alicia agree to run for the seat as he knows she will be challenged and will agree to contest although Alicia has told him a number of times “I hate politics” (“Trust Issues”). When Alicia meets the renowned feminist Gloria Steinem at a reception she congratulates her on her decision of running for the office. Alicia denies her involvement in the campaign and tells her that she is overwhelmed with responsibilities and has no intention of contesting for the candidacy. She tells Steinman “It wasn’t my idea. My husband’s chief of staff wants me to run” (“Dear God”) thereby admitting that someone else is making decisions on her behalf. She has been denied autonomy by her husband and his staff and they are interested in making her run for the State’s Attorney for their own purposes. Now that they have circulated the news about Alicia contesting for the seat, she has no choice but to do as she is being told to. Alicia is not in control of things. It’s getting chaotic and out of her control and seems to have overpowered her. Under so much pressure and in order not to disappoint people who expect a lot from her she cannot quit and disappoint them. Her meeting with Gloria Steinem is crucial as she tells Alicia that she wants to hand over the responsibility of women’s representation to her. Despite Alicia’s repeated proclamation that she hates politics and its machinations she submits to what others expect of her.

Eli Gold reprimands Alicia for her actions after a photo of hers is released on the internet in which she is shown scrubbing an already cleaned pot and talking on the phone. She explains to him that she was talking to him on the phone and did not pose for the photo. Someone took the photo and used it against her. He asks her to see him immediately to strategize their plan. He gets angry at her when she tells him that she has to go to the court for her case and cannot see him and tells her that she is not doing her job seriously. “Why are you dressed like you are going to a dinner party? … I take my job seriously. You need to take it seriously” (“Red Zone”). Alicia compromises on many of her ideas and after initial resistance and refusal starts acting upon Eli’s advice and directions saying “Tell me what to do” (“Red Zone”) thereby showing her submission and denial of autonomy. Alicia’s image as State’s Attorney is created by her campaign strategist; her team, hired by her husband, decides what she will say, wear or act like in her interviews, ad campaign and the mock debate that she has to take part in, during her campaign. Alicia cannot create her own image and people in her team

decide what sort of an image Alicia must present if she is to become a politician. It is denial of autonomy when she herself cannot even create or build her own image and her image is designed by men who are preparing her for the world of politics.

For the state attorney's position Alicia is asked to prepare for an interview and her campaign manager Johnny prepares her for the interview. She is asked to profess her faith and disclaim her earlier statement that she is an atheist. Alicia states that she finds it very awkward to pretend to be what she is not but at her manager's advice she admits to have some faith in God. Johnny also prepares her for the interview that she has to appear in, for her candidacy. He provides her with prepared answers and she has to repeat them without wavering from what she is told to. She cannot speak her mind or add anything to the replies as it will tangle issues or hard questions the interviewer might ask.

Alicia's campaign team puts together a commercial for her: Alicia opposes using a courthouse murder scene to be added in the commercial and suggests that they should include her talk about her children and Peter's scandal but they insist on using the murder scene. Using the courthouse death scene reminds Alicia of her friend Will Gardner's death and she feels it to be a bad idea to use it in her political campaign since she had emotional attachment with Will Gardner and feels that her personal relations must not be exploited for political purpose. But she can do little to convince her team not to use in her ad what she is uncomfortable with.

On the campaign front Alicia is offered a million dollars by a Democratic donor. She accepts it before her opponent Prady does. Prady also makes a plea for money to Redmayne but it does not go well. Later Prady meets Alicia and shows his disappointment at her accepting Redmayne's offer. He acts sympathetic as if he is her well-wisher but in doing so he denies her autonomy. On the one hand he is controlling her by being a sympathizer and on the other hand he is strategizing against her in his campaign. He intervenes into Alicia's decision-making by acting sympathetically and by showing dismay at her decision to accept Redmayne's black money for her campaign. He tries to influence Alicia by showing sympathy and concern whereas, it is his own interest that he is guarding, as her opponent. Whether Alicia should take money and from whom, is her own decision. Prady's interventions shows that he puts pressure on Alicia by acting sympathetically towards her and thereby making her guilty of a moral breach.

In “Mind’s Eye” Alicia is shown waiting for her interview for a newspaper whose endorsement is expected to help her campaign. What is shown instead of the actual interview is Alicia’s fantasized thoughts. The imagined sequences of the upcoming interview show her preparation for it but a closer look at her thoughts shows that Alicia imagines herself looking inert and is denied autonomy too. In her imagination too she is constantly being told by her campaign team members what she should do or say. Their reactions to her replies in the imagined interview also reveal that she is not autonomous in making her moves and choosing replies to the interviewer’s questions.

Alicia’s planning for the approaching interview for the campaign shows that she is actively planning for the future but this future is being crafted for her by others such as Peter and her campaign team Eli and Johnny. Alicia’s fantasized thoughts about herself and what she expects will happen in the interview, show her fretting over matters and showing discomfort at being unprepared to handle the issues. For instance, she fears that she will be asked about taking money for her campaign from a drug dealer. In the imagined sequences she has to fight to get rid of her attraction for Johnny - her media campaign manager, Peter’s alleged affair with Kalinda etc. Much like Meredith in *Grey’s Anatomy* the female hero in *The Good Wife* also is going through a state of indecisiveness, shows lacking confidence and panics at a testing moment. It is shown through her paranoia and obsession about the disturbing things in her life.

Alicia cannot think on her own, let alone take decisions about her life and career. Johnny calls her to inform that Peter had claimed in an interview that Alicia is definitely going to be the next State Attorney. Alicia shows her pleasure at this remark but Johnny tells her that it is a matter of concern for her as now the voters will not come out since they know that she is secure. “Peter just screwed you” (“Red Meat”). He tells her to ask him what he is up to. Her campaign manager is telling her what to think and she cannot think logically. She listens to her manager’s decision and accuses Peter of not wanting her to win because he wants to be the only winner in the family. Peter guesses quickly that it is Johnny Elfman speaking through her. He reminds her that he has done everything to help her reach this stage. Alicia’s thoughts are colored with the opinion and dictation of her campaign manager and she takes every idea of the manger as her own decision.

When Alicia wins the State Attorney’s election. She is pressed by her financiers to entertain them. She refuses to be used by them and does not cut a deal with any of

the supporters, eventually annoying them. Eli reprimands Alicia for refusing Redmayne who wants her to appoint his man as the Deputy State Attorney. He stomps into her office to set Alicia straight for being undiplomatic and unprofessional. Alicia shows autonomy by refusing to entertain Redmayne and Bishop who have funded her campaign. She does not want them to take advantage of her office and tells them straight that she will not take dictation from them and will make her own decisions but Eli's intervention puts her in the back seat again as he tells her not to annoy them. Eventually, Alicia takes Eli's advice to negotiate with her financiers.

Alicia's autonomy at home is undermined by her mother-in-law. On Peter's birthday his mother wants to take the children to the prison to meet him. When she seeks Alicia's permission she denies her the mother to do so. She tells her mother in law that she will plan it, but later. "Peter and I agreed I'll bring the kids next week. It's their first visit—a big deal. I want to do it right" ("Crash"). Despite Alicia's opposition the mother in law takes the children to prison to meet Peter. She denies Alicia autonomy by refusing to do as she wanted her to. Alicia protests "I am their mother. It is my decision. This above all is my decision" ("Crash").

There are other instances also in the series which show Peter's mother either obstructing or ruling out Alicia's authority. Is seems that the mother is threatened since Alicia is gaining autonomy and independence, since Peter is in prison and the sole responsibility of earning and running the house rests on Alicia. Peter's mother's attempt to thwart Alicia's power shows her compliance with the patriarchal order of domination. The grandmother takes care of the house and children and it is evident that Alicia's authority over her children is undermined by the grandmother who wants to bring up the children in her own way. The grandmother intervenes in decisions that Alicia makes for her children, for instance spending time with friends that Alicia allows them and the choice of clothes etc. Although the children do not like the grandmother's intervention in their life, it has been shown that Alicia cannot do without the grandmother. In this way it is shown that despite the fact that the female hero who is thriving in her career and is establishing herself in the professional world, she lacks the ability to manage her home and the grandmother is needed to help her in taking care of the kids. Although the female hero is diligent and shows promise at work there is an aspect of life that she is unable to manage alone and that is her household.

Alicia's daughter Grace gets to know through Google that Peter will soon be out on bail. Grace and Zach, Alicia's children, are keen to discuss with her where Peter

would be staying during that period. Zach says that Peter is not going to stay in an apartment, and that their dad will stay with them. “In mom’s room. Where do you think?” (“Unprepared”). Alicia looks at Zach, surprised at his confidence, but does not say anything except that this is a very premature idea but her son’s statement shows his authority over Alicia. He does not ask her whether his mom would like it or not but says so as if his desire is what his mother should also respect. Logically speaking it should be Alicia’s decision whether to have Peter staying with her but Zach’s intervention shows denial of autonomy for Alicia who can only evade the issue by saying that they will talk about it if it happens.

When Alicia makes a choice to move forward in her life and starts seeing her old friend Will Gardner, Peter stops her from leaving and Grace confronts her mother over her relationship with Will. Alicia explains that they are old friends and were attracted to each other but it is over. She explains to her children that she was angry with their father and had tried to walk out a few nights earlier but that things have changed in the past few days. “Your father and I are agreeing to make this work and I have agreed to trust you again” (“Mock”). Alicia cannot make a choice on her own; Peter stops her from leaving, telling her that she should think about their children. Her teenaged kids are mature enough to see the faults in their parents; Grace confronts her mother the way a mother would correct her daughter. Alicia gives in to the pressure of her family since she cannot walk out on her husband and children, and follow her desires. She has to sacrifice her own independence and wishes for the sake of her family. Alicia recognizes her own worth and that she has a separate identity that is not dependent on her husband but she has to sacrifice her independence for the sake of her children. Ibsen’s Nora leaves home after years of playing the dependent doll of her husband; like Nora, Alicia realizes the inherent contradiction in the patriarchal myth of obedience to the master. She is tied to her family out of duty and compassion. After years of an invisible and passive existence she decides to walk out on the oppressive husband. Although she later decides to stay, she is freer than before as she is being herself. “There are, of course, circumstances in which a hero does not have the option of beginning a new life … Aware that people are social beings, and that we are constantly altered and reserialized by our surroundings” (Pearson and Pope 80). The female hero in *The Good Wife* does not rebel outwardly but finds an alternate way by telling the children that she and Will were attracted to each other and that she was angry

at their father for his infidelity and wanted to leave him but that she has decided to stay despite her desire to leave the confining and thankless job of a wronged wife.

In Episode three "Fixed", apparently it seems that Alicia shows agency and autonomy when she attempts to find out on her own if jury tampering has occurred in a suit against a pharmaceutical company. It is revealed that all the while she has been played with. The plaintiff played with her by bribing one of the jurors with thirty-five thousand dollars. Alicia sympathizes with the wife of the paralyzed man who has filed the lawsuit but does not suspect him of tricking her. Alicia looks for leads and investigates about the bribe but in getting rid of the bribed juror, removes the wrong one from the jury and thus plays into the hands of the plaintiff by getting rid of the juror that the plaintiff wanted removed. Obviously, the plaintiff is able to win the case easily and it is only in the end that Alicia realizes that she has been tricked. It is obvious that the semblance of autonomy is there but still the female hero is acting as a pawn. She is being played with and somebody else meets her goal by using Alicia. Here the female hero's autonomy is used for someone else's advantage showing that although she is given autonomy and agency, it is more a façade or semblance of autonomy where her efforts and work do not pay off, and rather benefit those who are using her as a tool for their purposes.

In another incident, Alicia is abruptly taken off a case she has been working on for two months and is sent off to deal with a divorce case. She complains to Kalinda how she has almost reached a settlement in the case and now has suddenly been told that she has to deal with a divorce client instead; she has worked hard on the case and now "Carry gets all the glory" ("Infamy"). She is infuriated and tired of the job of "hand holder". This time she is told to hold the hand of Glen Childs' wife who has filed divorce case. David Lee, the divorce lawyer meets Alicia and without listening to what she wants to say, tells her he is introducing her to a client:

LEE. I need you in a meet and greet in 45 minutes to hand hold a client….

ALICIA. O wait, I've got a settlement on Duke Rasco case in an hour.

LEE. See you in 45 minutes. (Infamy)

Alicia is denied autonomy as she has no say in deciding what she may and may not do. She can only grumble and give vent to her exasperation in front of Kalinda when Lee orders her; she tells Kalinda that the bosses send her to handle clients that she is not involved with and is taken off cases she is about to find a settlement for. Kalinda

says that the bosses do not doubt Alicia's competence but when she leads the case to a win she is moved to another difficult case since she is good at it.

Alicia confronts Will Gardner who Diane told her has taken her off the case of Broussard. Earlier she has been taken off another case which she came to know was assigned to Cary Agos, with whom she is competing for a place in the firm. When Alicia tries to pin Will down for treating her unjustly and not asking her before pulling her away from the cases for which she has been preparing and fighting hard, Will tells her he wanted to give her a break due to the complications in her domestic life. Will objectifies Alicia by taking decisions on her behalf and not considering her opinion on the issues and cases that she is dealing with. "I just thought with Peter coming home your life is complicated enough and I should give you a break" ("Bang"). He decides that she needs a break, thus denying her autonomy and his decision becomes even more unreasonable when he tells her that she has not done anything wrong and is doing her job very well. He does not realize that this will have a detrimental effect on her career since she is in competition with Cary Agos for the position in the firm.

It might on the surface seem that Alicia is showing agency and is resisting inertness by showing activity in order to secure for herself a position at Lockhart & Gardner. She talks to Will and tells him that she is better than Cary and is doing a good job. She asks Diane to mentor her and Diane's suggests that she should use her husband's connections to benefit the firm. Her place at the firm is thus guaranteed and Alicia acts on Diane's advice and asks for Eli's favor to bring clients to the firm. On the face it appears that Alicia has learned the ropes and is showing activity and agency but it is in fact denial of autonomy since she is made to change her ways. All the agency in reality is the compliance to directions that have been given to her. She feels sorry for acting in this way and to have beaten Cary in this manner in the competition does not seem fair to her but Alicia has no choice but to do as directed. She is caught up in a situation where she has to do what her boss and the firm demand of her. Cary also comments that Alicia has changed and this change is denial of autonomy since she can no longer assert her autonomy and live up to the ideals she believed in.

Diane and Cary leave Alicia out of the important decision that they make about the firm they own as partners and when Alicia gets to know of the decision to bring in David Lee as partner for Florrick, Agos, Lockhart & Associates she heads to Diane's office who tells her that since she is running for State Attorney's office they decided it on their own. "When did you decide this? You can't just … Don't you think it was

important to talk to me? ... I am a named partner. This is the decision for all of us" ("The Debate"). Alicia is denied autonomy by Diane and Cary by being given no say in David's return as a partner in their firm.

In the next episode "Open Source" when Alicia tells Cary that Canning is in the ICU and wants to see her Cary presses Alicia to take advantage of his situation and convince him to drop the lawsuit. On the other hand, Canning is suspected to have set up Alicia in a trap as he wants her to help in donating money to his kidney donor's family. The money in fact will be used to facilitate the group that supports Hamas. Suddenly the press is talking about Alicia supporting Hamas, damaging her campaign. Alicia does what Cary and later Canning ask her to do. LaCirox and Pratto state that "The denial of autonomy and self-determination is implicit in the concept of instrumentalizing Others as tools to meet an Agent's own ends—tools enable others to do things; they do not set their own goals and tasks" (196). The female hero although presented as the central character around whom the drama and its action revolves, is not a mere sidekick to a male hero, not a sex object but she is hardly ever shown as being autonomous.

Alicia also denies herself autonomy when she shows hesitation in making decisions and depends on others to figure out ways for her. After stepping down as State Attorney Alicia cannot decide on her own what she should do. She asks Peter "What do I do now?" ("The Deconstruction") proving that she is denying herself autonomy by giving somebody else the privilege to make decision for her.

As in *Castle* Beckett depends on Castle for a clue or theory that gives her a lead in investigation, Alicia depends on Kalinda, the in-house investigator for the crime or the record of the person involved in the case and through her aid Alicia finds a lead that gives her a breakthrough in the case and find an ingenious solution for it. Although Alicia loses the case of the child in "Lifeguard" and cannot prevent him from a prison sentence, with the help of Kalinda she is able to send the judge to prison. Just as Beckett cannot do without Castle, Alicia cannot do without Kalinda. The female hero thus is not assigned absolute autonomy as some agent helps her achieve her goal and win in difficult situations. There are other instances too that show Alicia's dependence on Kalinda; the same way as Beckett feels incapacitated without Castle in her investigations and relies on him for support, Alicia relies on Kalinda. In the episode "Fleas" when Alicia finds a bag full of money lying in her office she does not know what to do and rushes out of her office to call Kalinda since she herself cannot decide

what to do with the money that is sent to her as bribe and takes Kalinda along to tell Diane about the discovery.

Kalinda informs Alicia that Will and Diane are about to announce their decision of choosing either Cary or Alicia and gives her clues about Cary campaigning for his place at her firm. She advises Alicia that her future at Lockhart & Gardner now rests on her ability to convince Diane to mentor her since it is only in this way that she can outsmart Cary's manipulative campaign. She also tells Alicia that since she refused Will's advances he will prefer Cary over her. In this situation it becomes all the more important that she wins Diane's vote. Kalinda shows agency and that is why Alicia depends on her. She tells Alicia to "Play the mentor card" (Unplugged) when talking to Diane. Without Kalinda's support and inside information Alicia cannot succeed, not only for securing her place at Lockhart and Gardner but also for success in her case.

Another important aspect in Alicia's role is that although she has been given agency in the absence of her husband in joining the law firm, she does not play any role in trying to save her husband. Although in a very short time she proves herself a competent and sought-after lawyer and overcomes her initial resentment against her husband she does not do anything to help Peter get out of the prison. It is significant to note that Peter is fighting his battle on his own. Traditionally superheroes are assigned a mission and Superman saves Lois Lane, Wonder Woman saves Steve Trevor; Alicia saves many people almost every day in the court from imprisonment and death, brings happiness to grieving mothers and fathers, unites lonely wives with their husbands but she does not help her own husband. Owing to her competence at her job everyone feels that she could have taken up Peter's case or helped him in some other way. The fact that she is a good lawyer makes it more obvious that she is not helping her husband. Alicia's agency is limited to saving others but when it comes to saving her own man, the patriarch, she is inert. It is evident that Peter is fighting his own case and his utterances show that Alicia does not offer him any advice regarding his moves or strategy. Even when he hires Kalinda as a spy to find out about Child's next move Alicia makes no move to help Peter in his case. When Alicia tells him about his mother's stroke and Zach's troubling behavior he tells Alicia "I need to get out of here" (Painkiller) showing that he feels he can solve the mess at home and that Alicia is not able to manage it alone. He expresses his desire to get out rather than asking Alicia to help him get out since he is a man and does not need his wife's help. All these examples show that Alicia has deliberately not been endowed with agency in this regard. If Peter

had depended on her for rescue she would become absolutely autonomous and thereby threaten the autonomy of the patriarch.

4.3 Ownership

In the context of objectification Martha Nussbaum defines ownership as using someone as if she is owned by another. “The objectifier treats the object as something that is owned by another” (218 *Sex and Social Justice*). Treating a person as an object owned by someone also entails “lack of self determination and autonomy” (220). A person’s selfhood and humanity is denied when they are not properly acknowledged to be the owners of their own will and are treated as objects. Shedding more light on Martha Nussbaum’s conception of objectification, Jessica M. LaCroix and Felicia Pratto state that “Ownership is acted out when people control others’ freedom, presume that control of others is their right” (195). The analysis of the female heroes’ roles in the drama series will reveal how far they are objectified in terms of ownership and how it limits their power and freedom.

4.3.1 “I was just me for three days”

In season eleven, in the absence of Cristina, Meredith grows close to Alex and confides in him about the personal matters that she used to discuss with Cristina Yang. Meredith is facing problems with her husband, Dr. Derek Shepherd and one day Alex asks her to stay and have a drink as she needs to unwind and relax whereas Meredith is insistent upon leaving for home as she needs to talk to Shepherd. Although he imposes on Meredith as her friend, what he says later is more serious for the case of objectification. He tells Meredith that Cristina Yang along with some other things left him Meredith too. “Look, Yang left me her shares and her board seat and she left me you too” (“I Must Have Lost”). Here Alex includes Meredith among other “things” that he was given in this way claiming ownership of Meredith.

On accepting a job in Washington DC, Shepherd broke his promise of letting Meredith concentrate on her work and research at Seattle since Meredith had told him that in order to stabilize her career she needs him to work in the same hospital for a year at least. On getting a high profile position in National Health Program, in order to make things easier for himself, he finds a job for Meredith also in Washington D.C. so that she too moves with him and he can accept the offer and move ahead in his career. This shows Shepherd claiming ownership of Meredith without taking into consideration

what she wants. In deciding on her behalf, he not only treats her as if he owns her but also denies her autonomy and the right for self-determination.

Meredith states that she feels consumed and burdened by being owned and defined by others. When she was able to steal three days from work, home and all her responsibilities and people in her life she felt freedom in being alone. “It was just me for three days. All by myself. I wasn’t anybody’s wife or doctor or mother” (“The Pretender”). She knows that others own her but she cannot do anything about it. She is bound within conventions and can do little to change it. She is bound in a marriage that gives her little comfort and yet she is trying to keep it going and doesn’t want it to be over.

4.3.2 Mrs. Castle—“Beckett no More”

With the arrival of Beckett's former boyfriend in the ninth episode the issue of the objectifier treating the female hero as an instrument also comes to the surface. Castle sets Beckett up against her former boyfriend Sorenson in order to see how the spark of a relationship can be rekindled between them to give him some spice for his upcoming best seller. Castle sets Beckett up against Sorenson as if he owns her. He makes Sorenson feel romantically about Beckett by challenging him that he cannot get her or allure her back into his charms. He realizes that Sorenson is aware of his relationship with Beckett and by challenging him to win her over as if she is a prize or a commodity he shows that he has ownership rights over Beckett.

Another instance useful for understanding the fact that Beckett also allows for ownership is when she explains to Castle about the episode with Sorenson. She is embarrassed and acts as if she owes him an explanation for her action. In this way Beckett herself lets Castle own her and acts as if he has a right on her and feels she needs to share with him and seek his approval for her actions.

Near the end of the episode where Castle asks Beckett to go out for a drink she refuses saying she has a date. Surprised and jealous at Beckett's brashness he asks “A date? Your date? Who?” (“Little Girl Lost”) showing that Castle is controlling Beckett. His probing tone reveals that he does not believe that Beckett can act on her own and be independent in her decisions. Beckett appears to show some courage and resists Castle's intrusion into her personal life and replies “That's why it is called private life” (“Little Girl Lost”). When Castle wants to bring up the subject of reopening Beckett's mother's case before her he asks her "Hey, can I ask you something?" (“A Death in the

Family') and she asks curtly "Since when do you ask permission to ask questions?" ("A Death in the Family") showing that Beckett also acknowledges Castle's influence and control over her life. Castle treats Beckett as if she is owned by him and should comply with his wishes. Beckett's personal decision is not regarded by Castle and he wants her not to meet Zhang as he does not like the idea of Beckett being close to another detective who impressed her and whom she views as being more powerful and autonomous than herself.

In season seven episode nineteen "Habeas Corpse" Castle signs up for a singing and dance performance with Beckett at the annual competition, without asking Beckett if she would like to take part. Castle takes the decision on her behalf and does not feel the need to ask her about it. When she hears about it she is surprised at this as she feels anxious in performing before an audience. Castle does not think it a big deal as if he owns Beckett and can make her do whatever he wants.

In Episode twenty-two, "Dead from New York", Season seven, Beckett and Castle approach a famous actor for investigation into the murder of a television producer. In their meeting, the actor, Valentine, ignores Castle who is a famous novelist, and instead starts admiring Beckett in a flirtatious manner that makes Castle feel uncomfortable. Beckett acts politely but Castle steps up and pushes Valentine away from Beckett, by announcing the purpose of the meeting, Castle insinuates himself between Valentine and Beckett and says "We're investigating a murder (to Beckett) Right?" ("Dead from New York"). Castle's action shows he is claiming ownership on her and "marking his territory" (Orlando, "TV Fanatic"). Castle's move of interjecting himself between Beckett and Valentine shows ownership. LaCroix and Pratto explain the notion of ownership: "Ownership is acted out when people control other's freedom, presume that control of others is their right or exchange others for something else." (195). They further argue that behavior that shows ownership removes the autonomy of the other and their subjective experiences are also disregarded.

In the last episode of season seven, "Hollander's Woods" Castle expects to win Poe's Pen Career Achievement Award and Beckett awaits promotion to the rank of Captain. Castle is excited as he prepares for the event and exclaims to Beckett "You know, with this award, you going for captain? We could be New York's newest power couple" ("Hollander's Woods"). Castle sees Beckett's achievement as his own and brags about it almost as if her power and achievement are his own to exploit and flaunt. It is important to note here that Beckett does not mind his claiming ownership of her as

it is acceptable for women to submit to and agree with men's ideas. This is an example of the power tilt and the extent to which inequalities against women are practiced and sustained. Suzy D'Enbeau and Patrice M. Buzzanell in their discussion on gender and power in the context of career and workplace, state that popular cultural representations for women "solidify gender inequalities and patriarchal power" (5). D'Enbeau and Buzzanell argue that the myth of romantic love is one of the ways used to create interdependence between the sexes. The female sacrifices her independence and individuality due to this and submits to the man's control (5). Beckett does not find it odd that Castle takes her achievement as his own and that her career boost will raise his social standing.

In episode twenty-three season seven Castle wants to solve the case of a murder that Castle witnessed when he was eleven years old. He has never told Beckett about the incident that led him to become a murder mystery novelist. When searching for clues to the murder Castle says to Beckett "After all these years we finally get some answers" ("Hollander's Woods"). It is only when a man reports seeing a woman's murder whose details match the murder that Castle witnessed that Castle feels he can solve the mystery of that murder as well. To Beckett the case is new and she has not researched it as Castle already has but here he uses "we" instead of "I" when he says they have got answers, as if Beckett has always been along in the case.

On their first day at the office as husband and wife, Castle teases Beckett by reminding her of her changed status, calling her "Mrs. Castle" ("Once Upon a time in the West"). Beckett approves this joke with a laugh indicating the joy and pride she feels at this status. When she also replies mischievously by calling him "Mr. Beckett", Castle's laughter stops and his facial expression shows that he finds the idea strange. Being a man he reserves the right to ownership of Beckett by referring to her as "Mrs. Castle" whereas she does not have the same right to own him as her husband. This is also noticed when Castle introduces Beckett as "Mrs. Castle" to the mob boss in episode ten in spite of it being in the realm of work. She is detective Kate Beckett at work and her status as Castle's wife is irrelevant to her work and her expertise as a detective. Introducing her as his wife shows possession and implies that she has no other role to play than that of his wife. This implication becomes apparent when she introduces herself to the mob boss as Kate Beckett NYPD. Margaret Bruzelius discussing women characters and the constraints of adventure states that for women "satisfactory insertion into the world at the center instead requires a ruthlessly exacted and radical loss of

autonomy" (151). She contends that for success a woman has to associate with a male partner. This partnership will allow her acceptance in society and determine her success. "Success for a woman traditionally means identification with a male partner and a consequent loss of one's name in marriage" (Bruzelius 151). This is a woman's ultimate achievement, defined by "abnegation of self" (Bruzelius 115). In a patriarchal society the adventure for woman remains merged with the masculine other, she cannot embark on her own routes, having a name or an enterprise of her own. Bruzelius looks at female adventure narratives to investigate the autonomy and lack thereof of female heroes and finds women's adventures discursively employing restraints even on those characters who seek to resist them (115). In *Castle* also Kate Beckett's autonomy and independence are compromised and she is restrained through ownership by her husband. One can hardly proclaim that the female hero has achieved autonomy and self-determination when she ends up as Mrs. XYZ. This strategy for the female hero's domestication and ownership by a male figure is presented as her self-fulfillment in the self of the other—her husband. Bruzelius terms it as "abolishing of the self" (150) since female heroes are made to devote themselves to the causes of men, which thus denies them autonomy and individuality.

4.3.3 "My girl"

Peter also treats Alicia as if he owns her even though their relationship is on a rocky road after the charges of corruption, forgery and fornication. When Peter is detained at home the more testing time begins for Alicia as she finds it hard to forget and move on with Peter in their marriage. She chalks out the boundaries for Peter while he stays at her apartment during house arrest and arranges a separate room for him to stay in, implying that she needs time to rebuild the trust in their relationship. Peter gets suspicious about Alicia and thinks that she is having an affair with her boss Will Gardner. One night when she tells him that she has to go to the office again he confronts her by asking personal questions that Alicia feels she is not bound to answer as he has violated the sanctity of their marriage and she being a good wife is still bearing with him and so he must trust her. He commands her not to go to work at this hour if she wants him to trust her. Peter's interrogation into Alicia's personal life asking her about her relationship with Will reveals that he is claiming ownership on her by disapproving who she meets or works with and dictating the time she should be going to work.

Not only her husband but other people also treat Alicia as if they own her. Peter's rival Glenn Childs threatens Alicia for helping his wife win her divorce case and using the secret information against him. He comes to see her without her permission, shouts at her and refuses to leave when she asks him to leave. Glenn Childs grabs her hand when she does not listen to him and accuses her of influencing his wife and enticing her against him. Childs' approaching Alicia without her consent and threatening her are acts which show he is claiming ownership on her. Alicia's autonomy is denied as Childs forces her to stop supporting his wife and warns her of severe consequences. The threats are not just verbal but the grabbing of her hand roughly also shows the female hero's violation in terms of claiming ownership on her and objectifying her.

During Alicia's campaign for the election, Johnny, her media man refers to Alicia and Peter, as "your boy" and "my girl" ("Hail Mary"). He argues that Eli, Alicia's campaign strategist, is supporting Peter and designing things to favor him over Alicia. This shows ownership over both Alicia and Peter; Alicia is doubly owned by others as it is Peter who has hired the team for his wife's election campaign. This means that Alicia is owned by her image makers. "She does not need a break. Your boy needs a break …. You cannot save your boy at my girl's expense" ("Hail Mary"). Such behavior not only assumes ownership but includes other features of objectification as well. Alicia's autonomy is removed as being owned by those who are creating her political image and she has little say in the process since her subjective experiences are totally disregarded.

The detailed investigation of the three notions of objectification namely, instrumentality, denial of autonomy and ownership shows that despite being given the role of the hero around whom the action of the drama series revolves, the female heroes, Meredith, Beckett and Alicia are undermined in various ways through objectification in terms of instrumentality, denial of autonomy and ownership. The female hero is an instrument in the hands of the people around her who may be members of the family, male or female co-workers, who not only objectify her but deny her autonomy and claim ownership of her.

CHAPTER 5

OBJECTIFICATION THROUGH INERTNESS, VIOLABILITY, DENIAL OF SUBJECTIVITY AND FUNGIBILITY

This chapter comprises the discussion on the four notions of objectification: Inertness, Violability, Denial of Subjectivity and Fungibility. In the selected drama series, the roles of the female heroes will be analyzed with respect to the four notions of objectification that Martha Nussbaum has presented in her objectification theory. Taking each notion, I will analyze the instances from the selected drama series to examine how these notions are used in objectifying women and they are denied personhood, agency and exercise of power and control over their lives. The textual-critical analysis will reveal the subtle ways through which the seemingly powerful female heroes are objectified. The analysis is focused on not only pinpointing the seven notions of objectification of personhood but it goes beyond just the labeling by studying and interpreting the ways it is being done. Not only will it account for the presence of objectification but at the same time it will help in understanding how this subtle objectification is carried out by the persons around the female heroes. The analysis intends to go beyond the identification of objectification of personhood in the lives of the career-centered female heroes to see how their powers are curtailed and how they are denied humanity.

5.1 Inertness

Martha Nussbaum defines inertness as the treatment of another person as if they lack agency, and also activity (*Sex and Social Justice* 218). Agency has been defined as "the capacity to act, plan and exert self-control" (K. Gray 1208). It is one of the characteristics of human nature that defines human dignity and freedom and worth. Denial of agency implies that the behavior of others is directed or controlled rather than stemming from personal will. This lack of agency and allowance for freedom causes inertness and "mechanistic dehumanization" (LaCriox and Pratto 197). The discussion given here presents instances and situations which reveal inertness of the female hero.

5.1.1 “I am kind of screwed”

Meredith’s inertness becomes apparent at the very outset. Her discourse right at the start does not present her as a strong character, let alone a strong female hero. The viewers get to know that she has spent the night with a stranger and now wants to get rid of him. Whatever transpired in the night or why it did is not important here, what is important for the present study is that Meredith goes through a lot of trouble to oust the man, who later turns out to be her boss. She gets up before the man does and says to him: “You have to go” (“A Hard Day’s Night”). The man just brushes it aside and asks her to come back to him. Meredith becomes a bit sterner in her reproach: “… seriously, you have to go” (“A Hard Day’s Night”). Her discourse employs the imperative but it has no impact and when she sees that her commands have gone unheeded she offers a reason for her asking the man to leave her house. She says she is running late on her first day at work so he should leave right away. Even this is not enough to make him leave and he starts asking her questions about her life and her home. Eventually she runs upstairs saying: “I'm going upstairs to take a shower and when I come back you will be gone” (“A Hard Day’s Night”). This is in no way a threat or even a warning as she is giggling when she says it. Also inherent in the discourse here is Meredith’s retreat. Her threat foregrounds her going upstairs which is her escape from the situation. She realizes that her attempts to take charge of the situation have been defeated by the man so she turns away from the challenge the situation has put up to her. Her going upstairs is akin to accepting defeat. She turns away from the challenge hoping the situation will come to a resolution on its own and she will not have to confront the man.

Meredith is not the mistress of herself. At least this is what the man in the opening scene makes abundantly clear by his willful disregard of Meredith's assertions. He is toying with her; she wants him to leave but he starts up a conversation. Even when she says she does not want to “do the thing” (“A Hard Day’s Night”) where they pretend to take interest in each other as persons the man just ignores her and tells her his name and jumps over the sofa to come close to her and tells her his name. All the while, the man is smiling while Meredith wears a look of bewilderment. She is at a loss to understand how to handle the situation. The man, on the other hand, is confident and this is evident in the way he toys with Meredith.

Meredith is inert not only in the situations involving personal relations but also in the situations at the workplace. She is called when her patient is having convulsions but she stands still for a moment looking at the patient and cannot decide how to

proceed. The female hero thus is shown helpless in a testing situation. She takes time in deciding what to do asking the nurse to administer an injection and when it doesn't work she panics and asks for a male doctor's assistance. "Page Dr. Shepherd" ("A Hard Day's Night"). She stands still for a while almost frozen, unable to decide what to do, without assistance and consultation. She delays action because of her lack of agency and takes time to decide on her own. She freezes in a testing moment and wants a male doctor's help in handling it. It is Meredith's first day on the internship but this cannot be an excuse for her to freeze when she is required to perform under pressure, being an intern cannot be an excuse for freezing since as an intern all she had to do was call for Dr. Shepherd. Looking at it from this perspective she is seen as weak because she takes time even to yell for the attending doctor.

After Cristina Yang's departure in the ninth season of *Grey's Anatomy*, the role of friend and confidant in Meredith's life is filled by Alex who points a number of times to taking care and responsibility of Meredith. He states that Yang "… left me you" ("I Must Have Lost it on the Wind"). As if she is a child, incapable of taking care of herself. Alex's estimation of Meredith shows that he thinks she is inert and lacks agency and activity and that is why he has to take care of her. On another occasion too Alex expresses the thought that Meredith is incapable of taking care of herself and lacks the capacity to decide and act for herself. Meredith also approaches Alex when she is frustrated by the unwanted interference of her half-sister. She is unable to resolve the issue on her own and is unable to think of a logical way to handle the situation. She has the tendency to feel agitated and impatient at such moments. When she confides in Alex about what is bothering her he tells her that after Yang he knows she will be dependent on him. He is sarcastic when he says, "Meredith, I realize that I said I would take over as your person. May be that means I have to buy your tampons" ("Got to Be Real"). Meredith, Cristina and Alex use the term "person" in lieu of "best friend". When Cristina left the hospital she handed over the responsibility and job of "person" for Meredith to Alex, realizing that Meredith cannot do without one. He is also exasperated at Meredith's inertness as he has to take care of her in situations where she cannot find a solution herself. Since Meredith lacks autonomy Alex has to manage her. Meredith's dependence on Alex increases in the face of the troubles she encounters. On one hand she is upset at her husband for the breach in their relationship while on the other she is facing the surprising and upsetting discovery of her half-sister. Meredith comes to Alex again when he is preparing for an important presentation and wants him to comfort and

help her in dealing with the increasing tensions in her life. Alex sees that Meredith is not bothered about the situation where he is contesting for the new member of the board in its forthcoming meeting, against Dr. Bailey. He whips at her by telling her that she is dependent and unable to handle tough situations alone. "Why aren't you at your own house, drinking and having bit** baby tears about your fake sister with your husband" ("Got to Be Real"). Here, he points towards her weak and dependent nature when he refers to her need to blow away her frustrations and anger by leaning on someone or through drinking. Later she comes to see him again to discuss her troubles when he is preparing for his important presentation and takes refuge in drinking in order to avoid reality. Alex gets upset at her: "Hey! You can sit here and get drunk and then vomit and cry" ("Got to Be Real"). Meredith's attitude of escape and inability to face problems boldly, shows her inertness. The female hero is vulnerable and lacks the action and strength to face troubles alone. Her emotional vulnerability, her dependence on the people in her life, crying and drinking show her lack of agency making her inert and dependent. Meredith's inertness is also evident in another instance where she is obsessed with her frustration about her new found half-sister and her confrontations with her at the hospital. She wants to talk to Alex in order to figure out how to handle this situation. She tells Alex's girlfriend and Pierce, "… if anybody asks you, I am sick" ("Got to Be Real"). When she is unable to come to terms with reality and finds it unbearably tough she resorts to escape instead of taking action or trying to find a solution. This idiosyncrasy of the female hero who is otherwise a gifted, hardworking and sensitive surgeon, managing her life alone since childhood, mars her strength as a hero. Sherrie A. Inness argues that this is a subversive strategy in popular texts and media representations of women. "… tough women are frequently toned down to make them more palatable to mass audience" (9). It shows that women are only allowed to show power within certain parameters which does not threaten male dominance and privilege. Therefore, an objectified female hero who is either objectified by others or leads to her own objectification through inherent weaknesses, does not make men nervous, as an active and fully confident woman might make them question their own masculinity.

In order to resolve Meredith's tension regarding the claim of Pierce that she is her sister, Alex despite being occupied with his crucial presentation sets out to find facts about the issue. Meredith, on the other hand, is reluctant and scared of finding out the truth. When Alex searches hospital data to discover the truth about Pierce's parentage,

she feels uneasy and compares his attitude with her previous best friend Yang, saying that had she been there they would have danced and tried to evade the reality whereas he is making her confront it. This confirms Meredith's inertness. When Alex discovers hospital records that would prove Pierce's parentage Meredith stops him from opening it as she is scared to face the truth. "Well, don't click on it, because I'm not … I'm not sure I'm ready to see this" ("Got to Be Real"). Although Meredith is confronted with this situation some time ago, she cannot get rid of this and concentrate on other matters, nor is she ready to resolve other matters. Alex's reply to Meredith's unwillingness to face the truth confirms Meredith's inertness and lack of autonomy. "Are you ever ready for this stuff?" ("Got to Be Real").

The female hero in *Grey's Anatomy* views herself in terms of the estimates of society. Theorists in sociology claim that a person's sense of self is a "social construction", and that it is impossible for identity to exist outside a nexus of social influences that control our lives (Rowlands 132). At the very start of the drama where she is busy in talking to herself she reveals her perception of the self when she says "my mother was one of the greats … and I am kind of screwed" ("A Hard Day's Night"). One gets to know later why Meredith has termed herself as "screwed". The female hero finds herself caught in the situations and circumstances of her life, in both spheres of her life—personal and professional. Meredith's use of passive structures in her talk is also another evidence of inertness or her lack of agency. Meredith Grey often talks to herself and these monologues are addressed to the viewers showing that she finds it difficult to make the people around her understand her thoughts and ideas. Meredith's explanations in her talk reveal her need to express herself and reflect her lack of agency since she feels she can't make anybody listen to an understand her views.

Meredith's inertness goes beyond the simple actions such as getting rid of her one-night stand. She is inert in that she cannot follow the values she preaches. Shepherd urges her to carry on with their fling when Meredith wants to end it upon discovering that Shepherd is her boss. When Meredith discovers that Derek, the man she spent the last night with, is the attending doctor at the same hospital where she works, she tries to avoid him. She refuses his offer of another night out, reminding him that he is an attending doctor and she is an intern. "This is inappropriate. Has that ever occurred to you? " ("A Hard Day's Night"). Meredith is not saying that she does not want to go out with him but is rather making a soft comment that it will be inappropriate if they continue a relationship other than the professional one.

In another scene with Alex in the dressing room Alex starts boasting before Meredith about his achievement, as he has assisted for the first time in an open heart surgery. He tells Meredith that he smells good after performing an open-heart surgery which she hasn't yet had the chance to experience. "It's awesome. You gotta smell me". he says with excitement, imposing his will on her, and when she refuses outright saying, "I don't want to" he exclaims "Oh, yes you do" ("Winning the Battle") as if she has no choice or likes and dislikes and must do as he desires. Here Alex denies her autonomy and forces Meredith to comply with his wishes and commands. The woman to him is not a person having her own feelings and desires. Despite the fact that she has angrily refused to do as he wants Alex ignores her disgust and grabs her in his arms forcefully, claiming that this is what she wants. At this moment Meredith's voice becomes louder in her exasperation but her refusal has no effect on him. She strikes back in anger when he grabs her, and forces him towards the wall and grabbing his face tells him, "I have more important things to deal with than you. I have roommates, boy problems and family problems" ("Winning the Battle") Meredith is angry since this is what is going on in her mind and life at that moment when Alex starts imposing himself on her and takes her acceptance for granted. Here the female hero is shown to reveal courage in not allowing a man to violate her boundary integrity. She tells him to his face "You smell like crap" ("Winning a Battle"). But she alone cannot combat the assailant as it will be revealed later that she will be set free only when Shepherd enters the room. When Alex grabs her in his arms Meredith shows resistance and pushes him away to show that she will not let him take advantage of her but at this moment too when the female hero is shown powerful enough to not let the man treat her as an object of his desire, one notices Alex's expressions as he enjoys arousing anger in her and making her hold him although with a feeling of utter disgust and hate. Alex violates the physical boundary in coming closer to her and grabbing her against her wish when she struggles almost as if she is a violable thing who can be taken advantage of. When Shepherd enters the room at this moment Meredith leaves Alex and in order to save himself from humiliation he quickly tells Shepherd, "She attacked me" ("Winning the Battle"). The female hero cannot bear this accusation and starts towards Alex to hit him again but Shepherd stops her and asks Alex to leave. Here again when the female hero seemed to be taking control of the situation another man is shown to be working as her savior or protector showing that she lacks the ability to handle tough situations on her own. If she is the hero she must be capable and endowed with the strength to face difficult

situations and protect herself from villainous people who pose a threat to her individuality and her humanity. But the female hero's presentation as a violable thing that lacks autonomy shows that she is not granted powers expected of a hero figure.

Meredith appears both inert and inactive when Alex bullies her after coming back from an operation. He jeers at Meredith that he smells of surgery and then forces Meredith to smell him. Meredith is inert in that she lets Alex pull her to himself but she retorts: "You smell like crap" ("Winning a Battle"). This show of strength infuriates Alex who expects obedience and he holds her to himself when Shepherd appears at the door and Alex is forced to let Meredith go. The point is that the female hero is unable to set herself free of Alex's hold. Her fists are "ineffectual" so she needs Shepherd to rescue her.

Shepherd asks Meredith to share what she is worried about. Meredith is upset about the mistake she has made in the operation theatre but she does not feel like talking about it to and is overcome with the feeling of inadequacy owing to her mistake. Shepherd wants Meredith to talk about the issue, "I'm talking about the heart thing. Do you want to talk about it?" ("Shake Your Groove Thing") to which Meredith replies showing her inertness. She is uncertain even about matters that she is involved in. Since this issue is a legal matter because Meredith in the presence of the patient's husband accepted the responsibility of causing damage to the patient's heart. Asking Shepherd instead of answering his question shows Meredith's inability to act for herself. Due to the fact that Meredith has been treated as an inert person that lacks the ability to decide and act on her own now that she has internalized her status as an inert object and finds it difficult to act.

In another scene when Meredith goes to get her mother's signatures for the legal processes of the property, seeing her mother's unstable mental state the caretaker suggests that Meredith should come some other time. She gets exasperated at this and issues a series of questions to the caretaker. "You know, why did she put this off for so long? And why did you let her? Doesn't it strike you as slightly irresponsible? I mean, what the hell is wrong with you people?" ("Shake Your Groove Thing"). This shows Meredith's inertness since she is so used to being told everything that she finds it hard to figure things out for herself. On many occasions she is found to be perplexed about what to do and this helplessness is evident in her asking questions of those in authority.

At the end of the party arranged by her friends at her house when Meredith is heavily drunk, Shepherd tells her the disadvantages of drinking as if she doesn't know

it herself. Shepherd acts as if Meredith does not understand the drawbacks of her action showing Meredith's inertness in that she lets herself be treated as an object lacking capacity to think and decide. Later Meredith asks Shepherd to take her on a ride. "Take me for a ride, Derek" ("Shake Your Groove Thing"). Meredith's asking him to take her on a ride also reveals her inertness since she doesn't order or suggest it to him but asks to be taken for a ride as if she is giving Shepherd rights and authority over herself. Her asking him to be taken for a ride also shows that she can't do it herself and needs someone else to do it for her.

In season seven episode four, "Only Mama Knows" Meredith saves a patient's life when they were losing him on the operation table. All the other doctors had given up due to excessive bleeding of the liver and. Meredith comes up with the idea of balloon tamponade to control a penetrating liver injury, stating "It's the best chance we have got" ("Only Mama Knows"). Everyone applauds her thoughtful and timely decision. Alex asks her "How the hell did you think of that?" ("Only Mama Knows"). Although she has done something great still questioning her that how she did it, is equal to questioning her ability as if he doesn't trust that she could perform such a feat.

Season eleven's first episode "I Must Have Lost it on the Wind" opens with Meredith's flashbacks in which she remembers her childhood and incidents of past such as losing her favorite doll, getting lost in a park, witnessing her mother in the hospital. Meredith's losing herself in memories time and again shows that she can't keep the past at bay and memories still haunt her. These become a hurdle in her realizing her potential, making the present more secure for herself and building her future as well. Her inability to come to terms with difficult experiences and memories of her past distracts her from her job and herself. Her constant struggle with the things that she cannot change and feels helpless against reveals that the female hero is shown as inert and inactive as if she lacks the capacity to act for herself and holds circumstances responsible for the things that are amiss in her life. Sherrie A. Inness contends that this pattern of tough yet bound woman is prevalent in the media depictions of women, as a fully powerful and autonomous woman threatens patriarchal status quo. The media presents powerful female heroes "but subsequently curtail their power when those women are found to be too subversive of the dominant social order" (Inness, *Action Chicks* 11).

Meredith at work cannot keep her past and personal experiences at bay. Time and again occurrences in the present, transport her into her past. For instance, on seeing a patient, a little girl in pain, she is reminded of her own childhood when she was troubled by her mother's attitude. These deliriums incapacitate her performance and disturb her activity as she is transported from present into the past and although the impact of these hallucinations, does not affect her work it does present her as inert.

In another episode "One Flight Down" season eleven when the victims of a plane crash are brought into the hospital, Meredith starts having flashbacks of the plane crash she suffered once. As the victims are pouring into the hospital Meredith finds it difficult to face the painful reality and her agency is contained due to her memories of the past. She becomes inert on seeing the suffering of the plane crash victims and since she cannot act due to the emotional strain and the memory of the plane cash she experienced in the past, she hides herself in the supply closet to escape the reality of the crash.

Years later, in season nine of the drama series, when faced with the devastating experience of Shepherd's death, Meredith shows composure and agency. When the doctors need Meredith's permission to stop life sustaining devices as there is no hope that Shepherd could survive fatal head injuries she commands; "Discontinue all the routine monitoring, remove all the catheters, drains, and tubes … Terminate all life-sustaining measures …" and says this even before the doctor asks her to sign the papers ("How to Save a Life"). Meredith shows autonomy and also agency in that she does not lack the capacity to decide and act in the face of the most traumatic situation in her life. In her last words to Shepherd when he is lying unconscious in ICU she assures him composedly, "Derek. It's okay. You go. We'll be fine" ("How to Save a Life"). It is a very traumatic situation for Meredith to let go of her husband and say a final good-bye to him while he is lying unconscious and on the brink of death but Meredith keeps herself calm, decides what is wise and appropriate and soothes the dying husband instead of wailing and crying.

As season eleven comes to its end and after Shepherd's death, Meredith becomes ever more haunted by the memories of her mother as there is a significant resemblance between her situation now and that of her mother. When Meredith was five years old her surgeon mother had been through the same situation: she too was pregnant and her husband had left her. These parallels are important as they show how Meredith deals with loss, how she fights her fears and inertness. As Ashley Sumeret in

her review of episode twenty-two says “Grey’s Anatomy, at its core, is about Meredith Grey becoming someone different than her mother” (“Grey’s Anatomy”).

Meredith asks questions which point to her inertness. She wants someone to tell her what to do. She can’t act on her own because she has been made inert too often. When Meredith is asked by the caretaker of her mother’s estate, to take responsibility of her inheritance Meredith’s reaction reveals that she wants to evade the responsibility. She makes up excuses that she has a tough day of surgery ahead and there should be somebody else like the attorney who can do what she, as her daughter, is supposed to do. Meredith’s response to the caretaker reveals that she does not believe that she is able to handle this responsibility, therefore she wishes to escape from it. “Are you sure there isn't anybody here, or the attorney...? I mean, do I really have to be the one to handle this?” (“No Man’s Land”). Meredith’s wonder and discomposure at finding herself in a testing situation where she is required to act like an independent adult who is to take charge of the situation and handle it with responsibility and without panicking shows her inertness. It also reveals that she has been treated by others as a person who lacks autonomy and self-determination and now that she has internalized these concepts she is hesitant to take responsibility. She has come to believe that she is incapable of making the right decisions on her own and needs somebody else to do it for her and thus to share her responsibilities.

In the elevator the conversation between Meredith and George after the surgery also reveals Meredith’s inertness. She is regretting her laxity, as she feels the patient could have lost her life due to her mistake. In order to clear her doubts, she seeks a reassurance and she asks George, “My fingernail popped the glove. Cut straight through. George, what if I punctured Mrs. Patterson's heart?” (“Shake Your Groove Thing”). When George reassures her that “… nothing happened. The woman is okay” (“Shake Your Groove Thing”) she in a state of bewilderment and asks him again “So I shouldn’t tell Burke” (“Shake Your Groove Thing”). Meredith keeps asking George about what she needs to do instead of figuring it out for herself thus revealing that the female hero is inert and needs someone else to tell her what she should do and also whether what she has done is right or not.

When Meredith is in a state of utter confusion as to what Shepherd feels about her, his not sharing any details about himself, makes her feel that she is kept in the dark regarding Shepherd's personal matters because she is only a plaything, and an object to toy with. She also feels that had Shepherd been serious about her he would have given

her importance and considered her worthy enough to share something about his personal life. This exasperates Meredith and she cannot comply with Shepherd's wishes as he does not want her to probe into his life. “Where'd you grow up? What's your favorite flavor of ice cream? Where'd you spend your summer vacations?” (“Save Me”). Meredith's outburst in a series of questions reveals that the female hero has not only been denied authority but also humanity. In a relationship she deserves to share with her partner the details of his life, his likes and dislikes but Shepherd’s not telling her anything about himself shows that he does not give her importance and thinks that he is the one to decide what she should know about him, and also how much and when. Therefore, he doesn’t feel it necessary to answer Meredith's questions “I’ve got to go. We'll find these things out” (“Save Me”).

Observing closely the exchange between Meredith and Shepherd it is evident that the female hero asks questions more often and also that her questions are lengthy inquiries into matters she doesn’t know about or is not sure whether she should do something about it. On the other hand, Shepherd asks fewer questions and when he does, his questions are short. Specifically, in episode eight and nine where Meredith asks questions about Shepherd's life but when he wants to know anything about Meredith, he confines himself to just a few short questions. “Who is calling you at this hour?” (“Who’s Zoomin’ Who?”). Similarly, when he inquires about the illness of Meredith's mother his questions comprise just a word or two. “Why? … How advanced?” (“Who’s Zoomin’ Who?”). This situation reveals that the female hero does not feel empowered. Meredith often asks questions and in the form of lengthy statements. In this way she seems to be figuring out for herself the way or course of action thus revealing the female hero's powerlessness. She is inert and lacks the capacity to act on her own, asking questions to find out for herself, whereas Shepherd being a man feels no need to inquire r to seek someone else’s guidance or opinion. Meredith also needs reassurance or another person's point of view in the form of their answers. Asking questions shows that she does not feel confident of her ability to judge, choose and act. Derek, on the other hand, by asking fewer questions reveals the confidence and empowerment that he does not need someone else to give him answers or details.

Having made up her mind and after taking a stand against Shepherd for treating the patient who is suffering from an infection that is spreading to her brain and lungs, Meredith still feels indecisive as she questions her own decision regarding her treatment of the patient. Meredith had overruled Shepherd’s diagnosis of treating the patient’s

brain first and operated on her lungs. She operates on the patient and thus saves her from organ failure but is later found questioning herself when she talks to Alex regarding Shepherd's warning about the patient. She also doubts her own intuition and feelings regarding Shepherd in her relationship with him. "Because we saved this patient from organ failure, but now she could wake up with brain damage. What if you were right? What if he wasn't being a stubborn, pig-faced jackass? What if it is me?" ("Risk"). What Meredith in this conversation says to Alex reveals her inertness. She is adamant and headstrong in believing that Shepherd is at fault not only in the diagnosis of the patient but also in their personal relationship for claiming to have given up the job for his family whereas Meredith feels that he has broken a promise and has preferred his career over hers. Through these questions to Alex she shows doubt in her own thoughts and decisions. Meredith finds it hard to make up her mind and act on her own decisions and even when she does, she begins to doubt her own actions and decisions and needs somebody else to assure her whether she is right or not.

Although Meredith gains autonomy at work after Shepherd leaves for Washington and she achieves remarkable progress within a short time she realizes that since Shepherd's departure, she has not failed a single surgery and is astonished at this "better off without him". But Meredith shows inertness since it is hard for her to believe in her own autonomy and agency. She shares this with Alex, telling him about her realization that what everyone else at work has been telling her is the truth: she has not lost a single patient from the very day her husband left. "What does that tell you? That you are right? That I'm better off without him?" ("I Feel the Earth Move"). The facts are before her. Her colleagues are also telling her and applauding her but still she is uncertain about her potential and needs answers to these to be sure of herself and her success. Her questions show that she is asking if it is really her who has accomplished this extraordinary feat.

Meredith does not want to take credit for her miraculous success and says that the "streak" in which she had eighty-nine consecutive successful surgeries, "It has nothing to do with me" ("Don't Dream It's Over"). Dr. Owen Hunt also tells Meredith that her success in surgeries is not due to Shepherd's departure but it is because of her commitment to work that is helping her. But she finds it hard to believe. "Grey, that has something to do with you. Don't kid yourself" ("Don't Dream It's Over").

The concept that females are weak and passive is so subtly embedded in their minds from the early years of their childhood that they begin to see it as an

unchangeable state. Meredith also carries this illusion. Her voice-over gives expression to this thought. One morning Meredith wakes up and reminisces over her dream, like every other girl, of finding a prince charming who would rescue her from all the troubles in her life and will take care of her. Meredith's voice-over reveals the inertness of the female hero who is looking at somebody else as her savior. “That fantasy of what your life would be. White dress, Prince Charming, Who'd carry you away … and you had complete and utter faith” (“Save Me”). She imagines herself as a damsel in distress who wants to be rescued and is helpless without a man showing that she considers herself incapable of handling difficult situations in her life and feels the need to give the charge of her life to somebody else. Despite the fact that she is the hero she longs to be rescued by a man and wants to depend on somebody revealing her faith in the other to rescue her and not in herself.

The experiences of her life and her encounters with trials in real life teach her that it is a fantasy to believe in rescue and help from some outside sources. The female hero finds it hard to come to terms with this reality and is duped by the illusion. “But the thing is, it's hard to let go of that fairy tale entirely” (“Save Me”). The female hero is so used to being objectified that she cannot think of herself as an independent and self-reliant person. She has been treated as an object lacking in agency. We hardly get to see women act confidently, make choices and decisions, take risks and become heroes and leaders. Anita Sarkeesian contends “the damsel in distress trope disempowers female characters and robs them of the chance to be heroes in their own right” (“Damsel in Distress”). Meredith also sees herself as weak and incapable of handling difficult situations of her life and longs for help. This feeling is the result of a social system based on patriarchal conventions that instill the belief that women are weak, ineffectual and need companion to take care of them.

In season Eleven, episode three, “Got to be Real”, in a voice over at the start of the episode when Meredith is reminiscing over her situation in life, she expresses that she is “vulnerable … like a patient on an operating table … naked, exposed”. Meredith’s reveries reveal estimation of herself. The female hero despite managing her life independently as a competent doctor, sees herself as vulnerable and at the mercy of people. The analogy she uses explains her situation. The mood of self-pity and exasperation at her helplessness show that Meredith does not feel autonomous and powerful and the new crisis in her life is the appearance of a half-sister, Dr. Pierce who

is having rifts and arguments at work with her making Meredith feel that her life is directed by people than herself.

The female hero in *Grey's Anatomy* has been shown as powerless and inert in the face of society, in the form of authority figures whether men or women, at the workplace or with men in a romantic relationship. She is told to do things as if she lacks the ability to act on her own or do what she likes or thinks appropriate. Shepherd also denies Meredith agency and activity. On a number of occasions Meredith succumbs to the wishes of others and submits before their will, showing no resistance while at other times when she does show resistance it seems like hollow words or expressions of frustration which rise temporarily but do not show any promise or potential that the female hero has taken control of her life and would not like to be dictated to. When Meredith feels that Shepherd does not talk to her about his home, family and personal matters the way she does, and also that he had never taken her to his house, spent time there the way Meredith does, she considers it a man's way of blocking her out of other spheres of his life and not giving her the privilege to share what she thinks he should if he loves her or is serious about their relationship. At Meredith's questions, Shepherd tells her not to get upset as it isn't anything important enough to feel so seriously about. He asks her to calm down and relax as she is making a fuss over nothing. Meredith, in exasperation, tells him not to dictate to her what to do. "Oh, don't you tell me to lighten up. I'll lighten up when I ... feel light" ("Winning a Battle"). The female thus hero asserts herself by saying that she does not need him to tell her what to do. These words on the surface seem to show the female hero's power in that she is refusing to let somebody else govern her life, take decisions of her life and tell her what to do and feel; but it still shows inertness as Meredith in anger does refuse to be told by Shepherd how she should feel but she is unable to do so because she cannot deny Shepherd's control over her feelings and mind.

When Meredith wants to know about Shepherd's sister Dr. Amelia who suffered personal accusations from a patient's daughter, and asks Shepherd to tell her what Dr. Own Hut said about her, he refuses to tell her anything saying, "I can't talk to you about this" ("Could We Start Again Please?"). At the same time, on getting to know that the new chief of cardio, Dr. Maggie Pierce is Meredith's sister, Shepherd questions Meredith and is able to get all the information about her. It is evident here that Meredith lacks the power to tell him what she wants to know. By refusing to tell her about his sister when she is asking him about her he treats her as inert. Meredith is inert in that

her constantly forceful questions do not yield an answer from Shepherd showing that he will tell her about his sister only when he feels comfortable.

As the drama series progresses it becomes evident that Meredith, instead of becoming more focused, confident and strong, has turned weak, insecure, confused and traumatized. In terms of the development of the female hero Meredith's decline in personality is a sign of the female hero's inability to handle troubles that she faces in her personal life. Although at work she still proves herself strong and competent but her personality and personal life, especially her marriage, are unsteady and she is failing to cope with the rising issues on these fronts. She needs somebody to help her as for instance she had relied on her friend Yang. She freaks out at minor issues arising in her relationship with her husband or the recurring discoveries of her mother's past life and her connection with events and people related to her mother are the problems she loses her mind over. Pearson and Pope, in their comprehensive study of the female hero, address this issue to describe the subordination of a female hero to the male. "The female hero finds herself unable to feel whole; furthermore, she is psychologically dependent on another person … [it] not only causes fragmentation in the self; it actually masks a radical imbalance of power between men and women" (20). Meredith's mental state resembles that of her mother whose mental capacities began to deteriorate later in her life due to Alzheimer's. Haunted by her past, tangled in the puzzles of her life that she cannot solve, hopelessly fighting with and sulking over things that she cannot change in her life she presents a haunted, obsessed and neurotic woman. Her deliriums into past life and her fights and intolerance in matters involving her husband, increase over time. The eleventh season therefore presents a haunted and shattered Meredith.

In episode three "Got to Be Real" and episode five "Bend & Break" Meredith's inertness and lack of autonomy are evident from her resorting to frequent drinking and binge eating. While with Alex, pressed by the attitude of Derek and also confronted with the appearance of her half-sister she finds it impossible to resolve the conflicts with both and tries to forget about these through indulgence in drinking. Also with Callie she goes out to the bar and loses herself in drinking and binge eating. Arizona is concerned about Meredith's state and forbids her from immoderation. The female hero's inability to face the challenges and solve them shows her weakness. She not only appears lacking autonomy but also as inert.

Meredith shows dependence on other people and also invites others into her personal life. When confronted with problems in her personal life she depends on

Christina and when the latter leaves the city, Alex takes up the role of her confidant. After Shepherd's departure to Washington she is overcome with the feeling of loneliness and wants to share it with Alex who due to his personal commitments is unable to reply to her. She reprimands him in the morning for not responding to her messages and tells him that "Christiana would've responded" ("The Bed is too Big Without You"). She herself had asked Shepherd to leave and avail the opportunity offered by the president but when he leaves she feels her absence and in the dead of the night wants her friend to console and comfort her over her loss. While reprimanding Alex over his behavior the night before, she asks him to give her company at work too which he refuses. She then asks Dr. Baily to scrub for her showing that Meredith needs someone so that she can share her feelings with them since the void and problems in her personal life are too much bear alone. Asking Alex and then Bailey for company during a case also stems from her need for some person who could listen to her and console her. Having made her decisions, she tends to get doubtful about her own actions and needs someone to assure her whether whatever she feels is right.

Meredith tells Pierce about her not boarding the plane to Washington D.C. to meet her husband. She reveals to her that she is scared to make the move after what has happened between them and she does not have courage to face either the further confrontation or Shepherd's cold attitude. Thus, due to her fear and uncertainty about Shepherd's reaction she is unable to make up her mind and despite telling everyone at work that she is leaving to see her husband she does not board the plane and stays alone. "I just stood there. I froze. I didn't get on the plane" ("The Pretender"). She admits to Pierce that she is afraid to face reality and she is not sure how she should handle the situation. Later she says in a monologue too "Fear makes us hold ourselves back" ("The Pretender"). Meredith is confident and is ready to take risks in her professional life but when it comes to her personal life she cannot muster up courage to face or to clear uncertainties by dealing with them head on. When she meets Alex she expresses to him the same fears that she admitted before Pierce. "What if I got off the plane and he wasn't happy to see me? What if he didn't smile?" ("The Pretender"). She is inert in that she cannot decide what she wants from Shepherd and herself. Having made a decision to let him go, she feels uncertain about their relationship. Although she admits to Alex "I don't want to leave him" ("The Pretender") she is still not able to make amends with Shepherd and put their relationship back on track.

When faced with devastating experience of Shepherd's death Meredith shows composure and agency. When the doctors need Meredith's permission to stop life sustaining devices as there is not hope that Shepherd could survive fatal head injuries she even before the doctor asks her to sign the papers commands him "Discontinue all the routine monitoring, remove all the catheters, drains, and tubes … terminate all life-sustaining measure…" (Save a Life). Meredith shows autonomy and also agency. She does not lack the capacity to decide and act in the face of the most traumatic situation in her life. In her last words to Shepherd when he was lying unconscious in ICU she assures him composedly "Derek. It's okay. You go. We'll be fine" (Save a Life). It was a very traumatic situation for Meredith to let go of her husband and say a final good bye to him while he was lying unconscious on the brink of death but Meredith keeps herself calm, decides what is wise and appropriate and soothes the dying husband instead of wailing or crying.

Meredith, despite troubles in her personal life keeps her head high at work. It is evident that her performance at work did not suffer from what she faces in her personal life. After the surprising discovery that Dr. Pierce is her sister, and discovering the awful truths and trouble about her mother's life she bears so much emotional pain. After getting to know about Shepherd's interest in a job at Washington which would mean she will have to take care of the children alone she still manages her work immaculately proving that she can face her challenges like a hero. Despite the agreement that Meredith and Shepherd had that he would keep working at least for a year at Seattle so that Meredith can focus on her research. But when Shepherd revealed to her the attractive offer by the president she felt devastated that Shepherd cracked their relationship by breaking promise and feels his career is more important than hers. Although on knowing that Meredith is displeased at his decision he refuses the offer but Meredith keeps the resentment and tells him to accept the offer and move to Washington and pursue his dream. In this situation she takes the responsibility of taking care of children despite the responsibilities of her job. Meredith conscientiously preforms her responsibilities as a mother and as a doctor. Her concentration and brilliance at work still gets her applauds. She makes diagnosis for a patient, whom everyone was blaming as reckless driver and irresponsible mom, having pancreatic cancer, when other doctors overruled it and later applaud Meredith for her smart diagnosis. Her empathy with the patients also increases with mounting pressures in her

life. She is exercising agency at work and proves herself. This despite the havoc and troubles in her personal life she has the strength and courage to do her job well. This proves her agency and resisting inertness.

Meredith shows autonomy and power that stems from her skills as a doctor she is vulnerable in her personal life but her professional caliber is unquestionable and she is thriving as a surgeon, showing creativity in thinking and making use of technology. This noticeable development becomes more important as it happens right at the time when she had just let go of her husband who wanted to pursue his dream career. The only contention Meredith had with his decision was that it would put her career at stake as they as partners were sharing responsibilities of home and kids. She questioned Shepherd that he thinks his career was more important than hers. Her increased competence and smartness at work show that she is proving how important her career is to her and how seriously she take it. Meredith's intuition and insight has increased tremendously, as she is innovative and bold at her work. Shepherd's departure and his decision of finding a job away gave Meredith a motive and prompted her towards more competence where she is realizing her autonomy in making decisions for her patients, coming up with ingenious ideas and taking risks.

Meredith also stays on call in the hospital at night showing more concern for her job as a savior of lives despite that fact that her small children need her at home in the absence of her husband. In episode ten "The Bed is too Big Without You" Dr. Bailey askes her abut children and she says they are in the nursery in the hospital. Bailey asks her to make up something about call so that she can stay with kids as Shepherd also is not there to take care of the kids. Meredith makes excuses like she cannot leave work as she need to oversee the printing herself. "Someone has to stay in case the printer crashes" (The Bed is too big). It seems she is running away from her responsibility of kids. When Shepherd left her and their children and pursued his job away from home Meredith felt shattered at his decision of giving priority to his career. Now it seems that she is trying to prove that if Shepherd believed his career more significant than hers she too will prove that her career means more to her and will not let Shepherd treat her as less committed to work.

Meredith is able to gain autonomy and exercise agency after coming out of the shadow and dominance of Shepherd. When Shepherd comes to see her after a long

grove in their relationship and wants to make amends with her. She admits to him that this breach made her realize that she can live on her own but she does not want to live without him. "I can live without you. But I don't want to" (With or Without You). Meredith after gaining autonomy in her personal life chooses to live with Shepherd. Her realization that she can live without a man's support has not turned her rebellious. In fact during the period of separation not only did she excel in her career but also improved as a person. She knows she was happy in her freedom but still she chooses to stand by her husband.

Faced with the most traumatic experience of her life—Shepherd's death—Meredith shows composure and autonomy. When the doctors approach her to seek her permission to put her husband off life-sustaining equipment she herself commands him to do what any sane doctor would do in this situations where there is no hope of the patient's survival. "Discontinue all routine monitoring. Remove all the catheters, drains, and tubes…Terminate all … life-sustaining measures… and behave as any sane doctor would behave" (How to Save a Life). Meredith commands the doctor who was treating her husband before he tell her anything to do she tell him what he is supposed to do. At the moment of saying a final good bye to Shepherd, who is lying unconscious in the ICU, she shows no sign of weakness. Instead of crying or wailing she soothes the dying husband by telling him Bye, Derek. Derek. It's okay. Your go. We'll be fine" (How to Save a Life). Meredith not only takes a decision of letting her husband dye comfortable by removing the catheters when there is no hope of his survival but also accepts the responsibility of taking care of herself and their children assuring the dying husband that he need not worry as she will take care of everything. As in the next episode she remembers Shepherd's words that give hers strength to move on alone and confidently face any crisis in life. "If there's a crisis … You don't freeze. You move forward. You get the rest of us move forward. Because you have seen worse. You have survived worse" (She's Leaving Home). She resolves to leave all the "ghosts behind" and joins work again in order to move forward. After Shepherd's death she leaves home with her children without informing anyone at work, and leaves only a note "the kids and I are safe" (She's Leaving Home) she does take the responsibility despite escaping the situation. On one hand she left her responsibilities at the hospital. Worried about Meredith's disappearance, Dr. Bailey remarks "She just dropped everything… Her patients, her surgeries" (She's Leaving Home). Others showing concerns suggest

informing police about her disappearance. But Dr. Webber sees her act in a different light. He dismisses the charges of irresponsibility on Meredith saying that since she left a note she is not a missing person. “She’s not jeopardizing her kids. She’s not an irresponsible person…she’s doing what she knows to do” (She’s Leaving Home).

5.1.2 Beckett “falling behind”

Castle, the famous writer of detective thrillers, comes to assist Beckett in solving a murder case that has happened just the way one of Castle's stories goes. The first time Castle comes to meet Beckett at her office regarding the case he acts not like someone who is supposed to assist Beckett, the detective in charge, but like someone whom Beckett seems to be assisting. He wants to take some action to show he is using his authority and knowledge of cases as a writer and a man having more experience than the female detective hero. He wants the prints quickly and when Beckett says that they follow the protocol and things would take the usual course to get done Castle remarks that she is feeling threatened that her authority is being challenged by him. “I think somebody feels threatened” (“Flowers for Your Grave”). By directing the course of actions that are regular procedures and that Beckett follows as protocol, Castle denies her agency. He treats her as if she lacks the capacity to act in an efficient and effective manner and takes over to proceed according to his own likes. The female hero is relegated to the subordinate role and the man takes control of the situation, wanting to go about his work as he likes hence denying the female hero agency and freedom to act. Castle makes fun of Beckett’s adherence to rules and procedures and directs her to have some fun by putting rules aside. Even when she threatens her by saying “Do you know I'm wearing a gun?” (“Flowers for Your Grave”) he is not bothered showing that her threats and serious-mindedness about her work have no effect on him.

Like Meredith, Beckett also finds herself unsure in situations where she is accompanied by Castle. Over his remarks and predictions of the situation and cases under investigation she often asks him questions as if she is unable to understand these on her own. Beckett is a detective herself and Castle accompanies her to search for material for his writing. Owing to their positions, Beckett being a professional detective has more knowledge and expertise as compared to Castle but she lacks confidence and seeks confirmation of her ideas and explanation from Castle. In episode three “Hedge Fund Homeboys” when Beckett and Castle go for investigation to the boy’s house Castle asks them “when did they move?” Later Beckett asks him how he knew that the

Kendalls had moved and how he knows about the school. Questions like these show that she cannot come to a conclusion on her own and therefore her inertness. Despite being a detective and working in the field for years, she cannot discern on her own some very obvious facts and has to ask Castle.

While Castle and Beckett are speculating over the boy's murder Beckett asks Castle a number of questions. Instead of being confident of her own reading and understanding of the situation she needs confirmation of her ideas through Castle's assurances. When they are discussing Donny's reasons for sitting in the park before he was killed, she asks Castle "Drug deal gone bad?" ("Hedge Fund Home Boys"). During the course of the investigation it is Beckett who asks questions for clarification, not Castle. Beckett is inert in that she needs someone else to confirm her ideas and Castle is seen in the position of an expert: confident and more experienced than the female hero. At times Beckett questions Castle or waits for him to complete her statement. When Beckett's boss asks about a person's name she looks at Castle as if she is not sure whether she is right or not:

MONTGOMERY. Who's the sidekick?

BECKETT. He's a…

CASTLE. Consultant?

BECKETT. Consultant. ("Hell Hath No Fury")

In episode nine while investigating the kidnapping of a little girl, Castle points to the missing bunny that the girl is holding in the pictures. It is obvious that he is hinting at the fact that whoever abducted the girl knew that she cannot be comfortable without her bunny so it too was taken along. Still Beckett retorts: "You think whoever took Angela knew her well enough to take the bunny, too?" ("Little Girl Lost"). This shows Beckett's inertness since she is unable to come up with an idea or clue on her own. It is Castle in most cases who finds the lead; she only completes his thought and asks questions for relatively simple things.

Beckett's inertness is revealed when she cannot understand simple things or inquires Castle about things which she does not understand. In "Hell Hath No Fury" Castle explains to her the term "red herring" ("Hell"). He also asks her jokingly if she needs to consult "Castle notes"? ("Hell") implying that he is wise and she like a schoolgirl needs to consult Castle notes like Spark Notes or Cliffs Notes etc. The female hero's lack of knowledge shows her inertness in that she is not as bright and smart as Castle. There are many instances like these where she cannot figure out the meaning of

things and asks Castle for answers or it is he who tells her what she does not understand. Being the hero of the drama it is expected that Beckett should be smarter than Castle who is an accomplice in the cases she investigates but Castle's smartness gives him an edge over the female hero. Beckett's inertness mars her heroism; her indecisiveness and lack of confidence when she is supposed to act with confidence shows her inertness. She lacks the ability to act for herself and needs to depend on Castle's knowledge and experience.

In “A Chill Through Her Veins”, Castle is already there at the crime scene observing the dead body. As Beckett comes in Castle theatrically welcomes her, “Oh. Finally, you are here. You're gonna love this” (“Chill”). On many occasions Castle jumps into situations where Beckett doesn’t want to take him along as in this occasion he reaches the crime scene before Beckett and teases her by asserting his authority over Beckett. The female detective hero yields in to her objectifier's authority and has to act as the subordinate rather than the dominant figure.

Beckett’s inertness is further evident when she is lost in solving the mystery of transportation of the dead body. She expresses openly how she has no clue as to how the killer moved the dead body. It is interesting to note that Beckett despite being the hero in the drama series, is shown as helpless and clueless in solving the matters she deals with on daily basis and Castle explains the solutions to her giving her professional advice as if it is he who is a skilled and experienced detective instead of Beckett. He advises Beckett to get into the killer’s head to solve the mystery of the murder as if Beckett is a novice and is learning the ropes. Castle establishes his authority in testing situations by finding some missing link or suggesting a solution to a problem that Beckett is unable to solve. Beckett shows her simplicity to the point of silliness as we don’t expect such illogical questions from an efficient detective and the hero of the drama; also she is unable to solve the mystery involving the murder and Castle comes up with a solution:

BECKETT. How did he get the body to the storage unit?

CASTLE. He... He could... No.

[Beckett stammers the start of a word]

CASTLE. You know what helps?

BECKETT: Yeah?

CASTLE: Point is, you want to get into a killer's head, go to where the killer was and see what problems he had to face. (“A Chill

Through Her Veins")

In "Home" Beckett is unable to understand a simple point during the investigation of a murder and breaking of a safe. Despite Castle's clues regarding how the intruders knew about the presence of valuables in the safes in the house she asks, "Castle! What's the point?" ("Home") and Castle has to explain it to her as if he is the detective "The point is, our home invaders seem to know an awful lot about their victims" ("Home"). This case is not a complex puzzle that needs to be solved; even a layman can guess what Castle infers from the crime scene but Beckett, the detective, asks Castle to explain to her "the point". The ideas and solutions to the problems coming from Castle show Beckett's inertness. Through the constant presence of Castle Beckett starts to rely on him so much that she loses her ability to think independently and act on her own. It is like domination through consent that Beckett cannot think or act without Castle. In *Radical Feminism Today* Thompson explains the idea of domination through consent. "The social conditions of male supremacy function more efficiently to the extent that women (and men) accept the reality of their position, embrace it as natural and unalterable, desire its continuation and fear its destruction, and believe it is their own meaningful existence"(22). Beckett initially was not happy to work with Castle when her boss announced that she would have to cooperate and help Castle do some research for his novel writing. Beckett is denied autonomy since as a detective in charge she is not given the right to refuse what she does not feel comfortable about; the decision is made by her boss and she has to comply with it. The female hero, thus, has no choice but to accept the order. She feels uneasy at Castle's overbearing personality and influence but over time she begins to accept his increasing control in decision making. Her consent shows that she has submitted to the influence and power of the man accompanying her.

The observation of Castle's mother supports the argument that Beckett is dominated and patronized by Castle. When Castle helps her in winning at the poker game his mother considers it to be denying agency to a woman. Castle favors Beckett thinking that she will not be able to win on her own. It is like helping a child win a game by encouraging her when she plays with an adult. Castle's action reflects that he does not feel that Beckett has the mettle and maturity to act and win. He thinks he needs to lift her in every situation whether it is a game or solving a case at work. Martha, Castle's mother, tells him that by doing so he is not helping Beckett in any way but is instead denying her agency and activity. Martha says to Castle, "Kate Beckett is not

some bimbo who needs big, strong you to look out for her. She's a real woman. And a real woman does not want to be patronized" ("Ghosts"). The next day Beckett comes to return the money to Castle that she had won in the poker game. Beckett is inert in that she could not figure out that he let her win the game. Although she returns his favor, it does not mean that she is able to discern at the very moment that he is helping her win the game. She is shown to be helpless and less smart than Castle. This casts a shadow over the female hero as it is Castle who in the end steals the show.

Investigating the case of the lost child with Sorenson and his team, Beckett, on Castle's suggestion, requests Sorenson, the chief of the team to allow Castle to go for negotiation with the kidnapper. Instead of finding a way out by herself she quickly seconds Castle's opinion and cannot decide on her own what should be done in the situation. Beckett's dependence on Castle is evident from her remark, "He's been with me on cases before. He's good under pressure. And he's our best shot" ("Little Girl Lost"). This shows the female hero's inertness. She depends on Castle to the extent that she cannot do without him not only in terms of coming up with ideas and solutions but also in terms of taking action and making a move. This shows that the female hero lacks agency, autonomy and capacity to act on her own and this mars the female hero's. Examining the issue of objectification LaCriox and Pratto claim that objectification also occurs when a person "curtails his or her own autonomy, agency, or subjectivity" (201). On a number of occasions Beckett backs off from performing in situations and instead succumbs to Castle's suggestions and lets him lead.

In "Driven", Castle is abducted and Becket embarks on the mission of solving the mystery of his abduction. As chief investigator of the case, Beckett takes charge of the situation to resolve the case of Castle's abduction, which occurs on the day they are heading for their wedding. Beckett has been given agency here in solving this case. Under extreme emotional pressure she insists on pursuing the case herself despite her boss's concerns. It can be noticed that although the female hero has been granted agency but only to rescue the man—and restore the patriarch. Beckett's situation here coincides with that of Wonder Woman. In the *Wonder Woman* Series her love interest Captain Steve Trevor consistently needs to be rescued and Wonder Woman performs this feat, carrying him out of danger. Sharon Zechowski and Caryn E. Neumann call this motif a rare idea in "a popular culture dominated by male characters and patriarchal narratives" (133). In popular narratives it is rare to see women rescuing men from danger. When Beckett is given agency to find Castle and catch the malefactors, apparently the female

hero, like her male counterpart, is free to act and help him but what is more striking than the agency of the female hero is that even though she has been granted agency, it has been granted only to restore the patriarch and bring him back to his world. The concern of feminists and skepticism of critics regarding Wonder Woman that "Although she defies the stereotypes of the passive woman in need of rescue, her actions toward Trevor still support a heteronormative ideology" (Zechowski and Neumann 140) hold true for Beckett as well. They further argue about the motif of a female rescuing a man with reference to *Wonder Woman* stating that it is acceptable for Wonder Woman to rescue Trevor as she does it out of her love for him and there is no sense of domination or competition involved (140). Although Beckett has been given agency and she defies the stereotype of the passive woman who is supported and rescued by a man, her actions for rescuing Castle, like Wonder Woman, serve to "support a heteronormative ideology" (140). That is why the female hero's agency, when it is granted to her to save or help a man is motivated by her love rather than her power or superiority over him.

In the episode "At Close Range" in Season seven, Beckett finds a clue or stumbles into it and the clue takes her to the wrong person and it is that accused who tells her about the criminal. It is observed that when Castle does not solve the case Beckett cannot solve it on her own either. She stumbles and fumbles and ricochets off stuff to end up with the resolution. Catherine Haworth in her research on female detective figures in films, states that the detective agents occupy "fixed and static" (544) roles because their roles are characterized in relation to male heroes who, compared with female detectives, show a higher degree of "agency and mobility" (544) as it is observed in this instance in *Castle* that in the absence of her companion Beckett comes out of the shadows and attempts to gain agency. Haworth further states that this mobility and agency of the female detective hero is curtailed by the intervention and presence of a male figure or some other authority (as observed in this instance that Beckett's boss and then the FBI agent intervene to undermine Beckett's authority). Since the mobile, active and aggressive female hero is "a more nuanced and appealing portrayal of women" (Haworth 545). Haworth terms it a strategy used in the patriarchal setup to "neutralize and contain the threat to patriarchal authority" (545) that is implicit in the active female agent. This determination on the part of Beckett also leads to the female hero's agency and resistance to inertness as she declares "I will find Castle, with or without the FBI" ("Driven"). The statement of Beckett apparently seems like rebellion

against authority (patriarchal institution) but in fact is her submission to that authority. The female hero possesses agency but her agency is neutralized in the face of the powerful setup of which she is a part both as a member of this society and as a detective in the police department.

In "Time of Our Lives" Castle finds himself in a parallel universe where he is no more involved in solving cases with detective Beckett who is shown to have ascended to the rank of Captain with Javier and Rayan working as her subordinates. She is in a commanding position, issuing orders to them. It seems that the female hero has been granted agency and autonomy and her promotion to the seat of Captain speaks of her development and power, but as Castle enters in, he does most of the job that Beckett was expected to perform. Also in this parallel world he is not the best-selling author, rather his writing career tanked and he squandered his fortune. Although in this instance where the facts reveal Beckett's superiority over Castle, the fact that despite Beckett's position as superior Castle helps Beckett in the case and disapproves Beckett's autonomous and confident demeanor, undercuts the female hero's autonomy and authority and proves it just a façade of emancipation. Beckett's ascendency to the seat of captain is undermined when Castle finds her unimpressive. He disapproves Beckett's professional tactics in the parallel universe and this version of Beckett, although empowered and superior in rank, disappoints him. For him this avatar of Beckett lacks tenacity and the drive to fight crime and he even goes as far to call her out on it. It is Castle who impresses by not giving up in this situation whereas Beckett refuses to listen to Castle's stories and suggestions in solving the mystery of the lost artifact. He finds the artifact to reach back to his world. Beckett is not active here and her lack of agency shows that the female hero lacks the capacity to act. LaCriox and Pratto in discussing the issue of agency of the female characters argue that women in media are usually portrayed as lacking agency. Strong female characters are" inexplicably violated" and "disempowered … as a means of providing main male characters with motivation...and thus advance their own storylines" (197). In this instance also Beckett's passivity and lack of trust in Castle allows Castle to perform the task himself and solve the issue singlehandedly.

Although Beckett is the principle detective, there are numerous instances in which Castle solves the case. He handles the difficult part of the case and shows more activity whereas Beckett is relegated to secondary position. In "Clear and Present Danger" in which Beckett and Castle are dealing with the "invisible man" who uses

cloaking technology to hide, Castle saves Beckett from the invisible man's attack. The traditional motif of man rescuing a woman is reiterated as Beckett, despite being a detective, lacks the agency and power to avoid the attack. Castle rescues her and combats with the assailant. Once again Castle proves he is more powerful than the female hero, Beckett. Showing the female hero as less powerful and dependent on the man for her safety evokes the popular motif of the *Superman* comics and movies where Lois Lane is in need of rescue by Superman who saves her on countless occasions. Harvey Mansfield discusses the notion of Lois Lane's dependence on Superman by stating "She is secondary to her man in the sense of endorsing him and decorating his vicinity, providing "support" as we say, not in the sense of holding him to a standard" (117). Similarly, in *Castle* there are numerous instances where Beckett lacks agency and Castle takes up the leading position in solving matters. Keeping in view the fact that Castle is a writer and Beckett a detective, Beckett's relying on Castle supports the patriarchal ideology of female dependence on the male figure. Hannah Starke, like Harvey Mansfield, also comments on the "precarious situation" of the female lead in *Superman* comics and television series stating that on the one hand Lois Lane is presented as a strong female character that women can look up to as independent working woman, (a journalist) and at the same time is "nothing more than a girl who pines after a hero" (115). Such roles have been much criticized for promoting stereotypes and curtailing women's agency and in this instance Starke states that female characters are "treated as no more than a plot device and written as catalogue of stereotypes" (116). She calls it disheartening that "despite women proving themselves over and over again they are not literally respected in the same way as men" (Starke 116).

Various instances depict the female hero as lacking agency. In "Child's Play" Castle decides to undertake the task of getting information from the little boy who is the witness in a murder case. Although dealing with children and developing an emotional and sympathetic bond is considered the domain of females here also, instead of Beckett performing the job of solving the murder case that requires inquiring about the details of the murder from a child witness, it is Castle who performs this job and shows more agency and activity in solving the case at the same time proving himself more capable than Beckett.

In "Meme is Murder" Beckett is engaged in eliciting information from the criminal they have caught for investigation and she coaxes him to tell them the truth.

Castle watching Beckett through the glass screen, utters a statement that apparently seems to be in praise of Beckett. “If anyone can break him, it’s detective Beckett. And there’s still a chance Snappamatic can help us” (“Meme”). Here the qualification used by Castle is significant as it shows that she cannot do it, rather Snappamatic can be more useful in finding the information. This remark reveals that Beckett lacks agency and is inert. Instead it is the software that will prove more useful. Later Castle and another male detective go to find and free the detainees while Beckett performs the job at the office, eliciting information from the culprit. Here also Becket is treated as if she lacks agency and activity and Castle and Garrett perform the job of rescuing the men.

In “Reckoning” in which Beckett was abducted and Castle investigates to find and rescue her it can be compared to Beckett’s agency and role: when Castle is kidnapped and goes missing for about two months Beckett cannot do anything to rescue him or even to get some clue as to what has happened to him. After two months Castle himself turns up without Beckett’s intervention and help in his rescue. Whereas in this situation where the female hero is missing and is in danger, Castle exercises agency and activity finds the right clues to reach to her and he even takes the risk of breaking official procedures and protocol to find where Beckett is. Although when he reaches Beckett in the final scene she is able to get out of clutches of the woman and slays her. It was due to Castle’s intervention that the woman was unable to make a move as Castle had caught the accomplice, for whom she had been waiting. Sharon Zechowski and Caryn E. Neumann argue that in films and television drama strong women have become a media staple “the transgressive elements … were safely contained within a dominant muscular narrative, thus preserving the gender status quo” (137). Even though Beckett is given a little agency in freeing herself from chains and killing the malefactor, it is Castle’s strategy as well as actions which let Beckett act in her defense. This shows that the female hero despite being a detective in-charge is somehow constrained in activity and is inert on levels more complicated and subtle for the understanding of a common viewer who may take the detective female hero as active and autonomous agent. Her inertness in this way, where she cannot do anything to rescue Castle and where she is dependent on and is aided by Castle for her own rescue, are evidence of the female hero’s inertness. Her agency is limited. She is not given agency to rescue the man, and in her own plight too it is the man who does the rescuing. This situation can be compared with the situation in *Wonder Woman* comics and television series, as Annessa Ann Babic exploring patriarchal strategies of domination observes that although Steve

Trevor, whom Wonder Woman secretly loves, is rescued by Wonder Woman, he never finds out that Wonder Woman has saved him (100). Babic talks about the contradictions in Wonder Woman's superhero identity and role, that although she is given agency to rescue the man, the man does not get to know that the woman is responsible for this daring deed. Also, when she tells Steve Trevor about her secret identity and feat he considers it "nothing more than nonsense" (Babic 100). If a woman hero can rescue a man and not be acknowledged for this, it is because unprecedented authority and autonomy of the female hero is considered a threat to male autonomy and patriarchy. That's why Beckett despite being a detective, more skilled and trained than the novelist Castle, is not given agency to rescue him or even herself without his aid. Beckett acknowledges Castle's role in her rescue and is grateful to him. "Thanks for coming to get me" ("Reckoning"). In contrast to the situation of Wonder Woman, where her role as savior has been dismissed by Steve Trevor, in Castle not only does the female hero know that she has been rescued by the man but she also recognizes the act of kindness and daring that he performs, acknowledging that she could not have done it herself.

In season seven episode twenty, "Sleeper", Castle gets to a point where Beckett cannot find much information. Earlier too when Castle was missing she could not do anything to find him or even after his return she cannot solve the mystery surrounding his abduction. Castle wants to solve the mystery of the two months that he spent away from her, as he is disturbed by strange dreams that he thinks are clues. When he tries to find connections between the images and people in his dreams he asks Beckett to find some facts. "If I'm going to track him down I'm going to need you to do a background check on him" ("Sleeper"). Beckett, however, is unable to help him and he finds answers to what he was seeking himself. Beckett is thus not given agency and is even more inert in this situation.

In "Plane Sight" Castle investigates the case of an air marshal gone missing on board a plane. Castle finds out that he has been murdered on board and launches a search for the murderer. Although Beckett provides information about the suspects in the plane Castel needs her and her team in the office but she cannot do anything since she was not with Castle on the plane. She is shown as being inactive and passive most of the time and is worried about the safe return of Castle and the landing of the plane.

In "Hong Kong Hustle" when Beckett learns that the male colleague, she graduated with, has been promoted as Captain she begins to feel that she is lagging behind and sees herself as inert. "We started together, and he's going to be Captain and

I am just …" ('Hong Kong"). She feels that despite the fact he is not her senior he is more successful and is recognized for his accomplishments. In comparison she feels that she is "falling behind" ("Hong Kong"). She feels she needs autonomy in order to rise up to the level that her colleague has reached. "I guess that I just thought that I would be in more of a leadership position by now" ("Hong Kong"). Beckett realizes that she needs autonomy and more power for making decisions. She feels that in her position as a detective and chief investigator she does not enjoy as much power and authority as she should and that is why she feels she is falling behind her male course mate. Beckett's statement is the affirmation of the fact that the female hero is not fully empowered. Castle also notes that Beckett is not acting on her own and is influenced by Zhang's ideas after meeting her. He is able to point out that what Beckett is saying is not what she believes in herself, but actually Zhang's notions. This shows that Beckett lacks autonomy and the ability to make decisions for herself according to her own philosophy and beliefs and is taking someone else's ideas as her own. When she says to Castle "…When you reach the peak of one mountain isn't it time to scale another one?" ("Hong Kong"). Castle quickly discerns that these are not Beckett's thoughts. "That sounds like something Zhang would say. Are you quoting her" ("Hong Kong"). By getting so quickly influenced by Zhang, Beckett shows lack of self-confidence and self-determination and thereby denying herself autonomy rather than someone else curtailing her autonomy and agency.

Another instance where it is evident that Beckett feels she lacks autonomy and agency is where she meets Zhang, a female detective from Hong Kong P. D. Impressed by her skills, competence and career record Beckett begins to feel inferior. She feels that she does not yet have the skills that Zhang possesses. In a conversation with Castle, Beckett expresses her sense of inadequacy and her disappointment at not being able to achieve as much as Zhang has. "No, Castle. She is just like me. Only better" ("Hong Kong"). Also, Beckett objectifies herself by comparing herself to Zhang and believing herself to be less competent. When she tells Castle about Zhang's skills at shooting she says "She is good at everything! She has got an incredible career, movies star husband, perfect kids. She does it all, she has it all, and to top it off she is gorgeous" ("Hong Kong"). Beckett's fascination with Zhang and her accomplishments and her drawing comparisons with her, including things other than professional, show that she is succumbing to objectification. The mother and wife's roles are established in patriarchal society as important roles for women and are termed as leading women to

completion and success. If Beckett looks at herself as inept or less competent in realms that are stereotypically believed for women to show accomplishment in, then it is obvious that she does not recognize her individuality and professional competence as her defining traits. As an autonomous agent she can do and achieve what she wants, but instead she feels that someone else can do that and she cannot be as successful as they are. This also shows that Beckett herself admits that she lacks self-determination and autonomy to prove herself a successful and competent woman. Accessing her fascination with Zhang and feeling a rising sense of competition with Zhang, Beckett admits to Castle her lack of confidence. “I am insecure” (“Hong Kong”). Her insecurity is the result of her lack of self-determination and autonomy and proves that Beckett’s insecurities and lack of confidence in her own skills and talents is self-imposed and she later discovers that Zhang is not as successful in the domestic sphere as Beckett assumes she is. It is not that only other people around her objectify her, the female hero herself is also responsible for her objectification.

In the final scene in “Hong Kong Hustle”, when Beckett, Castle and Zhang are interrogating the suspect regarding the murder of Henry, the pattern in the interrogation is worth noting. Castle asserts the point in proving that the suspect is lying. Beckett only provides supporting details or evidence for what Castle says. It is noticeable that she is one step behind in explaining what Castle says. This shows the limited agency and inertness of the female hero since the man is doing the significant part of the investigation and leading the investigation to a resolution, whereas Beckett has a very minor part to play, as if it is not Castle who is assisting the detective hero Beckett, but Beckett assisting him in the investigation. Also Zhang interjects in Chinese to break the suspect into admitting the murder. The final speech act comes not from Beckett but from another female inspector. Also it is Zhang who announces the final arrest and puts hand-cuffs on the criminal. Both the declarative speech act and the physical act of arrest are performed by Zhang after Castle’s interrogation and Beckett is nowhere in the action. The female hero is treated as inert and her autonomy is compromised not only by Castle but also by another female inspector who is assisting Beckett in this case.

Beckett has to appear in a test to qualify for the seat of captaincy of the Precinct. Although she knows that she is competent and has worked really hard and served the department honestly she does not feel confident and is nervous that she will not do well in the test. Knowing about one of her male colleague’s promotion has filled her heart with greater regret at not having made enough progress in her career. She expresses to

Castle that she and her male colleague passed out from the academy together but she is "falling behind" ('Hong Kong"). Later on meeting Zhang, a vibrant and tough female detective form Hong Kong, Beckett begins to feel a sense of dissatisfaction at her own lot as a detective and decides to take the exam for the seat of captain to prove her worth. It is interesting to note that the female hero has to undergo a procedure such as a test or exam to qualify and thus prove her competence. Although the test is a formal procedure that cops undergo to succeed to the next level, it is perceived with reference to the female hero's agency and autonomy. Compared with Castle who has a become a part of the precinct investigation team without having formal qualification, Beckett's test and interview appear as more significant in terms of the female hero's portrayal. Castle can violate police codes and serve in NYPD as a civilian and nobody in the NYPD asks him to get formal training or a license. Later in another episode *Castle P.I,* he does get a private detective's license after taking up an online course but nobody questions his civilian status while he is working with NYPD. A man is given access to a prestigious department without having a qualification, on account of his connections with the city mayor. It is important to note that getting a private detective's license was his own decision and he does not tell anyone, not even Beckett about it and suddenly surprises everyone by revealing it one day on the scene of an investigation whereas the female hero, who is a professional detective, has to prove her worth through a test. Also when Beckett starts getting concerned about her promotion and her accomplishments, Castle reminds her about her giving up the law degree. "You ever regret it? Not getting your law degree?" ("Habeas Corpse"). It certainly is not the appropriate time for asking her such a question when she has already stated that she feels she is lagging behind and that others have moved ahead. When Beckett is pondering over the decision of the authorities who want her to run for the seat of senator, she is doubtful of her ability to perform well in politics and feels hesitant in taking up the offer. She tells Castle that her contentment comes through her service of bringing justice to victims' families and fighting crime. All she wanted to do was "to make a difference". To this Castle responds with another question: "Question now is, can you make a bigger difference?" ("Habeas Corpse"). He does not right away say or reassure her of her ability to make a bigger difference but rather asks her if she can do it. Her success is not assured and she has to prove and earn it. Self-doubt only leads her to see others doubting and questioning her. The male counterpart's qualification is established and he does not have to prove it, also he is above the law when he is granted a position with the investigative team. In

the case of *Grey's Anatomy* Dr. Shepherd's promotion as chief is granted. It is evident that he will be the next chief in the hospital. His qualification or competence do not require proof. It is left to his discretion whether he chooses to take up the charge. No higher authority will put him through a trial nor is his competence as a doctor in need of measurement. On the other hand, Beckett, the female hero has been put through a test for enhancing her qualification. After taking the test she undergoes a difficult interview where her loyalty to her work and her competence are also challenged. She is questioned as to why she should be promoted and she has to defend herself against false charges showing that a woman has to prove her competence and worth and for a man there is no question of what makes him qualify as a competent person. This idea can be easily understood by looking at Jane Austen's presentation of "an accomplished woman" in *Pride and Prejudice.* The discussion about the qualities of an accomplished woman is endless whereas there is no question about how to judge a man's accomplishment. The novel is placed in the Victorian age when women were yet to fight for their rights and place in the men's world. Conversely, the world represented in television dramas is contemporary and it is believed that women have come a long way in their struggle for rights and rightful position in the world. But if the female heroes in these dramas are facing scrutiny, trials, exams and the men around them do not have to face such hurdles, it is a matter of concern to point to women's struggle as ongoing for they are still facing objectification.

The female hero is aware of her position and the power she thinks that she must enjoy being in the pivotal position as the detective. She strives to play a respectable and active role in the capacity of a working woman who is challenging the stereo typical notion of the society that women cannot work independently and in testing situations. "I am going to do everything in my power to make sure that they pay for what they did" (Home is Where the Heart). Beckett's resolve at putting the culprits of murder to task show the sense of responsibility that she feels towards her work and commitment to the people she is finding justice for. When independent and in charge of the situation alone Becket does not show inertness. She shows agency and activity when she is free of Castle's overpowering influence.

In Season Seven, Episode 3 Castle and Becket are engaged in a conversation at home. After Castle's absence for two months and their frustration regarding the mystery that surround his case created distance between them and now they got some personal

time together to share things with each other. Castle does not want any interruption in this moment that's why when Beckett's cell phone rings he asks her not to pick it up. "Don't answer that. (She hesitates) Don't. Don't even. Don't look at it. Don't answer it. Don't pick it up" (Clear and Present Danger). Despite Castle forbidding her from attending the call she does what she deems appropriate and ignores his command. It shows Beckett preferring her professional duties over personal and proving herself a diligent detective who is at beck and call anytime for her work. It also allows Beckett a chance to prolong their intimate contact that Castle is asking for, as after the trauma of Castle's abduction and her inability to find out the facts about his case she needs some time to get close to Castle again and think of their marriage which was postponed due to his abduction. So she decided to pick up the official call and disobeys Castle. The female hero shows agency in choosing for herself and not following the directions of the man who is trying to influence her.

5.1.3 "Not to outshine her husband"

Alicia Florrick finds a job at Lockhart & Gardner, as a junior lawyer but it is not something she is granted in recognition of her qualification or her graduation on top of her class. She gets to know on the first day at work at Stern Lockhart & Gardner that she is in a competition. Will Gardner, her former college fellow who helped her in getting this job, tells her that they had two candidates for the position for which she has been hired. They had only one positon open so they hired two candidates and in six months it would be decided who gets the position. The competition is between Alicia and Cary for the seat of junior lawyer. The female hero has to prove herself through a test or competition. Her success or position is not granted; she has to acquire it through hard work. The female hero has to prove herself a hero, whether she truly deserves a position or not and her fate rests on the decision that will be taken about her. When the competition between Alicia and Cary reaches its decisive point, Alicia has to play tactfully in order to beat Cary and she does it by following Kalinda's advice to cut a deal with Diane to benefit the firm using her husband's political contacts. The female hero's place thus, is not determined only on the basis of her competence and degree. She is put through a competition with other candidates and she is tested for her ability to prove her benefit for the company. Her agency and activity matters only if she can save the firm from its downfall. In this way her agency is controlled or is not her own as she is being forced to act in a particular way.

Alicia Florrick gets a job as a first year associate at a law firm to support her children as her husband is in prison. She uses the law degree that she earned fifteen years ago to start all over again since after two years' practice she had left the job to take care of her children and husband. Now she is at the bottom of the ladder and has to prove herself in order to reach to the top as the thirteen years' period of being out of practice has put her at the bottom in the competitive work environment. Her mentor in the firm, Diane Lockhart, states that Alicia graduated from law school on top of her class. Alicia states that she sacrificed her career in order to be a good wife—to support her husband and to take care of their children. The opening of the drama also states that she has to be a good mother and a good wife — "devoted, struggling not to outshine her husband" ("Pilot"). It implies that the wife's inertness and passivity is appreciated as it helps in allowing the husband to accomplish his goals and dreams. The wife, no matter how brilliant she was at law school, should not "outshine her husband" in the professional realm. Alicia did not pursue career after marriage, despite her outstanding performance at law school. She realizes now that she is at a disadvantage. Having missed practice for the past thirteen years, she has to start from scratch to build her career and support her children while Peter faces his trial. Alicia finds it hard to hold control and authority at work. In the hierarchical setup she is not recognized as important. She is inconsequential as a junior associate, as it is evident from the fact that she cannot even get her assistant to get her a glass of water when she asks her to bring one. Lacking any distinct position and authority Alicia is in a state where even the junior and young assistants do not take her seriously.

Alicia appears passive, accompanying her husband to the press conference, standing beside him while he faces the press and walking along him as he grabs her hand to lead her out of the sight of journalists and their questions. In the wake of the sexual and political scandals of her husband Alicia is shown as "lacking adequate weapons with which to confront her positioning as a site of public interest" (Leonard 949). In a reply to Kalinda's questions as to why she stood by her unfaithful husband at his press conference, she admits her vulnerability and says "I was unprepared" ("Pilot"). Her subservience and compliance to her husband's wishes at this moment of crisis in her life is the result of the effort of saving the image of a "good wife". Leonard further argues that "the media reproduce the 'stand by her man' construction" (Leonard 949) of a wronged wife to sustain and reinforce the dominance of men. The wife must

support her erring husband, no matter what, if she wants to be a 'good wife'. In order to live up to this image she sacrifices her autonomy and agency and ends up being inert.

Alicia cannot do anything against Amber, the call girl who phones to threaten her on account of her relationship with her husband, Peter. Alicia asks Kalinda to attend her call. After receiving threats from Amber she goes to see Peter in prison and tells him to do something to stop her. She is on the verge of tears and tells him "She's phoning my work. Your prostitute is calling my work … I can't take this. No. I want this to stop … Make it stop. Make her stop" ("Threesome"). Alicia shows inertness in dealing with this matter. She has been managing home, taking care of her children and impressing everyone at work but when it comes to facing the woman who claims to have a relationship with her husband, she fails and retreats to ask her husband to do something to save her and their children.

During her election campaign for State Attorney, Alicia has her mind messed with thoughts of a woman in the panel who talks negatively about Alicia, calling her selfish and entitled. She tells Johnny "She said I seem obsessed with my own pain, my own achievements" ("Red Zone") Eli and Johnny tell her not to obsess with the woman's words but Alicia keeps thinking about what she has said. They tell her that it is just one woman's opinion but she can't think of anything else and worries. Her worry and distraction even interferes with her concentration on her current case since she keeps imagining that the woman is making comments on her actions. Alicia's delusions about the woman distract her from work and she finds it hard to get rid of her thoughts. It is as if the female hero cannot take opposition or criticism and her neurotic tendencies take the better of her and disturb her rational thinking and action.

As the campaign begins to gather momentum and Alicia prepares for television interviews, records her campaign ad and speeches, she faces opposition and criticism that she finds difficult to handle. She performs poorly in her television interview for which her campaign manager has helped her in preparation. After the interview she exclaims to her campaign team, "It was like watching a ship go down. And I couldn't do anything about it" ("Message Discipline"). She is tormented by the thoughts of a woman in the discussion in the focused group in connection with the preparations of the elections, who criticize her for being "entitled", to the extent of paranoia and obsession that Eli and Johnny counsel her to get rid of it. She frets over the dress she wore for the interview recording as she gets to know later that her opponent's mother has appeared in the same dress for his ad campaign. She creates further trouble for her

campaign by writing a humorous note for Grace's teacher that is used in the media against her, which is used by her opponents to defame her for threatening a teacher. Her nervousness and lack of control of the situation shows her as inert.

During her campaign Alicia looks less in control as her nervousness and insecurities are visible through her gestures and speech. In her interviews she stutters and is shaky in her replies to the questions, her nervousness is evident through her playing with the tape on the dais. After the interview she is exasperated that she has blown up her chances. In "Mind's Eye", she awaits another important interview and fantasizes about a number of things. Alicia's perceptions of herself reveal her desires, emotions, fears, sexual fantasies and hallucinations. Michele Hammers in his analysis of another female hero, Ally McBeal, who like Alicia is a lawyer, observes that "Ally's excessive emotionality is … linked by cultural association to her excessive femininity" (96). It is because of this that she falls short of attaining complete success. He argues that this is a disturbing presentation of a professional woman because it is "the cultural associations that link women to their body and deny them the authority of the "mind"" (Hammers 97). The episode "Mind's Eye" shows Alicia's interior state—which falls short of the demands and expectations of a mature and confident professional woman. She is insecure and overwhelmed and her sexual fantasies "confirm the association of women with sex and the body as opposed to the culturally approved, professional traits of reason and competence" (Hammers 98).

After being elected as State Attorney, Alicia faces a scandal in which her private emails, revealing her affair with Will Gardner, are exposed to the public by a news reporter. Once again the decision about how she should respond to it is of her image makers. Eli pulls her out of her interview with the reporter telling her "We don't need to explain your life … These emails merely suggest an obsession … flirtation" ("Loser Edit"). Alicia is upset at being told to deny her relationship with Will Gardner and she tells Eli that it was not an affair and that Will was very special to her. Upon hearing her refusal, Eli and his daughter think of talking to Peter to convince Alicia to deny the scandal. Will advises on the ensuing scandal and tells her "You have to control the narrative" ("Loser Edit"). Alicia finally gives in and does as she is told to. In her interview she says exactly what Eli tells her to say. When the anchor asks her about the leaked emails she says, "I am embarrassed to admit it. But it was a flirtation, an innocent but a wrong one" ("Loser Edit"). Alicia has little autonomy and agency as all her actions and words are directed by her campaign man Eli.

After being forced to resign from the State Attorney's office Alicia is devastated. She breaks down while announcing that she is stepping down as the State Attorney. Getting down the podium after making the announcement of her resignation she walks with Peter and with tears in her eyes asks him "What do I do now?" ("The Deconstruction"). Her expression shows inertness since she feels she has lost the battle and whatever she achieved in the past few years is now lost. She asks Peter, since she herself cannot figure out what to do and Peter has to tell her the course of action. She asks him to decide what is to be done because she is so used to being told what to do that at the moment of crisis and needs someone to guide and help her.

Alicia does not know what to do as she has reached the same state in which she was a few years ago, when Peter was charged with corruption. Her life is a blank slate again and she cannot decide if she should join Diane and Cary again or start her own firm. Peter advises her to give herself time to settle down and to write a memoir during this time. While calling her donors she is connected to a client who is facing murder charges again and wants her to defend him. Alicia meets Finn in a disguise in order to avoid being recognized by people. She feels embarrassed that people might recognize her and will probe as to why she resigned as State Attorney and the charges that she is facing. During her meeting with Finn, Alicia drinks heavily and tries to convince Finn to take her old client's case as she is going through a crisis of confidence and she is distracted with what happened to her in politics. Alicia shows her inability to muster up courage and confidence to start all over again and begin practice. Finn tells her to get up again and take this case as the first step to regain her confidence.

In "Threesome", Jonas Sterns, the company's shareholder takes Alicia to represent him in the court when he faces charges of Driving Under Influence and battery of a Police Officer. In the court when Alicia defends him he stands up and cuts her often to add to the argument. Although he also is lawyer he chooses Alicia to represent him in court. His interrupting her argument in the court shows that he is treating her as inert. He starts to add up details and even stands up to speak to the judge in reply to the latter's question. This shows he does not trust Alicia as his lawyer and feels that he can do this job better than her. On his first hearing, Alicia struggles to defend him as he keeps interrupting her. His interruptions not only seem odd in the court room as they weaken their impression before the judge they also confuse Alicia who finds it hard to carry on her argument due to his interruptions. The prosecutor also asks Sterns in the presence of Alicia, who he knows is representing Sterns, if he is representing himself, confirming

that Alicia was not allowed to plead on his behalf in the court as Sterns himself started to throw his weight around in the court.

In another instance Alicia's agency and activity are curtailed as Alicia is taken off a case and is replaced by Cary. Alicia is astounded at her being taken off Broussard's defense and is replaced by Cary. When she is handing over the case to Cary she tells him the details she has worked out while handling the case. He asks her why she has been taken off the case and she answers that she has been put on a tax case. A similar situation occurs in "Infamy' where Alicia is taken off a case that she is about to win and Cary is assigned her case. It is not the first time that it has happened to her. Alicia does not realize the seriousness of the situation that Kalinda points to. When Cary leaves, Kalinda asks Alicia why she doesn't ask Diane as it is clear that Diane is preferring Cary over her. But Alicia refuses to believe so.

KALINDA. So you are gonna talk to her?

ALICIA. Who?

KALINDA. Diane.

ALICIA. What about?

KALINDA. Why she is favoring Cary over you.

ALICIA. I don't know she is. ("Bang")

Kalind reminds Alicia about her competition with Cary which she thinks makes it necessary for her to talk to Diane if she wants to win and be treated fairly. She points to Alicia's inertness by telling her "Alicia you are a good lawyer but you are always waiting for people to give you things" ("Bang"). Kalinda says that if she cannot speak against this discrimination she should wait for something good to happen to her. Kalinda's advice sheds light on the fact that Alicia lacks the ability to fight for her rights and is acting as inert. She wants Alicia to fight for what she needs and also against any discrimination, rather than waiting for people and circumstances to turn in her favor.

At one point in the drama series, Alicia's son hides the incriminating pictures of Peter that someone is sending to their house. Zach investigates on his own, believing that the pictures have been photo-shopped. Zach and Grace hide the pictures from their mother but want to show them to their father who is in prison. Zach tries to meet Peter to talk to him about the pictures by going to witness his trial but it turns out that Peter is not present at the hearing. When Alicia asks him about the envelope he is carrying he does not reveal it to her but when Peter comes home and is under house arrest Zach confides in him about receiving the pictures. He withholds this information from his

mother and also tells Peter not to tell her about it, saying that Alicia will be hurt at seeing the pictures. But it seems that Zach does not share this information with Alicia believing that she will not be able to do anything about it. Perceiving that being a woman Alicia will look at the matter emotionally and will not be able to solve it he begins to find out on his own who is dropping the packages at their door, captures it on video and shows it to his father when he comes homes, instead of showing these to Alicia. Although Alicia is managing the house in the absence of their father and is providing for them through her work, this agency does not grant her the ability to handle a personal matter. Zach feels that his father can handle it in a better way. Zach's hiding the information from his mother shows that he thinks Alicia lacks the capacity to act for herself. Although Zach is considering her feelings in not telling her something disturbing to save her from getting hurt, as he knows that Alicia has suffered more pain and is witnessing similar stuff every day on television, internet and the news but he does not consider the fact that it will hurt her more to find out that her children do not trust her to share something personal with her whereas they do so with their father as soon as he comes home.

The female hero is shown dependent on the male counterpart. She is not autonomous as a hero despite the fact that the drama series presents her as apparently independent in her prowess. The pattern in *Castle* is that Castle makes a breakthrough in the case and Beckett looks for evidence. Similarly, in the first episode of *The Good Wife* when Alicia is dealing with her first case as attorney, her husband Peter gives her a clue "… if something got buried, pit it … get evidence or testimony" ("Pilot"). Alicia does not seek Peter's advice for her work. He gets to know about the case through his mother and begins to advise her how to go about it. It can be taken as denying Alicia agency and autonomy as Peter thinks his advice and help will aid her since she cannot come up with any strategy to solve the case on her own. Peter believes he is wiser and Alicia is a novice who will find it hard to win the case and therefore needs his tips to proceed with the case. On the other hand, Alicia does not want to talk to him about her work, as it is due to his failing that she has been thrown into this situation outside home and she believes she will find her way without him.

In "Stripped", Alicia finds out that the client she has got is referred to her by her husband. She suspects that Peter has had a relationship with the woman he referred to her. Peter denies any such involvement with the woman but says that he sent her to Alicia thinking that she would like to help the rape victim. He thought that his lawyer

was too busy to take her case so he thought it would be a good opportunity for Alicia to prove herself in the beginning of her career. “I thought you’d want the work” (“Stripped”). Sending a client to Alicia as if she herself is unable to get clients is what annoys Alicia too. It shows that Peter does not believe that Alicia who has just assumed the role of the bread winner for the family and has stepped out of the comfort of her house, will be able to get ahead at work without his assistance.

Alicia, like Meredith in *Grey’s Anatomy,* when not sure what to do asks questions. In dealing with the case of the three widows of the train company employees she finds it difficult to decide whether she should bring a woman’s personal life as evidence in the case. She asks her daughter Grace who tells her that she should do her job and represent her client and Alicia asks her “Even if it means hurting another family?” (“Crash”). Her inability to take a decision on her own and consulting her daughter shows her inertness.

5.2 Violability

Nussbaum defining violability describes it to be treating others as lacking in boundary integrity, as something that is permissible to break up, smash, break into. Apart from sexual violability there are other arenas of violating a person’s boundary integrity. LaCroix and Pratto define these violations of boundary integrity as including “intrusive gaze, unwanted touching, and conversational interruptions” (194). They further state that “power asymmetries are predictive of such boundary violations” (LaCroix and Pratto 194).

5.2.1 “That doesn’t mean I owe her my life story”

Meredith faces violation of her boundary integrity in front of powerful figures; for instance, in “Winning a Battle” Rick, the injured biker, objectifies Meredith through violability. There is a strict professional relationship between doctor and patient but Rick feels that he can pursue a social relationship with Meredith. This desire and the subsequent attempt shows that he considers Meredith lacks in boundary integrity and that she will acquiesce to a relationship with him and like him will not hold the patient-doctor boundary to be important. This is similar to Shepherd’s attitude towards Meredith. Seeing his doctor merely as a woman to toy with can be seen as the violation of boundary integrity. Meredith's respect and sanctity of her profession has been violated. Despite being the hero and in-charge of the situation as a doctor dealing with her subject, she lacks control of the situation that is why the other person sees her as a

violable thing. His talking to Meredith in a playful manner that has sexual innuendos is denying her humanity and reducing her to a body.

Meredith's inertness and inability to make the man agree to what she wants is revealed when she gives in before his argument and asks him to sign the form and leave. In reply to that the man says “Darling, I will do anything you want me to” (“Winning a Battle”) again putting his wish and desire in a way to show that he does not want it but he will do it since it is her desire. Meredith is violable, as the man takes advantage of her and she cannot stop him either from leaving against her advice or from flirting with her and kissing her despite her resistance. The female hero's inertness is evident in this interaction as she lacks the ability to resist the man's advances. Rick addresses her as “darling” which is violability of her personal boundary. He thinks Meredith does not have boundary integrity and is violable. The male patient assumes that the female has no notion of boundaries which her position as a doctor assigns to her.

Shepherd watches the exchange between Meredith and the injured man through the glass door. Although Shepherd is the boss and Meredith the intern, on moral and human grounds watching her from outside the glass door when she does not know that Shepherd is there, is violation of her boundary integrity and independence. Not only does Shepherd violate Meredith’s boundary visually by spying on her but he claims ownership despite having no right on or relation with her. He is furious at Meredith’s playful and romantic encounter with the patient and reminds her of his affair with her, claiming ownership and right. He reminds Meredith of their relationship to embarrass her about her fling with the man, as if her affair with Shepherd is justified and with anyone else it is not, implying that only he is entitled to have her attention.

After her first experience of open heart surgery Meredith feels upset that her negligence had posed a serious risk to the patient. She blames herself and is unable to regain composure in spite of the fact that she was going through a difficult time at work as well as at home. It is in this situation and state of mind that Shepherd approaches her once again and asks her to accompany her to dinner. He breaks in upon her personal space and privacy and disregards what she desires. When she refuses to tell him why she is upset, he offers her dinner where he suggests she can tell him everything. “Well, let me take you out to dinner tonight. You can tell me all about it” (“Shake your Grove Thing”). Although Meredith does not want to talk about how she is feeling and what is upsetting her, Shepherd keeps asking her for details. Meredith has to defend herself but instead of Meredith defending herself, Dr. Burke comes up with an explanation on

her behalf, defends her and speaks for her. This is actually an infringement of her rights since somebody else claims the position of representing her and shows disregard for the female hero's voice and individuality. Dr. Burke uses Meredith as an instrument to meet his purposes. In order to save himself from the consequences of negligence in his work he speaks for Meredith in an attempt to defend himself. Thus the female hero also becomes a tool for the purposes of the objectifier who seems to help the female hero in distress whereas in reality he is saving himself from the consequences that he would have to face had his mistake been revealed.

Meredith's half-sister Dr. Pierce offers to take care of Meredith's children and nudges her to go and meet Shepherd in Washington over the weekend. On getting to know that Meredith did not meet Shepherd, she wants Meredith to tell her where she actually had been. Meredith is grateful to her for babysitting her kids but she does not think that this puts her in a position where she owes explanation of her actions to Pierce. Meredith has not yet gotten accustomed to having a sister and when Pierce wants to know something that she does not want to reveal to her she feels it to be an intrusion into her privacy. Pierce tells her that Meredith trusted her with her kids so she should also trust her about her more personal matters. "I trust my babysitter with my kids. That doesn't mean I owe her my life story" ("The Great Pretender"). Meredith apologizes to Pierce for lying to Shepherd about her but she does not feel that she needs to tell her the details. She wants to maintain a distance with Pierce and is offended at her violating her boundary.

In Episode fifteen, "I Feel the Earth Move", Meredith seeks Alex's opinion about the "streak" that she is experiencing. Her unbelievable success in surgeries that she counts began the day Shepherd left. She does not want to believe that she can live and be more accomplished without Shepherd. Alex tells her that it is her own accomplishment or luck and has nothing to do with Shepherd being away. It was a personal matter for Meredith to decide how she feels about her success and also about living without Shepherd. But instead of finding answers on her own she lets someone else into her private matters and reveals inertness, showing that she lacks the capacity to decide and act for herself. In Episode Seventeen, "With or Without You", Meredith expresses her anger at Alex, after the surgery in which they lost the patient. She blames him for doubting and distracting her and the failure of the surgery. Alex tells her that the cause of her rage is Shepherd. She yells and screams at him "because things are hard at home" ("With or Without You"). Meredith cannot resolve her personal matters

on her own. She is unable to figure out her feelings as well, as it is Alex who tells her the actual cause of her frustration.

After Shepherd's death Meredith finds it hard to live in the house that she and Shepherd lived in. She is haunted by the memories of their time together and decides to sell it. Instead of coping with this void alone, she takes refuge in her friend Alex by requesting him to let her and the kids stay with him. Meredith repeatedly reverts to the state of uncertainty and vulnerability that she at one moment seems to have overcome. By showing her inability to cope with her loneliness and fears and the absence of her husband and by depending on Alex for support she shows that she is violable and her personal life is open to intervention by others.

5.2.2 "I don't want to pretend"

The female hero in *Castle* faces objectification by her male counterpart. Castle does not take Beckett seriously as the investigator when she comes to question him about a case that she is dealing with. Castle makes unprofessional advances. His statement "I would be happy to let you spank me" ("Flowers for Your Grave") reveals that he is toying with Beckett and instead of taking her words and questions seriously he wants to have some fun. The female hero is perceived as a body rather than a human being and a detective performing her job. Castle continues the unwelcome advances as he comments about Beckett's beauty, praising her eyes: "Do you know you have gorgeous eyes" ("Flowers for Your Grave"). Brian Lowry also notes in his article on *Castle* that Castle "irritates her with his flirty banter" ("Castle"). Beckett is talking business and she is not his acquaintance, so not only are such comments inappropriate but they also show that the female hero is being objectified and the man cannot ignore the fact that the detective talking to him about some serious case is a woman, vulnerable and weak who should give in to the man's advances and flirtation. Once again when Castle shows up at Beckett's office to assist her in a case that she is investigating he stares at her. When she asks what he is looking at, he remarks "Nothing…it's just the way your brow furrows when you are thinking. It's cute" ("Flowers for your Grave"). Such comments by Castle about Becket when she is performing her duties show that the female hero is looked at as something one can toy with, rather than being regarded as a person capable of performing her duties independently.

Observing the oversized watch on her wrist, Castle inquires if it belongs to her Dad or Mom. At first Beckett ignores his questions "What happened to your Dad? It's

your dad's, right? That's why you wear it?" ("A Chill"). Beckett and Castle interact at work only. Rarely there are situations when they meet off work. Beckett tries to maintain a strictly serious demeanor at work and is adept and sharp when it comes to her professional skills. The information that Castle asks for is personal for Beckett so she ignores Castle's question. Such questions through which he tries to elicit personal information is termed as violability since the female detective hero's personal space is intruded upon and she has little control to guard herself against such attempts. Her defenses break when she tells Castle that the watch belongs to her mother and also tells him the story behind her mother's tragic death. Castle does not respect Beckett's personal space. Time and gain he leads the discussion to the point where he can coax something about her personal life even though Beckett feels uncomfortable at his probing. Although she is able to discern what Castle is up to she cannot hold her ground and gives in before him so that finally he is able to get what he wants. "I know what you're trying to do. You're trying to get me to talk about my mom. See if you can squeeze any more pulp for your fiction" ("Home").

Castle's treatment of Beckett borders towards flirting. It amuses him to trifle with her. In situations where they are faced with solving serious cases Castle does not miss a chance to toy with Beckett's feelings and to test her about their relationship. In episode six, "A Chill through Her Veins" he suggests to Beckett that they should reenact the scene where the husband and wife might have had a fight. To relish this enactment, he says joyously "Alright. So, you and I are married" ("A Chill"). Beckett embarrassed and threatened by this, retorts quickly, "We are not married" ("A Chill"). Castle violates Beckett's personal freedom and space by imposing on her his thoughts and desires and this is infringement of her independence.

CASTLE. Relax. It's just pretend.

BECKETT. I don't want to pretend.

CASTLE. Scared you'll like it?. ("A Chill")

Although he asks her to pretend to be married he enjoys teasing Beckett and feels pleasure in making Beckett feel uncomfortable. Later his remark that she is scared that she is going to like being his wife also strengthens the idea that he might like the idea of acting as husband and wife whereas he accuses Beckett of loving the act of being his wife thereby showing utter disregard for Beckett's feelings.

In Episode seven "Home" when Beckett confronts a suspect for investigation in a murder case he treats Beckett as if she is incapable of getting information from him.

He addresses her as “Sweetie”, just the way in *Grey's Anatomy* one of Meredith’s patients, the injured biker treated her as an inert and violable thing rather than a woman on duty, serving him. He does not take Beckett seriously and his language explains his flirtatious behavior. Knowing that the suspect might feel that Beckett being a female is inert and needs someone, Castle intervenes and introduces himself as if coming to guard Becket “I’m assisting detective Beckett in the investigation” (“Home”). The suspect’s reaction to this confirms that he does not think a female could be capable of handling this situation. “Assisting? (to Beckett) What's the matter, sweetie? You can't hack it out there alone?” (“Home”). Thus the suspect also objectifies Beckett treating her as if she lacks agency and activity. In this incident it is inertness that dominates the female hero's character. Agency and activity signify the ability to exist independently whereas inertness signifies submission and fear. The suspect’s behavior infuriates her, she shoves the table and leans over him to show that she is challenged. Her show of anger reveals that he has touched a nerve and in order to prove herself powerful, fearless and independent she shoves the table and leans over the suspect threatening him with her force. Beckett’s fury at her insulting treatment is evident when she admits to Castle that she is holding the suspect from bail to settle scores with him. “I’m holding him out of spite” (“Home”). After this encounter Beckett practices shooting with the gun, revealing her frustration at not being able to solve the case. Her expression also reveals her desperation to reclaim the power that she has been denied.

The boundary between personal and professional is often violated by Castle showing that Beckett is violable. Castle treats her as if she is capable of being violated: when they are working on a case together, instead of respecting the boundary of the professional domain Castle makes personal comments. The female hero is expected to be strong and the people around her are expected to take her seriously. Castle may have romantic inclinations towards Beckett but it does not give him the license to violate her boundary integrity or infringe on her personal space. Beckett's superiority is compromised as Castle cannot respect the professional boundary that Beckett wants to guard and keep intact. Castle’s reference to his dreams, in episode nine, is an example of his violation of boundary integrity. “Actually, in my dreams you’re never jealous. In my dreams, you just join …” (“Little Girl Lost”). In the same episode Beckett is told that she has been asked to work for the FBI's task force in a particular case. This is not an acknowledgment of her skills since she has to obey the order no matter what she wants. This can be termed as violability as Beckett's consent is not sought since she is

in a position where she can take decisions and accept or reject something. Also the person heading this particular case happens to be her former boyfriend, Will Sorenson, and she certainly will not be comfortable working with him. When she inquires about the special agent in charge in the case, Montgomery says that it doesn't matter who is in charge, hinting that it is all work and professionalism. He believes in her rectitude and thinks that Beckett will be able to keep her past and her emotional affiliations at bay. We can see that Montgomery regards Beckett's acumen and her seriousness of purpose whereas Castle does not draw a line between Beckett the detective and Beckett the woman he feels romantically about. That is how Castle's advances and the liberties that he takes with Beckett can be taken as violability of the female hero. When Sorenson meets Beckett on the investigation of the lost girl he addresses her as Kate not Beckett. This too can be seen as violability of the female hero and violation on Sorenson's part. Beckett is no more his girl-friend, and calling her Kate seems casual and personal, which is an inappropriate way to address her at the scene of the investigation, where there are people around and more importantly when he is acting as the in-charge of the team of which Beckett also is a part. As a member of this taskforce she deserves respect and her former boyfriend's taking liberty over her on account of his former relations with Beckett is infringement of her rights. Sorenson thus disregards Beckett's boundary integrity. This is the instance of objectification when the objectifier treats the female hero as if she has no personal space to guard and keep aside from her professional life.

Witnessing the conversation between Beckett and Montgomery regarding the case in which Sorenson is the chief, Castle is curious to know about Sorenson's relationship with Beckett. During their conversation Castle keeps questioning "Who is Sorenson?" ("Little Girl Lost"). He asks three times during the conversation between Beckett and Montgomery about Sorenson, suspecting that there might be a story behind this. Castle's child-like probing during their serious conversation is also violability. He is interested in Beckett and her life but that does not give him the right to intrude into her personal sphere at the time when she is dealing with issues at work.

Beckett tells Castle about her relationship with Sorenson and that they dated for six months but he responds by saying "I didn't ask" ("Little Girl Lost") although Castle had inquired about Sorenson during her conversation with Montgomery. Although he does not ask her how long they had been in a relationship yet he was able to communicate through his pensive mood and unusual silence, what he wanted to know. Becket gives in before him and reveals something very personal to him. It speaks of the

influence that Castle has over her and also her violability in that the female hero's boundary of personal and professional, private and public is disregarded and can be broken easily. She cannot stand her ground when it comes to guarding her personal matters and life.

Snooping around the personal life of Beckett and Sorenson is violability; Castle probes into their personal life and accuses Sorenson of hiring Beckett in this case not for her competence but because he wanted to "see her again" ("Little Girl Lost"). Sorenson also probes into Beckett's personal life: he too is curious about Castle and Beckett's relationship. Beckett is uncomfortable working with Sorenson on the case as she did not think that she would feel comfortable owing to her relations with him. As they spend time together working on the case, the female hero loses her ground and her boundary of personal and professional areas is violated by the men who infringe upon her independence.

Another instance of violability is when Castle walks into the room without permission, when Beckett and Sorenson are talking. Castle disregards Beckett's privacy although she had told him to go home. The female hero's privacy is not maintained as Castle as the objectifier demonstrates that she of being violated. This infringement of her private space is violability. Sorenson also pokes his nose into Beckett and Castle's relationship. He sounds patronizing when he asks her to tell Castle how she feels about him. "He is quite a guy. If he only knew how big a fan you really are" ("Little Girl Lost"). Sorenson's intrusion into Beckett's private life and dictation on how she should act is violability of the female hero.

In another episode, "Death in the Family", Castle without bringing it to the knowledge of Beckett begins to explore the case of her mother's murder. It is a very sensitive issue that Beckett had shared with Castle on his probing. He reopens the case that Beckett had buried ten years ago and seeks the help of a forensic pathologist to catch something that the investigation team might have missed. Beckett has no idea what Castle is up to and she does not like that without asking her he is snooping around her personal life; after her personal and family life this time it is her dead mother that he is digging information about. It might be a gesture on Castle's part to show compassion for Beckett in trying to solve the mystery of her mother's murder but it is at the same time violability of the female hero. Castle disregards Beckett's feeling at his intrusion into her life as well as that of her mother.

When Martha, Castle's mother, finds out that Castle is looking into Beckett's mother's murder she asks him if Beckett knows what he is doing and her question – "So does she know you're poking into her mother's case? … Well, you ever stop to think you're invading her privacy?... You are digging up her past, darling, without her permission. Now you either tell her or leave it alone" ("A Death in the Family")—supports the violability of the female hero with Castle as the objectifier. Martha also feels that Castle is too nosey and investigating her mother's murder without her knowing it, is disregarding her rights.

When Beckett refuses to agree to Castle's idea of reopening her mother's case, he does not take her answer as final decision and probes further "Why don't you want to investigate it?" ("A Death in the Family"). Searching for the unknown fact about her life and the reasons for her actions and decisions, shows Castle interfering into Beckett's life since he feels she owes him an explanation for everything she does. This is violability of the female hero's right since it robs her of her independence and autonomy. Beckett tells him that she does not want to investigate the case again because she had a hard time recovering from the trauma she suffered not just because of her mother's death but also because of her inability to discover the culprits who had murdered her mother. It is agonizing for her and if Castle snoops into it he is not helping her wounds to heal; it is a very sensitive personal issue that Castle is interfering with and shows that he feels that Beckett is capable of being violated.

Despite knowing that it is a very sensitive issue Castle does not give up investigating the murder of Beckett's mother. At the end of the episode he takes Beckett aside to tell her something that he had found out: "It's about your mother" ("A Death in the Family"). It alarms Beckett as she has been avoiding the issue after the trauma she suffered. The statement: "Beckett looks disappointed and hurt" ("A Death in the Family") confirms that the female hero lacks the ability to guard her boundary integrity and invading into her personal space is a trivial matter for others.

In another episode, "Driven" when Beckett is investigating Castle's abduction, her boss Gates admits to Becket that it must be tough on her emotionally, to investigate the case of Castle's disappearance at the time when they were about to get married. Beckett requests her boss not to take her off the case and Gates replies that she will not do so "Unless you give me a cause" ("Driven") although at the same time she informs Beckett that a special FBI agent will work on the case and wants to ask her a few questions. This infuriates Beckett who wants to be in charge of the case and with the

entry of FBI agent Connors, considers her authority undermined. Like her boss Connors also reminds her of her vulnerability as a detective pursuing this particular case, due to her personal relationship with the kidnapped man. Becket does not feel intimidated by the unwanted intervention of other agents in the case. During the agents' probing of the case she discerns that he is hiding some information from her and that is why at the end of the meeting he asks her to keep him updated. To this she replies curtly, "As long as you do the same" ("Driven"). Beckett as a female detective and as the fiancé of Castle is believed by her cohort as less likely to keep her nerves enact and that is why her Boss as well as the FBI agent sympathize with her and doubt her ability to handle the case effectively. To Beckett this offers a more serious challenge since this case is related to her own life and involves personal emotions. It is a greater test of her abilities and competence as a detective and hero and that is why she does not want to give the authorities reason to believe that she cannot handle this responsibility. Their intervention may be part of the procedure and protocol but Beckett feels it to be an attempt at undermining her authority and underestimating her competence. Also in the absence of Castle, who used to provide clues to solving cases, Beckett needs to take charge of the situation and prove her worth.

In "Montreal", Castle is found abandoned at sea after two months' disappearance and is unable to recall the events of the past two months. The evidence that Beckett and her team find in Castle's case leads to Castle's involvement in his disappearance. Beckett is confused whether to believe Castle's innocence as a victim or to rely on the evidence that goes against him. After Castle's reappearance they are solving the case together but Beckett feels uneasy, a kind of distrust of Castle is felt as she wonders if he might be feigning memory loss. She expresses this private feeling to one of her coworkers Lenie, showing evidence of her violable nature. This feeling is very personal and yet she has doubt that she is inviting people to intervene and violate her personal space. Her relationship with Castle and the issue of her distrust on his account are both very private matters and by revealing her fears and doubts about him to someone at work she shows that her private life is accessible to people. Her feelings, expressed to Lenie, regarding her relation with and doubts about Castle's honesty, also show that the female hero is incapable of making decisions on her own. She cannot decide for herself whether to trust Castle or not and seeks help from outside by sharing her thoughts with her coworker.

In order to get information about his abduction and solve the mystery surrounding it, Castle decides to go to Canada. Beckett is reluctant to let him go alone after what happened but her efforts to stop Castle from proceeding with his plan are ignored by Castle who says "And need I remind you, I'm a grown man. I don't need to ask your permission" ("Montreal"). Although Beckett's concern for Castle's wellbeing stems out of love Beckett, despite being Castle's prospective wife, is not effective as a hero commanding authority and making the man comply with her decisions. Castle is determined to leave for Canada whether Beckett allows him or not. After reminding her that he is a grown man who does not need permission he says "That being said, please, please, please can I go?" ("Montreal"). This of course is not submission to or acceptance of detective Beckett's authority but an acknowledgement of the concern of the woman he loves. This alludes to the pattern in the relationship of men and women as observed by Zechowski and Neumann "the inversion of gender norms rarely occurs within popular-culture genres" (137). Zechowski and Neumann are of the view that cultural values and ideologies are normalized through these genres and the dominant ideology of patriarchy can be seen reinforced through this pattern of gender roles. Beckett has not been granted power and dominance over Castle and Castle disregards Beckett's authority and makes his own decision playfully asking for her permission, at the same time revealing his intention of going to Montreal with or without her approval.

Beckett's authority and agency is undermined when Castle is able to solve the case while Beckett is still looking for clues and trying to join lose ends. She expresses her inability at finding an answer to the mysterious murder case of the CEO of a toy company and wants Castle to help her in solving it. "Every answer leads to more questions. I have no idea what he was doing at that warehouse … Actually I was kind of hoping you'd help me with a crazy theory" ("Montreal"). Beckett's resigned attitude underscores the female hero's agency and autonomy. Castle on the other hand is able to reach the bottom of the problem and announces, "I think I have a crazy theory for you" ("Montreal") once again solving the case while Beckett is shown seeking his help. He proves his superiority in solving the case and wining the show, confirming "Themes as gender equality, women's superiority were and still are, anomalies within popular culture" (Zechowski and Neumann 137).

In the fifth episode of season seven, while solving a case involving social media, Beckett gets upset when a suspect tries to ruin their professional reputation by posting a picture of Castle and Beckett. She shows emotional vulnerability and is almost on the

verge of tears when Castle tries to comfort her with a hug. Although she does not embrace him and actually pushes him away, her emotional tantrum and vulnerability is in itself an invitation to Castle to act the way he did. Her emotionalism and display of frustration prompted Castle to violate the physical boundary. The female hero thus shows weakness by not being able to control her emotions and her weakness evokes violation.

After their marriage when Beckett and Castle walk to the crime scene Castle announces triumphantly "Rolling up to the crime scene as a married couple" ("Kill Switch"). It is significant to note that they are at work and she is the detective in charge while he is only the writer accompanying her in her cases out of his interest in crime and to search for material for her novels. Getting married to Beckett does not make him a detective but he brings their relationship into work and reminds her of her status as his wife. This is violability of the boundaries of person and profession by Castle. Earlier also when Castle insists on a honeymoon in the West while solving a case, Beckett does not agree since she does not want to mix work with her personal life but eventually she does give in to Castle's plan. In this instance also, Castle instead of seeing them as partners in solving crime, talks about them as husband and wife showing that the female hero's personal space, whether it is work or her relation with her husband, can be violated and she cannot guard herself against this infringement. Beckett does not violate Castle's boundary as she does not interfere into his writing career or his relationship with his mother or daughter whereas Castle as a man and her husband feels it permissible to violate Beckett's boundary. Even when Beckett refuses to attend a friend's wedding, Castle tries to push her to accept the invitation whereas there are no instances in which Becket tries to make Castle comply with her ideas in matters related to his carrier as a writer.

In order to continue working for investigations Castle gets a license as a private detective without letting Beckett know. Beckett is shocked when he shows up on a crime scene and reveals that he has a license and does not allow him to investigate with the team as he is not a part of the department. Castle, determined to carry on the investigation of the murder case, resolves to work on his own. She confronts Castle over keeping her in the dark regarding his getting a private investigator's license implying to Castle that being his wife she has a right to know about his plans and work. In this way she is herself creating grounds for his intervention and control over her own life; both personal and professional. In this way she is compromising her autonomy as

an independent individual. Although their relationship in marriage has brought them closer to each other, it does not allow them to influence each other as far as their professional lives are concerned.

In season seven episode eighteen "Hong Kong Hustle," Zhang a female detective from the Hong Kong police department becomes part of the investigation team with Beckett and Castle. Beckett is highly impressed by Zhang's competence and abilities. When she tells Castle that she is going to spend some time with Zhang, he does not like the idea and tries to stop Beckett from spending time with Zhang. "You think that's a good idea?" ("Hong Kong Hustle"). Although Beckett does not change her plan, Castle's action shows that he treats Beckett as a violable thing. Beckett is independent in making choices and decisions for herself but Castle questions her decision of meeting Zhang and disapproves of her idea. Ryan also comments on Castle's act as infringement on Beckett's personal rights. "You tried to stop her?" ("Hong Kong Hustle"). The female hero is free to act on her own but Castle violates her boundary-integrity.

In the final scene where Castle, Beckett and Zhang confront the suspect of Henry's murder instead of Beckett it is Castle who does most of the interrogation to lead the suspect to the point of breaking down. Beckett only adds supporting evidence to what Castle states. Beckett thus is treated as inert or lacking the capacity to perform this task. Also at the time of arrest, Zhang intervenes and takes over from Castle. She interjects in Chinese to make Mei Wu admit her crime and the latter begins to cry after Zhang's interjection. Zhang also performs the final physical act of arresting the culprit. She is not officially responsible for the case but disregarding Beckett, Zhang takes over as if she is the chief inspector in the case. Beckett is nowhere in this final act. Zhang also treats Beckett as violable. Keeping in view Beckett's status as the chief investigating officer in the case it is evident that both Castle and Zhang violate her boundary integrity. They supersede her position and act more actively in her stead, bringing the case to a closure.

In episode nineteen, titled "Habeas Corpse", in a conversation over the annual performance competition where Castle has committed to perform with Beckett, Ryan and Esposito makes fun of Beckett for backing off from making the bet. Esposito and Ryan want to compete with Castle and Beckett at the show. Believing that things are heating up among the colleagues, Beckett suggests that they should not make a bet over this:

BECKETT. … we don't need to make a bet out of this"

ESPOSITO. Why? Because you are a chicken?

BECKETT No. Because I am a grownup.

ESPOSITO. Yeah. A grownup chicken". ("Habeas Corpse")

Esposito treats Beckett as violable and shows disregard for her. She is his superior and the way he treats her with disrespect and mischief shows infringement of Beckett's boundary-integrity. In order to avoid the conflict and further argument with him, which she knows will lead to further humiliation and infringement of her status as his superior, she tries to defuse the situation although she is astonished at Esposito's behavior. He makes fun of her by calling her chicken, implying that she is a coward and therefore fears competition. Nick Haslam in his discussion on objectification and dehumanization contends that "femaleness is equated with, animality, nature, and childlikeness" (253). Haslam terms it as "mechanistic dehumanization". Such dehumanization through various forms of objectification such as violability, fungibility and inertness involves "emotional distancing…it implies indifference rather than disgust." (258). It is evident that Beckett is not being given respect and is treated as violable as she fears that her colleagues will not take her seriously when she is promoted to Captain of the precinct. "What if I want to be a captain one day, of my own precinct? I kinda need people to take me seriously … and I'd like to keep it that way. Which won't be possible if I'm acting like an idiot in front of the entire police force" ("Habeas Corpse"). Researchers like Nick Haslem (258-9), Gervais and Davidson (345) have noted that objectification reduces a person's humanity or human traits and contributes to dehumanization by emotional dominance and not just sexual or physical violability (258-9). Anderson and Umberson note that in patriarchal or male dominant societies men use force, threat or isolation to proclaim masculinity and to control their partners (366-7). Beckett is treated as a violable thing as Esposito uses verbal interruptions to violate her boundary integrity.

In 'Dead from New York", season seven, during the investigation of a television producer's murder when Beckett frequents the sets of studios for investigation with Castle, an actress imitates Beckett's gait and her movements. Beckett and Castle are doing a serious job at the set and the woman by parodying Beckett shows disregard for Beckett, the officer investigating the crime. She behaves as if she is Beckett's friend or intimate acquaintance. Beckett is treated as violable, someone who lacks boundary-integrity and whose status can be infringed or disregarded. Just as Esposito teases

Beckett by calling her chicken, the actress, Tina's behavior also shows that she too disregards that Beckett does not belong to her clan of actors but is a detective performing her duty in the studio.

In the last episode of season seven, titled "Hollander's Woods", coming across a murder Castle is reminded of a similar murder he had witnessed in his childhood. Beckett understands that the details a witness tells Castle have something to do with Castle too and she senses his anxiousness. However, she does not inquire about his feelings and waits for the right time to ask him. It is only when she shows him the sketches of the suspect, based on the descriptions by the witness that she asks him "You ready to talk about it?" ("Hollander's Woods"). She is able to keep the boundary-integrity and does not meddle in personal affairs that he himself does not share with her whereas in the case of Beckett's personal affairs, for instance her mother's murder, Castle probed her and even investigated the case without informing Beckett, despite her forbidding him to do so. All these years during their companionship Castle never talked to Beckett about the incident of his childhood and that he tells her now is the reason he became a mystery writer. In one episode early in season two, *Vampire Weekend*, Castle was about to tell her why he became a mystery novelist and started writing about murders but then stopped and turned it into a joke. It is now at the end of season eight that he finally reveals that a similar murder occurred that reminded him of the past. Beckett respects Castle's boundary and does not violate it whereas Castle claims it as his right to break into Beckett's personal space it also shows ownership. The female hero is violable showing that she is less empowered than a man. In this way her status as a hero in many ways reenacts the pattern of the life of a heroine whose life is bound up with a man's. D'Engeau and Buzzanell's critique of female heroes on television articulates that the working women's roles on television drama present them as still bound up in conventions. They argue that these female characters, although shown pursuing careers, "are embedded within their community, connected to others, and confronted by the constraints of the gender that delimits her life (D'Engeau and Buzzanell 6).

In the last episode of season seven *Hollander's Woods* Beckett appears for the interview before the panel of seniors in the department. One of the panelists confronts Beckett with questions that had more to do with her personal life than professional. He accuses her of being an inspiration for her novelist husband. "… you are infamous for being the inspiration for the fictional NYPD detective Nikki Heat, who spends more

time on her back than she does pursuing killers" ("Hollander's Woods"). This remark is not only impertinent but also very insulting. Not only is the panelist treating detective Beckett as violable but he is also treating her as inert. What Beckett is to her husband is not a matter that should come under discussion when her professional merit is being judged. She stands apart from the fictional character that her husband has created in his novels. Mixing her identity with that of a fictional detective is unreasonable and harmful for Beckett, who has worked hard in the real life of crime and murder to establish herself as a detective and in violating her boundary-integrity the man in the panel, by bringing in the sensual aspect of the fictional character Nikki Heat, objectifies the female hero.

5.2.3 "There is a part that wants freedom"

Alicia in her first meeting with her new client Christy asks her the reason for choosing her as her lawyer, to which the client replies that she had seen her on television and thought that she would understand her case and her position. Since Alicia also suffered due to her husband's sexual scandals the client who is a hooker felt that her lawyer having personally suffered the pain of the jilted wife of an errant husband would sympathize with her. Christy's reply that she selected Alicia after seeing her and her philanderer husband on television in a press conference shows that Christy is treating Alicia as violable. She brings in Alicia's personal life into her professional. Instead of choosing her as her lawyer for her ability, she thinks Alicia's suffering as a wronged wife will help her in gaining her sympathies and she will do her best to win her case. Christy's statement shows that she recognizes Alicia more as a wronged wife than a lawyer. By referring to Alicia's personal life she makes her feel uncomfortable and also breaks the boundary of client-lawyer relationship where Alicia expects to maintain a distance. It is the violation of both personal and professional boundaries where Alicia is treated by her clients as if her personal and professional lives cannot be kept separate.

A candidate whom Alicia interviews for induction in "Crash', mentions Alicia's personal ordeal because of her husband's trial. She violates Alicia's boundary integrity by bringing her personal life into a professional discussion. Alicia is senior to her and the candidate has been recommended for interview by another colleague, Cary Agos. Instead of maintaining decorum and formality the candidate shows frankness with Alicia and tells her that she understands how tough it might be for Alicia to juggle with cases and her personal ordeal. Due to the scandal, surrounding her husband Alicia's

personal life is now public but a junior and aspiring candidate in the law firm making a comment about the personal life of the interviewer shows violability of the female hero.

When Alicia visits Peter in prison he brings Will Gardner into their conversation, and shows concern that she is staying late in the office with Will Gardner, suspecting Alicia's involvement with him. He puts in a few bad words for Gardner and tells Alicia that Gardner is not what he appears to be. Alicia tells him that she is learning things on her own in his absence, implying she does not need his advice about people or allowing people to be her friends.

PETER. He is not what he seems Alicia.

ALECIA. Peter! It is one thing I'm learning. Nobody is.

PETER. I could tell you a few things about him. ("Crash")

This can be taken as violability as Peter is interfering in her relationships at work, despite having failed to remain loyal to Alicia.

In the seventh episode, Season One, "Unorthodox", Alicia gets an assignment to work as co-counsel in defending the daughter of one of her company's shareholders. Ryan Alprin—the lawyer she has to work with as co-counsel tries to get intimate with Alicia and drops suggestive hints to that effect. On Alicia's disapproval, he brings up her personal life into the conversation. Alicia stops him and tells him "Don't do that. Throwing up personal questions in the middle of an argument" ("Unorthodox") since he asks her personal questions in a purely business meeting in her office. Alicia finds it hard to stop him from commenting on and exploring her personal life. She wants to exchange notes with him on the case but he cuts her short and asks her about her marriage:

ALICIA. I have gone over the numbers. We can settle for double compensatory.

RYAN. Why didn't your divorce him?

ALICIA. Because I didn't want to. Double compensatory handles the victims medical and a bit more.

RAYAN. That's not an answer.

ALICIA. It's the only answer you are getting.

RAYAN. No one asks you?

ALICIA. Ryan I am your co-counsel. I know you think you have got this cute little spontaneous thing going.

RYAN. This is my take on it. You are a rule follower. The way you

dress, the way you act. But there is this part of you that wants freedom, rule breaking. Look at the way you are married. Look at …

ALICIA. Ryan seriously, stop!

RYAN. You like people who scare you. (“Unorthodox”)

This conversation is evidence of the fact that the female hero is treated as violable. Ryan as the objectifier does not respect the boundary of personal and professional life of Alicia. Despite her attempts to stop him, he disregards her personal space.

In episode ten “Lifeguard”, where Alicia is negotiating a plea bargain to save an African-American child from imprisonment the judge presiding over the trial also treats Alicia as inert by bringing in her husband during the trial proceeding to slight Alicia. Alicia’s personal and professional boundaries are violated, as remarks about what she is facing in her personal life due to the controversies and scandals regarding her husband, are brought into her work. These remarks are intended to undermine her authority as a competent lawyer. The judge as the objectifier shows disregard for Alicia’s boundary-integrity and treats her as inert. James Castro, the current State Attorney also treats Alicia as violable. He infringes her personal boundary by making comments on her life and accuses her of taking revenge for Will Gardner’s death. “Because your lover was gunned down in one of my courts …. Will Gardner was your lover. You blame me for his death and that’s why you are running. Retribution” (“Dear God”). Her opponent treats her as violable, and accuses her of binging in personal revenge in her professional life.

During her campaign Alicia is instructed to act in a particular manner, she is told what to say and do in her interviews and debates with her opponent. Since she is contesting for the position of Attorney, she needs to learn the ropes in the field which she is not familiar with but when it comes to her feelings and beliefs any intrusion and instructions regarding her personal values and feelings is violability. She is instructed by her media and campaign team to show particular emotion or not to express certain emotions etc. She finds their instruction annoying and tells them “You don’t need to instruct me about my feelings” (“The Debate”). Alicia is not autonomous even in deciding about her own feelings, as the constant instructions of the campaign team direct her to express emotions in a particular manner.

Alicia faces violability on many occasions by her clients who either chose her as their lawyer because she being a wronged wife has suffered betrayal or they make a

slighting comment on her husband's involvement with prostitutes. A client of Alicia who is suspected of murdering his wife also comments on Alicia's personal life when during her session of interview with him she asks her for information needed to build the case:

> ALICIA. There were rumors that she wanted to oust you of the family business.
>
> SWEENY. Yes, and there were rumors that you knew of your husband's whores. ("Bad")

Alicia cannot resist the violation of her boundary integrity. Not only her colleagues but her clients also infringe her personal space.

Another lawyer at the firm that Alicia contacts in order to verify her doubts about the case of drug overdose prescribed by a doctor from a hospital that is the firm's client, also comments on her husband. Amid the official talk the other lawyer takes Alicia off guard by asking her "Is Peter holding up Okay?" ("Painkiller"). Alicia's bewilderment at her question is evident from her expression as well as her reply "Peter?" She was not expecting it nor was there any need for the other lawyer to ask about her husband when they were discussing an official matter.

When Carla Childs, the wife of Glen Childs, who Peter thinks plotted his downfall, approaches Alicia to file her divorce case her reason for hiring Alicia is that since Alicia suffered in her marriage and also must hold grudges against Glen Childs for defaming her husband she'll be on her side not only as a lawyer but as a wronged woman as well. While introducing Alicia to Child's wife, the other lawyer says "You understand Mrs. Florrick? Carla thought you'd be sympathetic" ("Infamy"). On so many occasions at her work, Alicia comes across situation where her private life is brought to the forefront to define her or to make her agree to work for a case. The clients also violate her boundary-integrity so do the other lawyers and judges that she come into contact in her professional life.

The jury in a trial, where Alicia serves as defense attorney also objectifies her. They violate her personal boundary by making derogatory comments about Alicia and also about her husband's relationship with prostitutes. Her status at work is that of a defense lawyer but the jury's casual comments on her life with reference to her husband's scandal show that she is labelled as a sensual and wanton woman who bears the brunt of her husband's crime and is also responsible for his erring.

Alicia agrees to contend for the State Attorney's position. The image that the public likes is that of a wronged and faithful wife who stood by her husband for his political career. Despite her sacrifices for her husband and children, she is criticized for putting up with her husband despite his laxities. But Alicia constantly faces comments and questions regarding her personal life especially her marriage and relationships with Peter and Will Gardner. Even after so many years of hard work as a lawyer and the steady character that she has built that people also trust, she cannot avoid being violable. People still intrude into her private life and her relationship with her husband is always a question that she faces on special interviews or sessions with the public. She did a lot of hard work to build her career, established her own law firm, raised kids in Peter's absence and is now running for the State's Attorney. All this is not in question. People do not ask her about the dangers and troubles of handling the problems if she is elected the State's Attorney but what is the most personal matter in her life is what everyone is interested in probing about.

Peter's campaign manager approaches Alicia in her office to ask her to stand by Peter in his political campaign. Alicia does not want to discuss her relationship with her husband with his manager but despite the fact that Alicia stops him from proceeding on the topic begins to advise her that she must prove a good wife to help further her husband's political career. He tells Alicia that Peter told him that he came up with the idea of running for election over the family dinner they had last night. To which Alicia shows surprise that he didn't share it with her. She asks him to leave, sensing what he has to say next. But Eli does not restrain himself from advising Alicia that she needs to make amends and restore her marriage. "I need you to talk to him. He thinks he is trying to restore your marriage. Tell me you don't need that? ("Running"). Eli shows disregard for Alicia's personal boundary and treats Alicia as violable. She does not feel that he has any right to ask her about changing her mind regarding her decision of staying with Peter. "Peter can't win without you … You know that. Peter only wins with your good housekeeping seal of approval. Voters need to see you together up on that stage holding hands" ("Running").

Will Gardner objectifies Alicia by violating her personal and professional boundaries. When Alicia confronts her on taking her off the cases that she has been engaged in, he tells her, "I just thought, with Peter coming home your life is complicated and that I should give you a break" ("Bang"). Her life with Peter and the problems she is facing are her personal matters and she has been coping with these

without letting her work suffer. Will takes her off the cases she has dedicatedly been working on and which she expects will boost her career and reputation as a lawyer. When Will decides that she needs a break owing to the problems at home, he meddles into her private life although she has tried to keep it separate from her work. It is as if Will is deciding for Alicia that she must spend time at home with Peter; just as Castle decides for Beckett that she should go somewhere, Will who had a romantic relationship with Alicia back in law school, is deciding for her what she should do in her domestic life. He pursues Alicia despite her refusal to have a romantic relationship with him. Now that he is her boss, Alicia does not want to lose this job. She realizes that if she displeases him she may suffer in the form of losing the job that she desperately needs.

ALICIA. You are my boss

WILL. I know

ALICIA. I am a junior associate

WILL. I know. You came into my office. Last night after you left, you came back to my office. Why?

ALICIA. Will, help me out please…Whatever we had at Georgetown

WILL. But you came back

ALICIA. I know, I was wrong.

WILL. Because you are married?. ("Heart")

She tells him that their romance is going to be destructive for her and requests him to let her work. Will Gardner does not give up pursuing her and tells her that in a week's time they will go for dinner. Alicia cannot refuse him as she cannot afford to annoy her boss. Will's constant pressure on Alicia shows that he violates the personal and professional boundary about which Alicia often reminds him. In another episode he asks her for dinner again and she agrees. He does so in order to rekindle the old spark and pursue a relationship with her despite knowing that she is married and has a family to take care of. Inviting her for dinner he asks "You are worried about Peter?" ("Doubt") making it sound like something silly and romantic which of course is the violation of her boundary. It is violability as Will is her boss and also well aware of the fact that she is a devoted wife who despite her husband's infidelity has decided to stand by him. He takes advantage of her as her boss. When she acts indifferently towards his romantic interest in her he tries to get her attention by disturbing her and makes her bow before

him by pulling her off her cases. Kalinda tells Alicia that she is suffering the repercussions of unrequited love. Alicia does not understand this but Kalinda points to the reason for her being sidelined from important assignments as the result of not reciprocating Will's feelings. This clearly shows that Will wants Alicia to comply with his wishes and when she ignores him the only ploy he can use is that of making her inert and inactive by taking her cases away an reducing her to the periphery. As a result, Alicia who is determined to earn respectably to provide for her family and to excel in her work tells him that she wants to work. She gives in to his demands, showing that Will has succeeded in his plans. When she wants to ask him the reason for pulling her off the cases he makes her wait and then acts apologetically that he felt guilty and concerned about the turmoil in her personal life, but this is only a façade, with his apology and concern hiding his vested interest:

WILL. I just thought that with Peter coming home your life is complicated and that I should give you a break

ALICIA. But I don't wanna break. I wanna be here. I wanna be doing a good job.

WILL. You are doing a good job.

ALICIA. Then use me. Peter can take care of himself. He is irrelevant to this. I want to be here

WILL. I want you to be here.

ALICIA. Then—then I am here. ("Bang")

The exchange between Alicia and Will shows that Will is able to barter and wheedle with Alicia and she has no choice but to secure her place in the firm even though she has to agree to Will's terms in order to do so.

Alicia needs money for the campaign and in this regard, she meets Guy Redmayne who makes explicit comments about Alicia's legs and eyes, touching her hands and knees. Redmayne's behavior shows violability as, in a strictly professional discussion, he tries to take advantage of Alicia trying to allure her through his comments on her physical beauty. He takes her as if she is permissible to break into. He brags about his virility also to assert his masculinity and to control her. He thinks that by offering her money for her campaign he can claim right on her, especially her body. Redmayne also makes a lot of explicit comments about Alicia when he meets her opponent, Prady. Sexual advances are the most obvious illustration of violability. Suarez and Gadalla state in their research that patriarchal oppression legitimizes

ideologies and promotes objectification (2018). The harassment women face by men is part of the violation of the boundary integrity, intrusive gaze, unwanted touching and explicit talk include in the additional arenas of objectification through violability.

The female heroes' success is linked with the freedom they enjoy in their personal and professional life. Happiness comes by having the freedom to think and do what one wants in a natural way. "I want a happy life and to control my fate" (A Few Words) replies Alicia to a colleague's question. As the episodes progress Alicia gains more independence and is making decisions as well. Alicia starts off as an underdog at work as she was out of practice for almost thirteen years but as the first season comes to end Alicia makes the decision using her husband's connections to win a coveted position at work. It shows that Alicia is becoming more comfortable with the exercise of power and more elegantly invulnerable as compared to her previous self where she found it hard to come out of the shadow of her influential husband. Alicia starts her own new firm taking some of her old partner's most valuable clients with her. As Joshua Rothman in his criticism "The Greatness of The Good Wife" comments abut Alicia's dual nature: "Everyone including Alicia thinks that she's a victim—but, in fact, she is a predator. All the more dangerous for being stealthy". When she gradually comes to terms with her own privilege the transformation from docility to agency becomes more prominent. Having emerged from Peter's shadow she is succeeding professionally but she may be doing so without getting to know herself better. Eli Gold her husband's political manager makes a practical suggestion that she should run for the state attorney. Alicia entering politics like her husband seems a natural next step in her professional ascension not because she is brilliant or intelligent but because she is Peter's wife and she still is a part of Peter's political world

5.3 Denial of Subjectivity

Martha Nussbaum states that denial of subjectivity occurs when "the objectifier treats the object as something whose experience and feelings need not be taken into account" (*Sex and Social Justice* 218). People's subjective experiences, feelings and emotions if ignored by others, lead to holding them outside the scope of moral concern and can lead to other forms of objectifications such as instrumentality, fungibility and ownership. Heather M. Gray et al. opine that when we perceive others as humans we want to save them from destruction and try to make them happy (619). Disregard for someone's subjectivity leads to objectification. In the following section I have analyzed

instances from the *Grey's Anatomy* which show denial of subjectivity of the female hero.

5.3.1 "That's all you've earned for now"

LaCriox and Pratto contend that one way in which the subjectivity of others is overlooked is "through ideologies that claim that what is beneficial or harmful for powerful groups is equally beneficial or harmful for subordinate groups" (199). The relationship between Meredith and Shepherd also shows the tilt of power and control towards the man's side. Meredith despite being the hero of the drama has little power in terms of what she wants in her relationship. Shepherd denies her subjectivity by not considering her feelings. Meredith is upset about the fact that she has an intimate relation with Shepherd but he does not share with her the details of his life. Meredith is objectified and denied subjectivity, as her feelings regarding their relationship are not considered. Meredith "Who do you hang out with? What do you do on your days off? … I want facts and until I get them, my pants are staying on" ("Save Me"). Meredith feels it to be her right that if they have a relationship, she deserves to know about Shepherd's life too. Since he hides it from her, she is being objectified and her humanity is denied. Shepherd's reply to her is, "Be flexible. See what happens" ("Save Me"). Meredith's concern is over Shepherd's detached attitude. Despite the fact that they are sharing an important aspect of their life he deliberately conceals other aspects of his life, which she feels she has the right to know in an intimate relationship. And if Shepherd does not consider her worthy enough to know and share these details her humanity is denied and she is objectified. Meredith is upset and is angry at Shepherd for not sharing anything about his life with her and terms it as distrust since they are in a romantic relationship. When finally, Shepherd decides to tell Meredith what she has been insisting on knowing, he does so keeping his autonomy and power intact and does not grant Meredith the right to manipulate and coax things. Meredith's feelings are not taken into account since to Meredith; Shepherd's sharing would mean that he gives her significance. It would also mean to her that he takes their relationship seriously. Whereas Shepherd does not take Meredith's emotions regarding sharing everything about his life with her, seriously and says that she is being touchy over a minor issue. When on Meredith's coaxing he tells her a little about himself he says "That's all you've earned for now. The rest you're just ... just gonna have to take on faith" ("Save Me").

Here Shepherd means to say that this was all that he could share with her and she should not expect or ask for more.

In another scene in the hospital dressing room, Meredith has a scuffle with another intern Alex. After a tough day at duty when Meredith goes to the dressing room, Alex enters after her and begins to boast of his exploits of the day "God, I smell good! You know what it is? It's the smell of open-heart surgery. It's awesome" ("Winning the Battle"). Here denial of subjectivity is evident because Alex does not take into account Meredith's feelings. Since he is feeling proud of his achievement at the end of his day and he wants to boast in front of somebody. When he finds Meredith alone in the dressing room he finds her a good object to express his feelings to. He does not try to see what she might be feeling at that moment and whether she wants to listen to him or give him company. He also does not feel that he is intruding into her privacy, or the fact that if Meredith does not want to talk with him she might be upset about something. After all her day was not as wonderful as his, but he is not bothered at all to take into account her emotions and feelings.

This is Meredith's status in her relationships with men in the position of either her bosses or strangers as patients, where most of the time she is incapable of asserting herself as a dominant female hero. In addition, when one observes her position among her peers one finds her lacking control over the situation where she should have been assertive and authoritative. In a scene in the third episode when Meredith comes back home, she finds the interns looking at her mother's medical and surgical instruments and tapes and is exasperated at their intrusion into her private possessions, i.e. her mother's belongings. She orders them to stop meddling with the things but is unable to make them comply with her wish and retreats to her room as she lacks the courage to face this and fight it out. Meredith's helplessness before her housemates shows her inertness because her words have no effect on them. When she runs upstairs the two coworkers whom she has rented the rooms of the house to, begin to laugh at her desperation and frustration instead of feeling embarrassed at what they were doing without her permission in her house.

The same instance can also be taken as evidence of denial of autonomy as Izzie and George do not take Meredith's feelings into account. When they are exploring her Mother's equipment and unpacking the boxes that contain surgical instruments and records they are intruding into Meredith's personal space, her past, and how Meredith

might feel at the retrieval of the memories associated with her mother and that she must be angry at them exploring her belongings, is not considered at all by Izzie and George.

When Meredith sees Shepherd, he refers to their previous exchange in which he had called her hands "tiny, ineffectual fists" ("Winning a Battle"). Shepherd's reference to Meredith's hands and body shows his denying her autonomy and the right to choose for herself what she wants. Shepherd's insistence is pestering but Meredith lacks the power to escape his influence. Once again, the female hero seems violable; she cannot guard against what she does not desire. Tabea Linhard in her study *Fearless Women,* emphasizes the role assigned to the female hero due to her gender by stating the example of Lina Odena in Eugenio Sastre's romance. "Odena herself is the heroine of her story. Yet the sexual threat effaces her heroism: in her final moment … her sexually violable body leaves her no other option than ending her life instead of continuing to fight for that same struggle. Thus the woman's heroic death restores gender role, instead of obliterating them" (127). Linhard's study shows that the female heroes are bound in the confines of gender roles that the society assigns to them. Meredith also is violated and is violable. She is vulnerable in comparison to male physical strength since she lies at the bottom of physical strength.

In the fourth episode, Shepherd approaches Meredith when she is on duty and forces her to come and get breakfast with him, to which she replies, "I have already eaten" ("Winning a Battle"). Meredith's demeanor shows that she is not in the mood to pay attention to Dr. Shepherd. She feels irritated when he starts inquiring about what she had for breakfast and passes remarks about her choices for breakfast. The female hero seems utterly helpless in front of the man whom she wants to ignore and from whose influence she wants to escape. Whereas initially she snubs Shepherd for poking his nose into her affairs, later she relents and says, "It's none of your business" when he inquires what she had eaten for breakfast, then begins to give the details of breakfast to him as if giving up before his authority and influence. Shepherd's verdict at Meredith's choice of "grilled cheese" is: "That is sad. It's pathetic. A good day starts with a good breakfast" ("Winning a Battle"). This shows that he thinks Meredith lacks autonomy and the ability to choose for herself. He terms her choice and preference as "sad" and "pathetic" and seems to impose his ideas on her. It is not only denial of autonomy but also evidence of denial of subjectivity. Meredith wants to start her day without messing up and getting into confrontation with him but he is constantly trying to intrude into her life and work which in fact is the denial of subjectivity also as

Meredith is concerned that Dr. Shepherd's intimacy at the work place will mar her professionalism as she has just started her career as a doctor and is concerned about her professional reputation, whereas Shepherd is her senior, a resident doctor, who does not have to make a place for himself. Shepherd ignores the fact that Meredith feels uncomfortable and embarrassed at Shepherd's intimacy with her at the workplace. Her colleagues also tease Meredith about her relationship with the senior doctor, as one intern, Cristina, remarks, "I am not the intern who's screwing an attending" ("No Man's Land"). Meredith feels exasperated at the way Shepherd constantly bugs her and ignores her feelings and he as the objectifier shows no concern for her feelings.

In season, eleven where Meredith and Shepherd have been married, their relationship turns sour because of Shepherd's interest in a job at the federal initiative program in Washington DC. Meredith feels it a violation of their pact. They had decided that he would take care of the kids while Meredith concentrates on her research and career in Seattle. She is upset that he has disregarded her feelings as well as their agreement and preferred his own career to hers. Shepherd's act shows his denying subjectivity to Meredith. She is hurt at his decision since it shows more concern about his career. Not only has he violated the agreement by looking for a job when they had decided that he will stay with Meredith at Grey Sloan Hospital in Seattle, but also by not taking Meredith into confidence about his decision. When, in her anger, she tells him to accept the offer he refuses it. This decision too does not come out of his consideration of Meredith's disappointment but is the result of his pondering over the situation of a child whom Shepherd meets in the hospital, who after losing his father tells Shepherd that he misses him. The child's words melt his heart and he changes his mind. Meredith feels that he puts himself first on decisions about his career and her career does not mean anything to him. On being denied importance and equality Meredith protests and feels she has been mistreated. Shepherd in refusing to acknowledge Meredith's feeling objectifies her. Meredith relates her feelings when Alex tells her that she has won as Shepherd has refused the job offer. "No. I never asked him to stay. This wasn't a compromise. I didn't win. He forfeited, so we both lost … He is walking around like he's a martyr, waiting for me to be grateful. I am not grateful. My career is just as important as his" ("Got to Be Real"). Meredith's complaint shows that her feelings have been hurt by Shepherd and she is denied subjectivity.

Meredith finds it hard to come to terms with the reality that she has a sister. Her appearance in her life has refreshed memories of the traumatic childhood she had when

her mother suffered alone and she could not make sense of what was happening to her. It is only now that she is able to understand what her mother went through. Besides this, she has a stressful time in her marriage as Shepherd broke the promise of staying in Settle till she finishes her research and has made plans to move to Washington. Amidst this chaos in her life, she is prone to anger and is extremely irritable. Her relation with her newfound sister is also on the rocky side. Shepherd does not understand her feelings and tells her to invite her sister to dinner. Meredith is unable to understand why he is imposing his wish on her when he tells her that she is her family and this is what people do. Meredith and Shepherd are not on talking terms but Shepherd by asking her to invite Pierce over dinner acts as if everything is fine between them. That is why when he says that this is what people do she asks him "What people" ("Don't Let's Start"). She feels alone because Shepherd has made a decision about his career ignoring her. Shepherd later invites her sister himself and asks Dr. Richard (Pierce's father) to join them. Meredith calls it a bad idea and considers it atrocious that he should impose such a situation. "Why are you trying to force it?" ("Don't Let's Start"). She tells him that Pierce doesn't want to know her father, just the ways she does not want to see Pierce. Shepherd explaining his perspective tells her that since he comes from a large family he wants Meredith also to have the experience of a big family. On the other hand, Meredith is the only child of a divorced mother and is not raised among siblings and relatives. She even finds it hard to accept her half-sister who reminds her of the past and the bitter memories associated with it, but Shepherd does not take into account Meredith's feelings. Although his intentions might not be bad as Meredith interprets them, since he gave up his chance to work for the president's health initiative program he is playing his card with her but he forces Meredith to do something against her wishes, something she feels very uncomfortable about. Later when she and Dr. Richard think that the idea of having dinner with Pierce is awkward they decide to tell Shepherd to call it off. She tells Richard with confidence that "Derek will understand" but on getting to know their plan Derek Shepherd gets so infuriated that he shouts at them, still adamant to have the family dinner, telling them forcefully that they cannot call off the invite and leaves them after giving a command, "I will see you both there tonight" ("Don't Let's Start") thus denying Meredith both autonomy and subjectivity.

5.3.2 “I didn’t want you to think less of me”

A few instances of denial of subjectivity in the case of Beckett can be observed. In season seven episode sixteen, “The Wrong Stuff’, after Castle’s marriage to Beckett and getting his private license and proving his skill once again by rescuing Beckett, Castle is embraced by the NYPD team again and is allowed to work as Beckett’s assistant. On the domestic front, the female hero faces the attitude that typically shows female objectification. Castle’s mother brings up the issue that Beckett should think of starting a family. This makes Beckett feel awkward and embarrassed as her mother in law seems to be speaking from the traditional and stereotypical roles that women must perform. Since they are both married the logical conclusion is of Beckett raising a kid for the happiness of the mother-in-law. Beckett’s feelings and perspective is not given any weight. Martha speaks to Beckett about the matter as if there is no need to show concern for her feelings. Also it is violability as Beckett’s personal boundary and space is infringed. The disregard for her personal decision and choice shows that the female hero is still trapped in the objectification. She is seen as an object who would bring happiness for the family through reproduction and giving them a continuation of their lives in the form of a grandchild. What she wants and how she feels about it is not given any consideration and she is seen as a source or instrument to bring joy to the family.

In another episode, “At Close Range”, Beckett was interrogating a suspect, her status as the chief investigating officer grants her power to probe and interrogate the man but the lawyer cuts Beckett’s talk and stands up leading the suspect along. Instead of Beckett finishing the usual procedure of investigation, the lawyer stands up before Beckett is done. “I believe that concludes our interview. (they stand) If you have more questions get a subpoena” (“At Close Range”). Beckett was not accusing the suspect that the lawyer would need to intervene in this manner. She was asking procedural questions to begin the investigation of the case. The lawyer by refusing Beckett to ask any questions and by heading out with the suspect shows that he is more powerful than the female detective hero is. When an agent denies or fails to acknowledge some aspect of another person’s being or personhood such as her autonomy, agency or subjective experiences it is referred to as a condition of objectification. (Nussbaum, *SSJ* 221; LaCroix and Pratto 185).

Castle denies Beckett subjectivity by signing up for a performance with Beckett at the annual show. He does not feel the need to know how Beckett feels about it. He thinks that she will have no objection to what he feels right for her. When Beckett comes

to know about it, she expresses her anger at his decision, as she is uncomfortable in performing before strangers. She also tells his mother about her nervousness and fear of performing before the public but Castle does not think that Beckett would have a problem with his decision. Research on objectification states that people have the illusion that they know others better than others know them and that those whose perceptions differ are unrealistic. Both these perceptions lead to denial of others' subjectivity and constitute objectification (LaCroix and Pratto 199; Pronin et al. 639). Later, however, Castle pulls out of the competition when he overhears Beckett's talk with his mother that despite her fright of the audience, she will go for the performance, in order not to let Castle down. When Beckett realizes that Castle has withdrawn from the competition and the bet with Esposito she tells Castle "I didn't want you to think less of me" ("Habeas Corpse") showing that she is ready to deny her subjectivity and wants to sacrifice for him.

5.3.3 "I don't like pretending"

On her first trial, Alicia encounters the attorney who inquires her about Peter. She tells him that it is her first day in the court but instead of wishing her good luck he brings up the issue of her husband's disgrace asking her how she is facing it. He does so deliberately and reminds her of something that she has to suffer due to her husband's failing. He brings her personal life into their professional meeting and does not show any regard for her feelings; his comment makes Alicia feel embarrassed and awkward as if as a woman and wife of a husband who erred, she is bound to suffer the disgrace.

When Grace discovers through google that their father will soon be released on bail she asks her mother if he will be staying with them. Zach excited at the prospect of their father's acquittal interrupts the conversation saying "In mom's room. Where do you think?" ("Unprepared"). Alicia looks at Zach in surprise at her son making her decision, but he does not show regard for his mother's feelings. This to Alicia is a very sensitive matter as after Peter's infidelity she is hurt and finds it hard to trust and forgive him for his failing. Zach's statement shows that he does not acknowledge what his mother is going through and his dad's place is established no matter what he does.

Alicia's campaign manager tells her to profess faith in order to appeal to the public. Despite her claim that she is an atheist, she is asked to say that she is not an atheist and to show some sort of faith in God. To be successful in politics she is asked to put aside her personal beliefs and feelings and act according to the rules that are laid

for her to be a successful politician. Johnny tells her that she has to appear in a television interview with a pastor and pronounce that she is in search of faith:

ALICIA. These political rules keep changing when you want them to.

JOHNNY. Voters don't vote for atheists. You need to take this opportunity to say that you changed.

ALICIA. Changed to what?

JOHNY. Changed to someone who is not an atheist. ("Old Spice")

Alicia appears in the interview despite her reluctance and later admits to her personal assistant "I don't like pretending to be someone I am not …" ("Old Spice") showing that she feels upset and uncomfortable at doing something against her wishes.

5.4 Fungibility

According to Martha Nussbaum, fungibility occurs when a person is treated as interchangeable with other objects (*SSJ* 218). LaCriox and Pratto discussing the notions of objectification presented by Nussbaum state that fungibility includes viewing people as homogenous (191). When a person can fulfill the objectifier's purpose "individuals are usually not accorded self-determination or agency and their subjectivity may be ignored, thus constituting objectification" (LaCriox and Pratto192). Researchers claims that the representation of female characters on the media shows female characters as being interchangeable. On the other hand, male characters are idiosyncratic and irreplaceable (Dill 104; Sarkeesian, "Male Characters").

The female hero also becomes interchangeable with other people or even objects in some situations in the drama series under discussion. For instance, in episode five, season seven, "Meme is Murder", Beckett coaxes the culprit to elicit the information of the whereabouts of the detainees while Castle and Garrett watch from behind the glass. Castle praises Beckett for her skill and commitment, showing confidence that she will make the malefactor utter the truth. "If anyone can break him, it's Detective Beckett" ("Meme is Murder"*)* but his praise is accompanied with a qualification which undercuts the merit of his acknowledgment of Beckett's abilities "And there's still a chance Snappamatic can help us" ("Meme is Murder"). Beckett's ability and skill have been weighed along with software showing that Beckett is considered as a tool for finding clues of the whereabouts of the detainees in the same ways as Snappamatic (software used by the culprit in the episode for uploading pictures of crime). In this way, Castle's

comment shows his objectifying female hero. Either the device or Beckett can help them reach the spot where the detainees are kept. The humanity of the female hero is compromised as she is placed beside a thing that is being used to achieve a goal. The comment reflects that Beckett is interchangeable with the software. She is fungible or dispensable or can be traded by another thing. Endorsing Martha Nussbaum's idea that if a person is treated by someone as an instrument for achieving their goal, LaCriox and Pratto assert that "then the Agent is overlooking the Other's personhood and is engaging in objectification" (187). They further state that when any person or thing can suffice for a purpose the humans are not accorded subjectivity, autonomy and their agency is ignored thus leading to objectification (LaCriox and Pratto 192). In "A Hard Day's Night" Meredith is also dismissed in the similar fashion when she is unable to take care of the patient and Dr. Shepherd asks her to go and does the job himself. He scolds her and orders her to go as she no longer seems useful to perform the assigned job.

A number of instances show that when the female hero seems to be taking control of the situation another man is shown to be working as her savior or protector as if she lacks the ability to handle tough situations. If she is the hero she must be capable enough and endowed with the ability to manage tough situations and villainous people who pose threat to her individuality and above all her humanity. But the female hero's treatment as a violable and her lack of autonomy shows that she is not granted powers expected in the figure of a hero. The analysis of the female hero in the selected drama serials reveals the inertness of the female hero in different situations. It was observed that not only it is other people who treat the female hero as inert or lacking in capacity to act for herself and objectify her but the female hero herself also acts in some instances as inert and unwilling to act for herself.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The present study was conducted in order to analyze the female heroes in the American television drama series from the perspective of objectification theory presented by Martha Nussbaum. The purpose of the study was to examine the American Television drama series, asking questions about the depiction of the female hero in contemporary drama series. The study looks into the notion of the female hero through a feminist lens in order to determine what ways of objectification, or treating women as objects, are at work in the depiction of the female hero in American television drama series. For the purpose of the study of objectification of the female hero in American television drama series three drama series. *Grey's Anatomy, Castle* and *The Good Wife* were selected.

6.1 Significance of Television Dramas and Roles of Women

Television dramas play a major role in influencing society and shaping perspectives about female heroes in the minds of men and women alike. Sherrie A. Inness also advocates the importance of the study of popular culture and media representation of women by stating that television images affect the socialization process unintentionally by providing role models for its viewers in the fictional characters it represents as entertainment (Inness, *Tough Girls* 12). Portrayals of women on television are not meaningless discourses but an index to what it means to be a female in society, within the available dimensions and options which the role offers to a woman. The types of roles assigned to women and the stereotypes associated with them convey society's attitude toward women and its expectations of the kinds of behavior they exhibit. "These television characters and dramas presenting men and women in familiar and life-like situations establish viewers' expectations, validate established notions, and provide models of behaviors for their own lives" (Meehan 114). The characters in TV dramas assume an out of proportion importance due to the fact that "television is an electronic classroom, in which lessons are taught by the heroes of prime time (Montgomery 8).

Television as a popular medium shapes perspectives and television drama reflects the ideology and practices of people. Culture influences media, which in turn influences culture. The image of women that television drama presents has been the center of debate for decades but such debates and research mostly center around the appearance or the physical image of women in television and films. Observing the female characters especially those of female heroes in workplace drama series exposed what still needs to be done for the improvement of the overall image and representation of the female hero. Research is the first step in convincing people that a problem exists and needs to be addressed. As Dianna Meehan pointed out in her study of female hero in various forms of American drama from 1950s to the 80s: "television has ignored the most important part of women's lives—their concepts, sensations aspirations, desires, and dreams. It's time to tell the stories of female heroes—heading families, heading corporations, conquering fears, and coping with change" (Meehan 131). The roles of female heroes examined in the selected drama series for the present study also point to the incongruities and inequalities in practices that perpetuate women's subordinate position. Correcting the erroneous practices and stereotypes and liberating women of the objectified position will open up new avenues to exploring roles of women in films and TV. And these new images of women in films and dramas will provide more constructive models for film viewers. Positive models are needed to connect these female screen heroes to the society. The present study highlights those areas related to the objectification of the female hero's self and personality that reveal her unfair treatment and which is carried out in subtle ways in those drama series that present the women as heroes. Although women have been granted the status of the heroes upon whom the action and the plot of the series depends, there are discursive ways at work that objectify woman and curtail not only her freedom and power but her very personhood—the quality of being a human, who is autonomous agent and master of her own will.

Probing into contradictions of visual culture can often become a site for the struggle feminism waged in theoretical, political, experiential, and symbolic contexts. These television characters provide useful insight into feminism and visual culture. Instead of dismissing these dramas as merely entertainment or popular culture we can use these texts for raising awareness about the contradictions inherent in the representation of various sections of society. Social selves, McRobbie states, are

"fragile, fragmented identities formed in discourse and history are open to change, transformation and realignment" (192).

6.2 Nussbaum's Theory of Objectification

In order to study the idea of objectification, presented by Martha Nussbaum, who postulated seven notions of Objectification: Instrumentality, Denial of Autonomy, Ownership, Inertness, Violability, Denial of Subjectivity and Fungibility, the present study endeavored to explore the roles of the female heroes in three American television drama series, i.e. *Grey's Anatomy, Castle* and *The Good Wife*. Two seasons of each drama series were studied in order to look for instances of the seven notions of objectification with regard to the roles of female heroes in these drama series; Meredith Grey, Kate Beckett and Alicia Florrick. Given that the study intended to investigate the notion of objectification of the female hero from the perspective of Martha Nussbaum's notions of objectification, i.e. not the sexual but literal or mechanistic objectification, it set out to verify these objectives: determine the extent to which the female hero is objectified in American television drama series and expose ideological bias in terms of instrumentality, autonomy, agency, violability and subjectivity that exists in the presentation of the female heroes in television drama series.

The present study looked at each of these seven notions: instrumentality, denial of autonomy, ownership, inertness, violability denial of subjectivity and fungibility through textual critical approach as proposed by Horace Newcomb and Paul Hirsch. Since the study involved texts in the form of visuals and performance in the dramas, textual critical approach helped in the complex reading of the role of gender politics, patriarchy and objectification. Each of the notions of Nussbaum's theory was looked at in detail to find its instances in the visual text as to how these notions are at work in objectifying the female heroes.

6.2.1 Instrumentality

Instrumentality is one of the ways used to objectify the female hero. It occurs when a person is treated as a tool by the objectifier for his own purposes. In the world presented in these drama series the female heroes face instrumentality as the needs, interests and experiences of these female heroes are subordinated to those of the powerful, who are authority figures predominantly men and in some instances women as well, either in the family or at the workplace. It is also noted that the agents may not be hostile in their attempts to instrumentalizing the female hero, as benevolent friends

or spouses also fail to acknowledge that women have autonomy over their lives. Friends, family members and romantic partners also use these female heroes as instruments to serve their own purposes and achieve their own goals. Meredith Grey, Kate Beckett and Alicia Florrick are instruments for their romantic partners and husbands as well as their colleagues in helping these people achieve their own purposes and have less intrinsic value. For instance, in *The Good Wife,* Alicia is used by her husband Peter for his political ambitions.

6.2.2 Denial of Autonomy

The other notion that the study explored in the representation of the female hero was that of denial of autonomy. Autonomy means having independence in one's thoughts and actions. Nussbaum states that denying people autonomy leads to objectification. The female heroes in the primetime drama series under study were prevented from exercising autonomy and agency through constant intervention of their spouses, bosses and even colleagues and friends. According to Nussbaum, denial of autonomy leads to loss of personhood as a person's potential is undermined and her talents and potentials are not recognized. Her right to decision making and taking initiative is compromised. The evidence of denial of autonomy in the representation of female heroes shows ideological bias as well. It exposes the fear that if granted autonomy, women will be less dependent on men and other interpersonal relationships.

The portrayal of the female hero in a way where she could exercise little autonomy in her life reveals the artificial veneer of women empowerment. This notion of power seems just a façade of authority where women apparently are granted the status of a hero but are not granted autonomy. The analysis of situations that the female heroes face in the said series reveals that they are not granted enough autonomy despite the fact that they are competent and are placed in an influential position. Kate Beckett follows Castle's decisions and Alicia Florrick, those of Peter and her campaign manager, Eli. Meredith Grey also accepts what Shepherd decides for her. This is how the female heroes' autonomy is compromised as they appear less independent and more subordinate to the men accompanying and directing them. In denying women autonomy, the objectifiers make them believe that it is in their best interest. Therefore, the female heroes submit to the authority figures mistaking the decisions of their objectifiers to be beneficial to them. Women give up their autonomy due to their belief that what men propose to them is in fact in their best interest. Critics like Marilyn

Friedman also contend that in patriarchal societies women's autonomy is restricted as it is considered a threat to the hierarchy and dominance of patriarchy (46). This exposes the ideological bias of how discursive strategies are employed to uphold patriarchal superiority.

6.2.3 Ownership

Another aspect leading to female heroes' objectification is Ownership. Nussbaum states that the treatment of a person as an object owned by someone also causes lack of autonomy and self-determination (220). The study of the female heroes, reveals that their lives are governed and controlled by others such as family members, including spouses and siblings, bosses and colleagues. Authority figures and men who control the female heroes' lives fail to acknowledge that these women are owners of their own lives and have the right to self-determination and action. The objectifiers denying ownership to the female heroes presume that controlling their lives is their right. There is little awareness and resistance on the part of the women heroes as they sacrifice their individuality and independence and submit to the authority of men considering it beneficial to them. For instance, beguiled by the myth of romantic love Meredith and Beckett do not find it odd that their spouses accept their achievements as their own. Alicia sticks to an unhappy marriage despite her husband's infidelity believing in the notion of "the good wife" who has to stand by her husband through thick and thin as this will grant her respect in society. Patriarchal myths like submission in a romantic relationship and sincerity on the part of the wife perpetuate gender inequality and establish patriarchal power. For success these women heroes had to associate themselves with male partners/figures; Beckett with Castle who joins her at work and also becomes her romantic partner and later her husband; Meredith with Shepherd, who is her senior in the hospital and later romantic partner and husband; Alicia in her professional domain is associated with romantic partner Will Gardner and then her election campaign strategist Eli. This association with and ownership by a male partner grants her acceptance and success in society and shows ideological biases and patriarchal practices to employ restraint on women.

6.2.4 Inertness

Another notion from Martha Nussbaum's theory of objectification that was studied with respect to the female heroes in the American television drama series is Inertness which Nussbaum defines as lack of agency (*Sex and Social Justice* 218).

Denial of agency implies that the actions and freedom of a person is controlled by others, not allowing a person to enjoy control over her own life. The analysis of the female heroes reveals that despite being given the role of heroes their agency is limited. Meredith, despite being a competent and gifted doctor, acts nervously when faced with a testing situation both regarding her career and personal life and needs to depend on someone i.e. a friend and confidant like Cristina or Alex. Beckett's agency is controlled by the intervention of Castle who does most of the tough job that Beckett as a detective is equally capable of performing but is not allowed to. Alicia follows the plans, orders and instructions of her campaign manager and team. These female heroes are not fully autonomous and are inert as someone else manages the decisions about their life and career. This inertness mars their status as heroes who are not fully active agents. Critics regard it as a subversive strategy used in patriarchal societies to control tough women and which reveals that women are only allowed to show power within certain parameters which do not threaten male dominance.

6.2.5 Violability

Violability is another notion identified by Martha Nussbaum that causes objectification. Nussbaum defines it as treating someone as if they lack boundary-integrity or are permissible to break up, or break into. Intrusion into an individual's personal life and conversational interruptions are just a few of the ways of violating a person's boundary. In the analysis of the female heroes with respect to the notion of violability it was determined that power asymmetries create violations of personal boundaries. Authority figures such as males: spouses, colleagues or bosses, and even female authority figures such as bosses or relatives also treat female heroes in the same manner. The female heroes in the said drama serials have been observed to have been violated in terms of boundary integrity not only by close family members like spouses but also by strangers like patients in Meredith's case or clients in Alicia and Beckett's cases. It is not usually through force or threat that the female heroes' boundary integrity is violated but rather through emotional and subtle tactics they are treated as violable beings, as if they are not mature enough and therefore prone to emotional dominance by men. For instance, to proclaim masculinity and control over a female partner, men use verbal interruption to violate her boundary integrity. The violability of the female hero shows that the pattern of her life reenacts the role of a *heroine* whose life is bound up with a man's. The roles of working women on television show that they are still

constrained within gender stereotypes and are still objectified.

6.2.6 Denial of Subjectivity

With regard to Denial of Subjectivity**,** which Martha Nussbaum defines as disregard for a person's feelings and emotions, it has been determined through the study of the roles of the female heroes that others deny the feelings of the female heroes. In most instances others are taking decisions for the female heroes. Castle dominates Beckett, Shepherd over Meredith and in the case of Alicia it is her husband, her romantic partner and also her election campaign manager who take decisions on their behalf ignoring their feelings and emotions, hence denying them subjectivity. The objectifiers who deny them subjectivity and fail to acknowledge their uniqueness as individuals having personal feeling and emotions do so with the impression that they know what is in the best interest of these women. They disregard women's feelings as unrealistic or childlike and the female heroes are bound in the gender roles that society assigns to them. They are vulnerable and denied subjectivity as they lack emotional strength and ability in comparison with the mental and emotional strength and maturity of men.

6.2.7 Fungibility

As far as the last notion of Fungibility in Martha Nussbaum's theory of objectification is concerned, very few instances of its use were found during the study. The notion of fungibility, refers to using a person as interchangeable with other objects or persons. This usually occurs when a person is no longer considered beneficial and someone or something else is used in her place instead. On a few occasions the female heroes are treated by others as interchangeable. For instance, Alicia is replaced with her competitor Cary Agos. Her bosses replace her and take her off the cases she is dealing with. Alicia cannot avoid her objectification in the form of fungibility as her objectifier decides when to use her and for how long. Similarly, Beckett and Meredith also face fungibilty on some occasions which shows they are denied humanity and treated as objects. They are either replaced by tools or instruments or people showing that the female hero is fungible and can be traded for another thing or a person.

6.3 The Objectified Selves of Female Heroes and Patriarchal Dominance

The analysis of the female hero from the perspective of objectification also reveals that she is so used to being objectified that she cannot think of herself as an independent and self-reliant person. Since she has been treated as an object lacking agency it is difficult for her to make choices, take decisions and act confidently and independently in testing situations. This feeling is the result of a social system based on patriarchal conventions that instill the belief that women are weak, ineffectual and need a companion, preferably a man to take care of them. Pearson and Pope argue that the psychological dependence of the female hero on someone, particularly a male figure, masks a radical inequality of power between men and women (20). This dependence of the female hero on men and others shows that the women accept their subordinate position and consider it unalterable. They are told to accept it as it is in their own best interest. This hints at the social condition of male supremacy or patriarchal dominance. The dominant ideology of patriarchy can be seen enforced through this pattern of gender roles where women are made to depend on men.

The female heroes represented in the selected drama series, although not sexualized objects of desire, are denied their personhood, independence, agency and subjectivity thorough various means. The representation of the female hero exposes ideological biases, as the dominant groups and authority figures not only contain and restrict these women's exercise of freedom and power but also deny them humanity through various means of objectification. All forms of oppression are expressed at ideological level and are presented as if they are natural processes. "Oppression always involves a degree of objectification" (Brittan and Mayard 181) and objectification of the subject involves denial of the right to self-regulation or capacity for self-regulation. The objectified are "deprived of autonomy in many spheres…It is the ideology of objectification which we call masculinity. Masculinity, as we understand it, is that ideological form which informs any kind of oppression" (Brittan and Mayard 200). Catharine Mackinnon observes that men "create the world from their own point of view, which then becomes the truth to be described…the view from a distance ..." (22). Primetime dramas are not radical texts that attack or subvert the patriarchal order. Like all cultural commodities they bear the ideology of the system that promotes and distributes them although in the evolving social and economic system women have made their way to the workplace and can be seen performing roles in dominant

positions. Friedan, Geraghty, Meehan and many others in their study of the American soap operas have noted that the genre of soap operas was developed in the post war era to train women for domestic life and to propagate that women's fulfilment was to be found in domestic life prepared for them by the patriarchal system. My study reveals that although the primetime drama series of the present era present an apparently empowered woman who is assigned the role of a hero performing arduous tasks like her male counterpart, a close analysis of her roles reveals how she is still objectified and oppressed. This shows that having women in strong roles is not empowerment of women or recognition of their roles as equal to those of men. The three female heroes who have been studied are not fully empowered and liberated as they face objectification in its various forms as described by Martha Nussbaum. The message of these drama series seems to be contradictory: on the one hand each drama shows strong female heroes, taking control of their lives through work and benefiting society, while on the other hand these female heroes are dependent on men and are not autonomous agents. Higher education, jobs as doctor, detective and lawyer, chic attire and freedom are a mere façade which camouflage the objectified selves of these women heroes. The postmodern television series under study show women as both objects and subjects since the women in the roles of heroes performing jobs outside their homes are carefully managed. They may have moved away from just being sex-symbols and overcome sexual objectification but the study reveals that literal objectification or the objectification of the personhood is still at work and this is what they need to fight against. "Despite the enormous forces ranged against them, women do not become objects…[they] are more than capable of rejecting …[their] objectification … Put differently, the oppressed are always capable of subverting objectification by insisting on their status as intentional beings"(Brittan and Mayard (205).

Discrimination and contradiction in men's treatment of women is rooted in social practices of everyday life. It is carried out through the notions pointed out by Martha Nussbaum which show the objectification not of the body but of the personhood of a woman. In order to set things right women also have to recognize their own objectification in these and other realms. If they are to be valued by men, they have to value themselves first and recognize that certain practices which are proclaimed as beneficial and protective for them are in fact harmful to their autonomy and self-hood. As long as women consider themselves objects, sexual or otherwise they will continue

to be oppressed and objectified. Christine Wallace states “The belittling of women will not diminish until women stop ‘panhandling’”(159).

The analysis of the female heroes with respect to the seven notions of objectification thus reveals that although women have been granted entry into the coveted domain of heroism and leading roles in workplace dramas, there is still a lot more that needs to be done to make them autonomous agents who would be valued for who they are, for their talents, skills and abilities; and who, instead of being controlled by men, could take charge of their own lives and act independently to emerge fully as heroes. Otherwise it is only a façade of empowerment and women’s liberation and autonomy which will continue to encourage their oppression through subversive strategies in patriarchal societies.

I would like to say a few things here about the reasons the female hero is objectified. Of course it would be a full-fledged endeavor to look into the causes of objectification and would demand in-depth understanding of the way dramas are produced, sold and broadcast and this is why it is something I intend to discuss in detail in my later researches on the issue. For now I can offer only cursory commentary about the *why* of objectification in the light of the selected works. Kate Beckett’s objectification is partly the result of the patriarchal society. Her female boss Captain Gates makes her subordinates refer to her as sir and this is an indication that she feels accepting being a female will drag her down. Beckett applies for a job and is given only a secondary position. Alicia in The Good Wife is a victim of her husband’s betrayal but the patriarchal society forces her to be inert and back her husband as he fights allegations of corruption. Alicia standing by her husband even as he admits to infidelity is a picture of not just inertness but also denial of subjectivity at the hands of the society. Will’s attitude towards Alicia is a reminder that she will continue to be an owned object even if she is able to free herself of the bonds Peter has put her in. Meredith has to compromise on her job and further training for her husband who wants a better position as doctor, for which Meredith has to take care of their children.

6.4 Relevance of the Research to the Pakistani Context

In the Pakistani media although there is a substantial representation of women in various genres of popular media such as film, television, advertisements etc. but one scarcely sees women performing roles which assign them power or central position of authority. Specifically, it is rare to find dramas representing women in workplace

situations and performing in leading roles. We see more domesticated images of women and if a female in the role of a working woman is shown her role is not explored in depth. This shows that the Pakistani drama lags far behind the American television drama in changing the perceptions about women and their roles. The American television drama allowed entry to women heroes in the primetime work-place drama series, showing them in the roles of lawyers, detectives and doctors to present the liberated and emancipated image of American women, responding to the call of the feminists. It seems to satisfy and pacify those who lay charges of male dominance over popular media. My study reveals that it is a façade of a liberated woman that the American drama portrays. The reality is hidden behind this obvious role of the female hero who is still facing objectification and needs to overcome it to fully claim heroism. There is dearth of academic research on the medium of television in Pakistan due to the trend of research on print based material. The present study will provide a model to the researchers interested in television research in Pakistan. Moreover, the researches that have been conducted from feminist perspective on women's roles in media focus on the physical dimension of objectification and the objectification of personhood is a neglected area. This study will help in drawing attention of the researchers to study the other forms of objectification. The representation of women on television in Pakistan, in any genre whether drama, political or entertainment talk-shows and advertisements can be studied to see how far the feminists' efforts in our context have been fruitful in helping to change the image of Pakistani women.

6.5 Recommendations for Future Researchers

A lot of work has been done on sexual objectification but the objectification of personhood or personality is an under-researched area not only in Pakistan but also in the western academia. I analyzed the female heroes' roles exclusively, but for future researchers it would be interesting to note through the comparison of male and female heroes' roles, how much difference can be observed in the treatment of both male and female heroes in workplace dramas or films. The same study can be undertaken to analyze dramas in the Pakistani context, which will give an idea as to how far and in what ways the women in Pakistani dramas are objectified, in Nussbaum's sense of the term. Since the struggle for women's emancipation and freedom from oppression is stronger in the west, and living in the east we assume that western women are more liberated and independent and less prone to discrimination and objectification, I took

the American television dramas to observe the objectification of the female heroes as there are a number of American dramas showing women in apparently powerful roles. In order to see how women in Pakistan are faring, prospective researchers can take Pakistani dramas where women are assigned dominant roles in order to see if they also face similar kinds of objectification and to what extent they are objectified. Future research may also look at individual notions such as ownership, instrumentality or inertness as cultural constructs and institutional processes and discuss how they are carried out across cultures. Another dimension of objectification that is "self-objectification" may also be explored with reference to female heroes in the future studies of objectification.

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