



## **A DEFENCE OF HENRY MILLER'S CRAZY COCK AGAINST CHARGES OF MISOGYNY BY KATE MILLET IN SEXUAL POLITICS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Henry Miller, the author of Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn has been doomed to notoriety mainly because of charges of obscenity in his books; and due to allegations of being a male chauvinist who treats women as 'things' by Kate Millett in her seminal work, Sexual Politics. While Judge Sam B Epstein absolved him of all charges of obscenity in Tropic of Cancer, the allegations of misogyny levelled by Kate Millett tend to linger on even today. This paper aims at defending Henry Miller against the charges of Kate Millett in Sexual Politics. At the same time, it also explores the love hate relationship between the two great literary stalwarts.*

**Keywords:** obscenity, misogyny, vulgarity, misrepresentation, revolution.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Henry Miller is widely considered as one of the greatest literary figures of the twentieth century, revolutionizing how we read and think about art. His work epitomized a tradition

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within Bohemian mythology that made poverty and exile an inherent attribute for those with artistic integrity. His wife June funded much of his travels and gave him a voice in the face of sex-related censorship. Anais Nin admired Miller's daring imagination so much that she gave him her typewriter; this love later inspired his first and most famous novel *Tropic of Cancer*. In her groundbreaking book *Sexual Politics*, Kate Millet examined how patriarchal society creates and distributes power within sexual relationships. She argued that this distribution was political in nature, not simply due to biological gender differences but instead rooted in patriarchal values and norms. She emphasized the role of patriarchy as a system of social control and its underlying ideology that men were superior to women. She believed women had been psychologically subjugated to this idea of inferiority, which ultimately affected their lives and relationships. Millet has dedicated her life to serving in various civil rights, political and feminist movements. She is widely regarded as a key figure in the second wave of feminism and her work forms an important part of its legacy. Her work remains relevant today as we engage in passionate cultural debates over the representation of women in literature and media. Her views on the value of reading culture for gaining a deeper insight into the world remain an invaluable guide for women and those interested in exploring feminist ideas. Columbia University Press published a revised edition of *Sexual Politics* that has brought the book back into the public eye and reminded readers about Millet's groundbreaking analysis of how sexuality has been represented in culture. While we may still have work to do before we achieve the structural changes Millet envisioned, her writing serves as an important vehicle for bringing feminist perspectives into larger conversations about representation and social change.

## **2. Charges against Henry Miller**

Kate Millet in *Sexual Politics* has heavily come upon what she saw as sexism and heterosexism of renowned novelists D. H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, and Norman Mailer. It is said that she charges Henry Miller the most. She begins her tirade and writes, "There is a kind of culturally cathartic release in Miller's writing, but it is really a result of the fact that he first gave voice to the unutterable. This is no easy matter of four-letter words; they had been printed already in a variety of places." (Millet 144).

Talking about the portrayal of women in his novels Millet writes, "What Miller did articulate was the disgust, the contempt, the hostility, the violence, and the sense of filth with which our culture, or more specifically, its masculine sensibility, surrounds sexuality. And women too; for somehow it is women upon whom this onerous burden of sexuality falls (Millet 146).

Kate Millet also questions the sincerity of Miller in writing about women. She even questions the veracity of the claims that Miller makes while writing in the first person narrative. She

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writes about Miller claiming to be a disciple of D H. Lawrence to be an ‘outrage’ against Lawrence. Kate Millet believes that all attempts of chivalry courtesy, kindness and sophistication claimed by the writers of the previous generations and even Lawrence were an attempt in hypocrisy or “psychological manipulation” (Millet 146) to mask the real face of men. She alleges that, “the woman in question -for Miller is a gang--just “fuck” women and discard them, much as one might avail oneself of sanitary facilities- Kleenex or toilet paper” (Millet 146, 147). Millet continues to charge Henry Miller, for treating women as mere pieces of genitalia. She also questions the intentions of the protagonist in Miller, “Just “fucking,” the Miller hero is merely a huckster and con man, unimpeded by pretension, with no priestly role to uphold.” (Millet 147). Kate Millett continues to charge both Lawrence and Henry Miller for being frauds who continue to cheat women. She charges them with the destruction of the romantic idea of love, “Lawrence did much to kill off the traditional attitudes of romantic love....Miller seems to have started up blissfully ignorant of their existence altogether. Actually, his cold-blooded procedure is intended as sacrilege to the tenderness of romantic love, a tenderness Lawrence was never willing to forgo.” (Millet 147)

She compares the act of courtship to mugging and calls it a disguised attempt, “a process no more complex than a mugging.” (Millet 147) The formula is rather simple: you meet her, cheat her into letting you have “a piece of ass,” and then take off. Miller’s hunt is a primitive find, fuck, and forget.” (Millet 147) In her opinion, both Miller and Lawrence disliked the idea of a sexual revolution for women and wanted to suppress “feminist claims to human recognition” (Millet 147). Lawrence, according to her was successful in “distorting them into a vegetative passivity, calling itself fulfilment” (Millet 147) Kate Millett laments the fact that D H Lawrence was so successful because, “his success prepared the way for Miller’s, escalation to open contempt.... Miller simply converts women to “cunt”—things, commodity matters. There is no personality to recognise or encounter.” She launches the final attack on Miller stating, “ Miller confronts nothing more challenging than the undifferentiated genital that exists in masturbatory reverie.” (Millet 147) and “Miller’s ideal woman is a whore. (Millet 151). She cites passages from Miller’s novels selectively to prove that Miller is a misogynist and does not like the personality of women.

### **3. Analysing the veracity of charges against Henry Miller**

The function of criticism is not to condemn or press any text or writer. Criticism derives from the Greek word krinein, which means “to pick, understand or interpret.” In order to understand any writer or text, it is important to understand where he comes from. The concept of new criticism however, popular it may be, does not do justice to any text or writer because without understanding the context, there is a great chance that the meaning may be

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misconstrued. The same is true for the case of Henry Miller as well. His books were termed as obscene and he was charged with misogyny. The key, therefore, is to understand why he wrote. It is a well-known fact that struggled to become a writer throughout his life until he was in his forties. Jay Martin discusses the beginning of Henry Miller's writing career in his essay "The Last Book." Martin narrates the incident when the publishers wanted Henry Miller to shelve Crazy Cock and publish Tropic of Cancer, Miller reacted, "Tropic of Cancer was not the book he wanted to write, he crazily asserted, not the story he really wanted to tell. He had promised himself in 1927 that he would dedicate himself to writing the story of his life with June." (Martin 82) It is quite contrary to the public opinion that Miller wanted to achieve immortality with the publication of Tropic of Cancer. Jay Martin gives a contrary fact about Miller's first book, "Henry wanted to force Crazy Cock down their throats. If Americans wanted a book by him now, they would have to take Crazy Cock." (Martin 82)

It is a well-known fact that struggled to become a writer throughout his life until he was in his forties. Norman Mailer discusses the evolution and the motivation of Henry Miller as a writer. She finds that Henry Miller was trying "for the highest stakes we can conceive..... to have some chance of becoming the greatest writer in America's history, a figure equal to Shakespeare. (Mailer 142). So till now we have observed the charges of Kate Millet against Henry Miller and the two reasons that Henry Miller wanted to write. The first being his desire to become a great writer and the second being his desire to write about his relationship with June Masfield. There is a third reason why Henry Miller wanted to write and that was to rebel against the established norms of the American society. He wanted to show the American public the mirror and for that he wanted to "make it a big success in the United States, he said, so that he could take down his pants and show his ass to his countrymen and say: "I'm crapping on it, disowning it. So much for you, America, of thee I sing! That's just the kind of shit you've been eating for the last fifteen years!" (Martin 82-83). It was in that act of rebellion that Henry Miller lashed out in his auto-novels. He subverted all the essential institutions of the erstwhile American society, even marriage. Miller made fun of himself as well. Penury, poverty, or insult; Miller took everything in his stride so much so that that Ezra Pound, who had found Shelly to be Satanic found Henry Miller's writings to be the writings of a "happy man."

Miller, however, due to the excessive use of the first person narrative in his "auto novels" has been termed as a "Narcissist." While analysing the element of narcissism in Henry Miller, Norman Mailer writes "The gusto of Miller's relation to sex is so outside the clam-like formulations of conventional psychoanalysis that it is probably incumbent to make a pass at the psychology of his sexual patterns." (Mailer 131). What Mailer seems to suggest is that what Henry Miller writes about sex in his auto novels is surreal and cannot be analysed in the

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conventional sense. Mailer does not assign any reason for the surreal expression and treatment of sex in Henry Miller's novels. He resists from the temptation to "analyse the sexuality of another person" (Mailer 131) because he finds it "unattractive" as he feels it is not even a question of taste but philosophy. On the other hand, Kate Millet does indulge in the temptation of analysing Miller, his sexuality and his treatment of women in Sexual Politics terms Miller "a compendium of American sexual neuroses." (Millet 145). Norman Mailer finds this abnormal and he feels that by doing this kind of analysis of someone else's sexuality, "the implicit assumption is that the person who performs the analysis is sexually superior to the subject" (Mailer 131) Considering oneself as someone superior to the other is also an indulgence in the act of narcissism. Mailer comments further, "To analyze anyone's sexuality assumes we know what sex is about; even the assumption is offensive.... There is a modern vanity which thrusts us into the dissection of our betters. Besides, in the case of Henry Miller, a species of cop-out exists." (Mailer 132)

#### **4. Analysing the veracity of charges against Crazy Cock**

It has already been mentioned above that Henry Miller wanted to produce a book that would show the American public the mirror. It is written in the third person narrative. The major charge levelled against Henry Miller and his books is that women in his novels are not "persons" but "genitalia" (Millet). A thorough analysis of the novel along with the plot and important incidents will be attempted here to make an unbiased analysis of the charges against Miller.

#### **Background of the novel**

It is important to mention a couple of trivia about Crazy Cock. When Henry Miller was told by Bradley, the agent in Obelisk Press that Tropic of Cancer was the book that could be published; Crazy Cock on the other hand was far inferior in his opinion. Henry Miller was shocked because in his opinion Tropic of Cancer was only a narration of his miseries in Paris. The Preface to the novel is simple and it reads "Good-bye to the novel, sanity, and good health. Hello angels!" The genesis of Crazy Cock is rather interesting. In the year 1927 Henry Miller's second wife June Masefield had run away to Europe with her lesbian lover Jean Kronschi. As a result of which he was in a state of depression. He was again in a state of being penniless and humiliated. To get some solace he went back to the house of his parents. His parents were shocked and unhappy to see their thirty-six years old son in such a state. Of course, they had expectations from him which he calls as bourgeoisie expectations.





In order to survive and meet his daily expenditures, he accepted one of the jobs that was offered to him by his childhood rival. However, to his amazement one day he stayed at home and started rattling the typewriter which resulted in the preparation of notes that were to form the foundation of the book that Miller was

supposed or rather destined to write in the form of Crazy Cock. Crazy Cock was for Henry Miller a sort of a nightmarish story. It recounts the days when his wife June used to work at a variety of hosting and waiting jobs. At the place she met a variety of interesting people who ranged from extremely rich to those who were sinking in the abyss of poverty. During such encounters Jean Kronski encountered June one night when she visited the restaurant where June worked. Jean was looking for a job as she had arrived in town from West Coast.

At this point the eternal triangle of a different sort took place. June thought that Jean was extremely beautiful and attractive and later the two women became inseparable. June Masfield Smith has been mentioned in a variety of places and books by Henry Miller. She has been mentioned as Mona in Tropic of Cancer, Hildred in Crazy Cock, Mara in the Rosy Crucifixion and she is mysteriously mentioned on the cover of Tropic of Capricorn as to her is the book dedicated. Henry Miller and June Mansfield shared. She was the epitome of sacrifice and selflessness for him. The twist in the tale came when she met Jean Kronski which was a name given to her by June Masfield. The drama took a sharper turn when the threesome shifted to an apartment at Brooklyn's Henry Street. Henry Miller started having insecurity about the love of June as he did suspect that Jean was indeed a lesbian. He used to wonder if the same was the case with June and this questions seemed to have a negative effect on his manhood—his beloved being attracted or won over by another woman. The sense of inappropriateness seemed to have filled him and he debated that in his mind this question. If that was not enough torture for Henry Miller, June started questioning Henry Miller about his sexual orientation which made him furious. The days were full of torture for Henry Miller until one day when he returned to the apartment in April 1927 to find it empty and with a note that the two women had sailed for Paris.

Henry Miller was desperate and, in his desperation, he did what he was best at—rattling the typewriter. He made notes in the form of a fictional account of the torture of a man by two women. To his amazement, two months later his wife June returned without her lover. It was a kind of atonement for June when she confessed to Henry Miller that she was ready to make even the extreme sacrifices to make Henry Miller a writer—a successful one so that he could immortalize her as a muse. The rest of story is well known that Henry Miller left for Paris and then composed his 'Tropic' books and what followed later. Before leaving for Paris, Henry Miller had left a copy of Crazy Cock with June to get it published. The earlier title he

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had given it was Lovely Lesbians. It is a known fact that the book was published only posthumously due to the efforts of Annette Baxtor, a scholar who did his doctoral dissertation on Henry Miller.

### **The Plot and Action**

The novel which is written in the third person narrative begins in a remote and desolate corner of America with the description of a woman. The woman is described in detail like the description in any novels or short story by Leo Tolstoy. This is a further refutation to the claim of Kate Millet's argument in Sexual Politics that women in Henry Miller's novels have no personality but are simple genitalia. The description reads, "Standing on the platform in her cowhide boots, a thick, brass-studded belt about her waist, she puffs nervously at a cigarette. The long black hair falls like a weight to her shoulders. The whistle blows, the wheels commence their journey." (Crazy Cock 3) The description is very long and it moves into the description of the landscapes and the surroundings. In almost poetic prose Henry Miller writes:

*Below her a grey waste choked with dust and sagebrush. Vast, cast, a limitless expanse without a human being in sight. An El Dorado with less than one inhabitant to the square mile. From the snow capped mountains that shoulder the sky strong winds blow down. With twilight the thermometer drops like an anchor. Here and there buttes and mesas dotted with creosote bushes. Tranquil the earth beneath the moaning wind. (Crazy Cock 3)*

The description of the surrounding areas is poetry in prose, rich description that does not tend to be as overbearing as the words of Thomas Hardy. Henry Miller also describes the state of mind June is passing through. It was at that instant that she remembers the entry of the third person in her life whom Miller tends to call the 'Krupanowa woman.' After the entry of 'Krupanowa

woman' in the life of June who takes up the name Hildred. Earlier Vanya was a compassionate and a self-effacing person who chose to call herself Miriam. This shows the kind of transition that took place in the persona of June after the entry of her lesbian lover Jean. A vivid imagery to describe the transformation which can be appreciated by a reader and is nothing but poetic is as follows:

*The Krupanowa woman was a sculptress. That she possessed other accomplishments—accomplishments less easily categorized—was also*

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*conceded....whereas before she had existed in a nebulous state, the tail of comet, as it were, now she became a sun whose inner chromosphere blazed with undying energy....She pursued the rhythms and forms that consumed her vision....odalisques bandaged like mummies and apostles whom not even the Christ had seen exposed their wounds....Inspired by Kali and Tlaloo, she invented goddesses from whose grinning skulls reptiles issued, their topaz eyes raised to heaven, their lips swollen with curses. (Crazy Cock 4,5)*

The above passage is a spit in the face of the writers and critics who feel that the women in the books of Henry Miller have no personality. The whole passage describes the transformation of June from a follower, a part of a man to an independent woman. June's encounter with Jean resulted in a kind of transformation that he has described so vividly drawing cosmic and mythological imagery from the Hindu as well as the Aztec civilization. June has been compared to a small planetary body who after colliding with Jean or the Krupanowa woman adopted an altogether new path just as a small planetary body would do after it has collided with a star. The tail of the comet refers to the personality of June as she was only a follower of Henry Miller. An interaction with the Krupanowa woman made her realize her individuality. The individuality that Vanya or June achieves has been compared to her becoming a planetary body like the sun that had energy which was undying meaning thereby an identity of her own. All the words like slime, gore and wounds do refer to the pain the woman might have suffered and hidden in herself before she would have achieved her individuality. By writing these lines the author is not attempting to be a feminist, nor is he

claiming that he understands a woman. He is simply putting to paper what in his opinion and viewpoint the lady would have felt at that time when the transformation in her personality was taking place.

He also compares her to the Goddess Kali, the Goddess of death in the Hindu mythology who brings destruction unto demons and Tlaloo an important deity in Aztec religion, a god of rain, fertility, and water. He was a beneficent god who gave life and sustenance, but he was also feared for his ability to send hail, thunder and lightning, and for being the lord of the powerful element of water. Thus by drawing two parallel images which are diametrically opposite to each other, Henry Miller is also using the device of metaphysical conceit, something that had been perfected by John Donne.

Ultimately the realization dawns upon Vanya (who represents June) and the author has described it in a magnificent manner when he writes:

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*Her pulse quickened as the tumultuous procession of thoughts drove the bright warm blood full-crested through her veins. She looked at the book in her lap and saw again these words:*

*“Taken as I am and as I shall always be, I feel that I am force both of creation and of dissolution, that I am a real value, and have a right, a place a mission among men.”*

*Suddenly, without let or warning, a dynamo broke loose inside her. Every particle of her molten being was convulsed with shuddering ruptures. ....She felt that in everything sublime or ignoble, there was hidden a turbulent, a vital force, a significance and beauty of which art, however glorious, was but a pale reflection.” (Crazy Cock 5, 6)*

Thus the transformation of Vanya or June is complete. Then the description of the male character Tony Bring takes place, his state of mind and what he feels about different sorts of things. The main emotion that he feels is that of oppression and a sort of loneliness. This is quite similar to the feelings of Henry Miller who used to debate in his mind if June was also a lesbian. He refers

to this ‘infernal waiting’ that used to ‘rasp his mind.’ Time and again one sees the futile attempt of Tony to reassure himself that everything was going to be alright but all in vain. He keeps cursing the other woman and calls her a whore and wishes that she eats her flesh and becomes spiritually dead. The politics to gain affection continues when he tries to focus all the attention on Vanya and ignores Hildred politely. Angered with this, Hildred tries to poison the relationship between the two. She says what exactly Kate Millet says about Henry Miller in Sexual Politics. Hildred tries to convince Vanya that ‘he’ was a bad person, a villain who only wanted women to possess the organs for his gratification.

It did not matter to him if the women were of any colour, diseased, intelligent or not. She even asks her as to how she could tolerate ‘him.’ Vanya tells Hildred her own problems of being broke and having no one to depend upon. Due to repeated pestering by Hildred Vanya is forced to say something without thinking. She proposes that the two of them should go to Paris. Hildred accepts that and implores upon Vanya the idea that she should let Hildred help her.

While Tony Bring is lost in his thoughts in a Caravan, Hildred enters with ‘a tall silent creature.’ Hildred now plays the game and ignores Tony and he wonders why she was doing

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it. Meanwhile, he tends to admire Hildred's beauty. Then a quarrel ensues between Hildred and Tony over the issue of attention. Attention being just an excuse, the real reason was that they both were fighting for the affection of one common individual and that was Vanya. The ambivalent feelings of Tony for Hildred have been described in the next few pages.

He proposes to take her to a restaurant the next day to which she replies that she has an appointment. It meant that Hildred was carrying on with her prostitution business to support the three of them. The next night Hildred does find time for Tony and while they are making love, Vanya enters the room. Hildred stops immediately and the two ladies make love to each other. They ignore Tony completely which is a source of humiliation for him. It is mentioned, "The Princess had arrived. Time to sing another tune." (Crazy Cock, 123)

Tony is also able to observe the difference in treatment that is meted out to Vanya. He feels that whenever he is patted by Hildred, she is very violent but when the same thing is done with Vanya, Hildred is more soft and tender as if Vanya were a princess.

Another interesting incident takes place in a restaurant when Hildred gets irritated with Tony present at the place. She feels that Tony is spying on her. At this point of time Vanya supports Tony and tells Hildred that he simply wants to be with her and that Hildred should go with him. Over the dinner Tony and Hildred discuss the relationship of the three of them. Tony expresses his apprehensions about their relationship going sour but Hildred informs him that he need not worry as her relationship with Vanya was 'sacred.' The word sacred has a strange impact on him and the two of them have a long discussion about it. In his mind, however, Tony struggles between his desire to believe what Hildred tells him and what his mind concludes. It is at this point of time that Hildred tells him that she loves them both and that her love for Tony is different from the kind of love she has for Vanya. At this juncture in the book the question of sexuality and same sex love has been addressed. One can also see the type of mindset that existed between people at that point of time:

*. . . men were different. It was impossible to compare the affection between two men. With women it was something normal, spontaneous, and in full accord to their instincts. But when a man avowed his love saying that there had been cases, to be sure, where men loved each other in a purely Platonic way. Platonic! It was one of those words....frequently during their nightly discussions. (Crazy Cock 94)*

The above passage reveals the bent of mind of the people during the period when the book was written. It reveals that two women loving each other was not considered bad. Women did

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love each other and in many sorts of ways expressed that love physically as well. In many societies where polygamy was practised and kings had harems it was natural for women to love each other. They expressed their affection in the form of physical intimacy by massaging each other, combing and braiding each other's hair and dressing each other up.

Homosexuality does exist in the males as well from times immemorial but it is something that the writer does not focus upon despite the recent case of Oscar Wilde being almost put to death for it. The reason for Henry Miller to write something like that means that either he was expressing the views of June in this regard or perhaps at the time when Crazy Cock was being written he himself was not comfortable with the idea of same sex male relationship.

Christmas approaches and the author describes the ebullience in the atmosphere. The three of them give each other presents and go to Tony's parents' house where Vanya starts talking continuously until Tony's mother asks him what he was doing for a living. He replies that he had a book to finish and his mother feels that most of the writers are starving, so he must look for a job. Tony feels that old ladies have the habit of looking only at the gloomy side of things. Even his father chides him for being a spendthrift and Tony feels that it was going to be another gloomy Christmas for him.

The spirit of gloominess looms large in the book after that. The author talks about literature and the whole atmosphere of America filled with gloom. The author describes the atmosphere and literature as well as the feelings people had about society at that time:

*One could read so much of Spangler and Proust and then there was an end to it. Joyce too gave one indigestion. In France there were clever fellows*

*....new book every six months—with illustrations too. No limits to their fecundity. But in America, somehow a cocaine atmosphere wouldn't produce literature. America was producing gunmen and beer barons. Literature was being left to women. Everything was left to women, except womanhood. (Crazy Cock 156, 157)*

The author thus laments the lack of the Americans to produce good literature at that time. He brings to the notice of the readers that at that time the people in France were able to produce good literature by use of drugs (needle). His only regret is that in America people were more occupied with war and accumulating wealth. The author's views about women writers turning lesbians and writing also tells us about the state of affairs during the time. Of course, the feminists will criticize him for that.

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The New Year eve is described in which everybody does their own things including Dredge who has a three-point agenda that includes understanding the meaning of the symbolist movement. He tells the readers about the major problem that were faced by the people at that time and that was anaemia. The author also describes the disparity that existed between the rich and the poor during the times. The description is as follows:

*And then came the reports!....At the bottom of all their ills lay anaemia. Anaemia was a sort of white heartrot developed by city organisms, a disease that turned the blood to dishwater....Undernourished—.... If you had money and you could afford to worry about your health, they would scare you to death. A millionaire could be kept alive, even if his stomach were cut out....A poor man, if he had only cough, was allowed to die of neglect. (Crazy Cock 190, 191)*

The final twist in the tale comes when Tony has haemorrhoids and Vanya and Hildred get medicine for him and take care of him. During this time one day Tony is able to visualize his whole life in front of his eyes and then starts writing about it. The novel has an abrupt ending when Miller talks about Hildred being promiscuous and Tony not caring anything about it. It was perhaps one of those moments of despair when Miller wrote the book. It does not mention anything about the two lesbians abandoning Tony and running off to Paris.

Overall the novel is a piece of fiction that proves the credibility of Henry Miller as a novelist. It shows that the author can be objective in describing situations and feelings. Crazy Cock is one of the few novels that have been written by the author on the third person narrative in which the omniscient authorial narration has been used. The author never describes what happened to the trio after Tony had piles and was taken care of by the two women. He does not tell anything about the two lesbians running to Paris. The ending is somewhat unexpected and incomplete. The novel is a fine piece of work and Henry Miller has controlled his passions while putting the words on paper. The narration of events is chronological and characterization is also done in a way that E.M. Forster would choose to call “Round” as mentioned in Aspects of the Novel.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The complete textual analysis of Crazy Cock does not prove anywhere the allegations of Kate Millet that women are not persons but pieces of genitalia in Henry Miller. The novel is a conventional novel with a proper beginning, middle and an ending. The women are described

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in great details along with their feelings and ideas. It is important to note that not only are the feelings of the two women described in such detail, their ideas are also discussed by the writer. A male chauvinist would never ever talk about the ideas of women (unless the intention is to make fun of the ideas and subsequently the woman.)

Wallace Fowle considers Henry Miller a “Prophet or the visionary” (Fowle 186) not in a metaphysical sense but someone who did away with the concept of evil in American literature:

*Throughout the history of American literature, there has been an uninterrupted preoccupation with the theme of evil, treated from a special viewpoint of horror and awesomeness and fixation. Poe, Melville, Djuna Barnes, and Julien Green in his French novels, are united in their conception of evil as being a sense of dark foreboding and the plotting of malign spirits. I believe that the work of Henry Miller (and by "work" I mean his presence, his spirit, and the profoundest meaning of his books) has interrupted the traditional American treatment of evil. (Fowle 187)*

He gives the “reason for Miller's books not being published in America during the 40's and 50's” (Fowle 187) as “the obscenity of their language in some of the passages.” Fowle however, seems that this kind of crudity in language was “needed to redirect the American consciousness of evil.” (Fowle 187) He believes that the coarse language and other obscenities were “a form of medication and catharsis, an extroversion needed after all the books of puritanical foreboding.” (Fowle 187) Among other things that Fowle analyses, he finds Miller's “dissoluteness in language and his fixation on the physical possession of woman” as we “means of liberating himself from the Hamlet-soul which has dominated the American literary heroes during the long period” (Fowle 187). He believes that the puritanical establishment with its obsession with evil and sexual chastity could never let men be comfortable in the company of women until the arrival of Henry Miller on the scene. This is completely opposite to what Kate Millet opines. One of Henry Miller's fiercest critics Erica Jong discusses the hardships faced by him. She says that brining this kind of a revolution was not an easy task. Henry Miller had to suffer a lot throughout his life. She writes:

*As a paradigm of the plight of the creative artist in America, Miller's life is nothing short of terrifying. Always rejected by both the literary establishment and the literary antiestablishment, broke until he was a relatively elderly man, he had no choice but to live on the margins and like it. Had he been a chronic depressive, he probably would not have survived. But Henry's great good luck*

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*was his temperament-“always merry and bright,” as he said-and he went on writing for the sheer joy of it. So Henry “the failure” was in fact the greatest success.....spiritual success, Miller was a dazzling success. (Jong 155)*

Therefore, as it was stated at the outset that the true assessment of any writer or a book by the author cannot be done in isolation. For proving a theory or a point, making a scapegoat out of someone is not a very scholarly or even human thing to do.

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