

# THE FEMININE OBJECTIFICATION: A GYNEPHILIC DISCUSSION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO E. L. JAMES' *FIFTY SHADES OF GREY*

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## Abstract:

*This research investigates objectification of women defined As Nussbaum (1995), "it is a question of treating one thing as another: One is treating as an object, what is in fact a human being." Who is nor a thing neither object, let alone a sexual commodity. According to Simone de Beauvoir (1940), "Evidently to play at being a man will be for her a source of frustration; but to play at being a woman is also a delusion: to be a woman would mean to be the object, the Other - and the Other nevertheless remains subject in the midst of her resignation." Furthermore, As cited in (Evangelia Lina Papadaki) 2015, "When a person is treated as less than human, as merely an object for another's use, she becomes, according to Dworkin, less than human. In this way, her humanity is harmed by being diminished." This is further explained, as cited in (Evangelia Lina Papadaki) 2015, Similarly, Dworkin talks about men being the only "human center" of the world, surrounded by objects for use, including women. A man experiences his power, according to Dworkin, in using objects, both inanimate objects and "persons who are not adult men" (Dworkin 1989, 104). However, in *Fifty Shades of Grey*, this objectification appears intensely complicated for it is gynophilic in nature which this paper intends to explore.*

**Key Words:** Gynophilic, Objectification, Submissive, Dominant, Objectified, Objectifier, Sadism, Machoism

## INTRODUCTION:

Objectification according to my perception is a process through which the more powerful person makes/treats a weaker person, usually a woman or child, as an object or commodity who can become the *submissive* of the powerful ones to fulfill their desires. This term however is used on a broader scale in my thesis. This not only related to the objectification of the weaker people who in most of the cases is a woman, in relation of fulfilling the sexual desires of their dominant, but it also defines that women/girls/children are considered commodities that one can purchase like the things purchased from the bazar and then do with them whatever they would like to do. Use them as they feel appropriate to fit their purpose. It appears that the weaker beings of the society where the patriarchal customs are highly valued, sometimes have lesser value than a pet who might be a darling to one's eye. They are not considered living being and so their feelings and emotions, likes or dislikes, happiness or sadness does not matter at all. Objectification depersonalizes a persona and so that person loses their integrity and dignity. Women and men both can be objectified but the former's is rare however women are the ones most objectified, treated like commodities and men use them to gain pleasure. Sometimes this exceeds the limits and become forceful, hostile, machoistic and sadistic. Opinion of women does not matter and so their resistance. In many cases it occurs that women do not want to give up their individuality and their rights but unfortunately, they are not even considered human beings as well as treated like objects.

## LITERATURE REVIEW:

Papadaki (2015) speaks of Cahill who believes that in patriarchal societies women are identified with their bodies, their entire being with the body, which is less inherently human in comparison to personality and mind. Bartky opine, (2015), "in some papers I draw upon the resources of this

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tradition, using, e.g., the Sartrean notion of ‘the gaze’ to illuminate the nature of sexual objectification; the Marxist conception of alienation to describe, also to condemn, the process of feminine self-objectification; Foucault’s account of ‘disciplinary practices’ to understand certain crucial dimensions of the constitution of embodied femininity.” All the focus is placed on a woman’s body, in a way that her mind or personality are not adequately acknowledged. A woman’s person, then, is fragmented. The scholar (2015) believes that through this fragmentation a woman is objectified, since her body is separated from her person and is thought as representing the woman. Furthermore, the scholar further elaborates, women at times objectifies their own person by accepting towards themselves the opinion as well as the attitude of men. Their self-decorating makes them hugely obsessives that they turn into narcissists. Here comes self-objectification of women. If women are required to become fully a person, then the basic requirement is both men and women must work towards the subjectivity of women instead of objectifying them.

### Sexual Objectification in Novels

Using or instrumentalizing a human-being, in order to fulfill the sexual desires, signifies their sexual objectification. Denial of autonomy, denial of subjectivity, instrumentality are basic elements of Martha Nussbaum’s theory that become the agents in sexual objectification of a human being, though the combination of the elements (of the theory of objectification) is subject to change from situation to situation. For example, if a person pays for the sexual services of another person this involves “ownership” also as well as in some of the cases violability can also become part of the process of sexual objectification. Furthermore, I believe if physical changes are made in a physiology/sexual organ of a person, it is also sexual objectification of that human being.

Anastasia received a documented letter to have an abnormal contractual relationship with Christian Grey whom she dearly loved.

Furthermore, sexual objectification has more categories. For instance, Anastasia, in *Fifty Shades of Grey* also faced was a different type of the sexual objectification. UN (2014) informs that data which global review provides confirms that 35% women from all around the globe have suffered from physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or the sexual violence from the non-partner. (Weiss, 2011) explains, that the terms BDSM and SM refer to several different acts that include domination, bondage, pain, sensational play, submission, leather sex, power exchange, fetishes, and flogging. BDSM is a recent term coined on internet expresses three acronyms, that are B & D that refer to Bondage and Discipline, D & S that means Dominant and *Submissive* and lastly S and M that stands for Sadism and *Machoism*. This is important to note as Freud, S. (1977) explains that, “the most remarkable feature of this perversion is that its active and passive forms are habitually found to occur together in the same individual. A person who feels pleasure in producing pain in someone else physic in a sexual relationship is also capable of enjoying as pleasure any pain which he may himself derive from sexual relations. A sadist is always at the same time a masochist, although the active or the passive aspect of the perversion may be the more strongly developed in him and may represent his predominant sexual activity.”

Most of physical violence that occurred in the researched novels is closely related to the sexual violence. There is a huge role of pornography, which influenced this kind of objectification of women. (Kendrcik, & Kendrick 1996) the definition of pornography from the American Heritage Dictionary which explains that this terminology is referred to something graphic, written or some other means of communication that intent to ignite lascivious feelings and this word originated from Greek word *Pornographies* that refers to written documents about the prostitutes. The ancient origin of this word reveals the age of the practice of these activities that consists of thousands of years.

The definition of Pornography and BDSM are themselves enough to reveal their true nature and effect on human beings. BDSM is the worst activity in porn that paves path for the sexual objectification of women, which leads to self-objectification of women which is explained in the following words by



Trans, S. (2021) “the tendency to view one’s body as an object to be used by others and evaluating one’s value in terms of attractiveness to others”.

Cahill (2012) opine the women if presented as “sex-objects” is portrayed as having no complex personality that is recognizable as well as they are perceived as having extremely low or no ethical value. Thus, women who go out of their houses to observe their jobs and if they are sexually harassed at workplace the same mentality works behind this kind of objectification. According to Bareket, O., & Shnabel, N. (2020), “In sum, the sexual objectification of women implicitly reinforces the exiting gender hierarchy by supporting men’s dominance and encouraging beliefs and behaviors that put women in a subordinate place.” This is extreme subjugation and treating women as objects/commodities.

### Women’s Instrumental Role

Papadaki (2010) speaks of Mackinnon, Kant, and Dworkin are of the idea that in pornography women’s role is instrumental to satisfy the male interest. The content that readers witness in *Fifty Shades of Grey* all of it comes all from porn, even the terminologies are pornographic. The writer further explains that the consent in this kind of relationship is not true consent because the money matters and so consent may be ignored and thus the reality in this relation will be changed. This is exactly what happened to the fifteen (*master-sub*) relations Christian Grey had with his *Submissives*. He expected this to work in his relation with Anastasia as well. The scholar (2010) explains that Makonnin, Dworkin and Kant agree that consumers of pornography learn that women are things that can be used by man to satisfy their need. Cahill (2012) elucidates that porn places women with the things, commodities, material entities, that are used by human-beings. These women through the porn become the target of sexualization as well of sexual gaze, whose fundamental purpose is to provide pleasure to the hetero-sexual male viewers.

And thus, a man surrounds himself with living objects to fulfill his willful desires. I find such example/s in *Fifty Shades of Grey* and a careful observation makes it clear that Anastasia’s objectification is gynophilic in nature. Furthermore, the sexual objectification of certain character/s exhibits that when a person is standardized as being utilized for sexual purpose, this is where sexual objectification occurs. According to Cahill (2012) the only problem is not the wrong portrayal of western culture and also of women as object/things but the real problem is that women are projected as the beings to fulfill masculine desires and thus western culture fails to identify women’s ontological specificity. This is the point where a person loses their identity and their recognition solely become the physical characteristics of their body. Extracting all to one point that an individual loses the identity and is recognized solely by the physical characteristics of their body. The purpose of this recognition is to bring enjoyment to others, or/and to serve as a sexual object for one or more people and this sexual objectification can occur as a social paradigm among individuals.

Furthermore, a more detailed definition of the sexual objectification comes from Thurman’s discussion of Simon De Beauvoir’s concept of women’s *Othering*. Thurman (2010) writes about Simon De Beauvoir’s “*The Second Sex*” that, Simon enunciates that women are considered as the “*other*” (*en-soi*) in itself and males as (*pour-soi*) for itself. . . Beauvoir was of the opinion that, women are considered as object, which is made for criticism. Furthermore, in the treatise *The Second Sex*, Simon Beauvoir (1949) interprets that women have always been scoffed and mocked predominantly. She points out that, woman is an object; she is second sex, which enlists her as a strange creature, who possesses no gender. This really is a negative attitude towards women. This is very similar in all the books that men treat females as sexual objects. Cahill (2012) explicates that it is not accidental that in most of the cases women’s feminine bodies are referred to as sex objects.

*In Fifty Shades of Grey* from the very beginning Christian tries to get hold of Anastasia’s life and does not let her go since his eyes caught the sight of her. Anastasia fell in love with Christian, lives her worst nightmare with him and yet she was not allowed to touch him, for being *The Submissive* to *The Dominant*, as she signed a vile sexual contract with Christian. This was made necessary in the first



place, in order to keep a relationship with Christian. Unfortunately, Christian deliberately saw her as an object not as an intelligent human-being capable of love. This has wisely been explained as, “Women’s sexual objectification means that they are represented and judged by the sexual parts or functions of their body alone, while ignoring their personality and subjectivity” (Bartky, 1990; Langton, 2009 as cited in Bareket, O., & Shnabel, N. (2020). This objectification is done on the basis of gender.

After Anastasia’s defloration, on one occasion, Christian took Anastasia to his red room, bend her over on the top of a table, lashed her and she was bound by him to count the strokes. Anna was traumatized due to this painful humiliation, left weeping silently. Later, Anastasia explained Christian about their contrary mindset making different people and thus she was not someone he would desire. Christian replied otherwise, however, he used the word “thing”, ignoring that Annastasia proceeded to reveal her love for Christian, who refused to accept her love by saying that she was not allowed to love him. At this particular instance it is revealed that Anastasia for Christian was object/commodity to extract sexual pleasure but for Anastasia, Christian was her universe. As Cahill, A. (2012) “sexual objectification as a concept assumes that the primary wrong of several kinds of unethical sexual interactions is to be found in mistaking a person for a thing; derivatization, in contrast, recognizes that persons are in fact material entities.” This is the denial of their individuality as human-beings.

### **Biological Discrimination of Ancient Philosophers Against Women**

According to Butler (1999) internalization of socially intelligible acceptable gender produces a repetition of the stylization of the highly rigid, regular framed body, significant of muscularity. Thus, there remain the ones who are not capable of fitting into this social category as their sexual orientation, racial, ethnical background and gender are objected as being unintelligible, pathological, unrecognized, useless in the matrix of being normal, denying the social status.

In addition to this, Learner (1986) opines that in this regards Aristotle had the same theory that unlike ‘mutilated males’ that are soulless females, males are active. Biological inferiority makes women inferior in her capabilities such as capacity to reason and make decisions. Thus, man’s superiority makes him ruler of the inferior woman. Furthermore, the courageous man commands woman and so she obeys.

Apart from Aristotle there are other critics sharing the same point of view as Sultana (2010) criticizes Freud who opine that in reference to the modern psychology, women’s psychology is determined by a women’s biology and thus their skills and roles are defined. Freud believed that normal human is male for women’s anatomy is her destiny. In his view, normal human was male.” Millet (1970) speaks of Freud’s opinion of women as castrated male. Freud is notorious in passing bitter remarks on women and was unable to understand women’s psyche due to his own complex prejudice against them. He in one of his essays On Narcissism (1914) reveals that, only men are capable to object-love truly for women are narcissist and fell into self-love. Though he himself kept on pointing the unreliability of his enquires into the realm of the “dark continent” as he describes his three essays, and yet still he is encouraged to make such remarks on the nature of a woman in regards of her ability to love.

Sultana (2010) quotes few other historian philosophers who believed that woman due to her biology was different and thus inferior to men. She further explains that these theories were challenged and later proved wrong. The scholar opines, that such theories where male is considered superior have been challenged because there had not been any scientific or historical evidence for such an explanation of men being the superior beings over women. There are of-course differences between women and men on biological basis. Men are dominated due to the sexual hierarchy over women, but this does not become the base of men’s dominancy. When such theories are closely analyzed, it occurs that patriarchy is men-made and created through time as a historical process.



### RESEARCH GAP:

*Fifty Shades of Grey* have not been researched by the angle of objectification of women, more specifically in relation to Martha Nussbaum's Theory of Objectification. Furthermore, I couldn't find Literature Review on objectification on women, taking different societies or cultures in one research. I find this as the research gap.

### RESEARCH THEORY OF OBJECTIFICATION:

The philosopher Nussbaum identified seven features that are involved in the idea of treating a person as an object:

1. instrumentality: the treatment of a person as a tool for the objectifier's [sic] purposes.
2. denial of autonomy: the treatment of a person as lacking in autonomy and self-determination.
3. inertness: the treatment of a person as lacking in agency, and perhaps also in activity.
4. fungibility: the treatment of a person as interchangeable with other objects.
5. violability: the treatment of a person as lacking in boundary-integrity.
6. ownership: the treatment of a person as something that is owned by another (can be bought or sold).
7. Denial of subjectivity: the treatment of a person as something whose experiences and feelings (if any) need not be taken into account [sic]. she continues to say that it is the treatment of a something as a thing which is not a thing."

### Discussion (Data and Analysis)

In *Fifty Shades of Grey* by E. L. James, two very intense sexual objectifiers in the novel, Christian Grey the disciple of Mrs. Robinson (child molester) found indulged in hazardous BDSM activity of making people their slaves like subs to fulfill their vile, sexual desires through objectification. This novel depicts that the true essence of the divine relationship between a man a woman has been lost since long time. Male and female as the members of society as well as of household are not truly aware of their status in a relationship as both man and woman, irrespective of their gender seem to have forgotten the knowledge of making peace by performing their duties. Moreover, the age concerned concept, bond to/with respect is also lost and people are now ignorant of their duties and specific societal and familial roles, which vividly is depicted in the vile relationship between Christian Grey and Mrs. Robinson, who is friend to his foster mother Grace Grey. Christian's *sub-master* affair in his youth with the Mrs. Robinson and later his *Master-Sub* relationship in adulthood, with numerous women including Anastasia Steele, reveal the abnormal characteristics of this generation's twisted, sick personality, resulting from abandoning the old values. It is important to note that all the *Submissives* inclusive of Chrisitan Grey accepted their role willingly.

It appears that nobody cares about their duties as responsible member of the society. The atmosphere of the novel *Fifty Shades of Grey* had been truly chaotic, and almost alarming since from the beginning and it reflect the current hazardous nature of the society.

### Themes

Following are the themes composed of the elements by Nussbaum's theory depicting sexual objectification occurs in the novel *Fifty Shades of Grey*.

#### 1. Denial of Subjectivity, Denial of Autonomy, Violability, Instrumentality, Ownership

Several incidents occurred involving the above-mentioned elements of the theory for the objectification of the character/s.



- **Chrisitan’s Treatment of Women as Commodity**

Christian also used women for his objectifying purpose.

“The Dominant accepts the *Submissive* as his, to own, control, dominate and discipline during the Term. . . The Dominant shall provide the *Submissive* with all necessary training and guidance in how to properly serve the Dominant. . . The Dominant may discipline the *Submissive* as necessary to ensure the *Submissive* fully appreciates her role of subservience to the Dominant and to discourage unacceptable conduct. The Dominant may flog, spank, whip or corporally punish the *Submissive* as he sees fit, for purposes of discipline, for his own personal enjoyment, or for any other reason, which he is not obliged to provide.” (p.168)

These lines depict the intense sexual objectification of women treated as a commodity by Christian.

- **Women; Slaves**

“The Dominant may restrain, handcuff, or bind the *Submissive* at any time during the Allotted Times or any agreed additional times for any reason . . . *Submissive*.” (p.169)

Restraining and cuffing a partner is like keeping a pet for owner’s/master’s company to gain personal pleasure.

“The *Submissive* accepts the Dominant as her master, with the understanding that she is now the property of the Dominant, . . . any additional agreed allotted times.” (p.169)

Here it is evident that Christian Grey drags his *subs* down to the level of a slave. A master makes a huma-being his property as the dominant, who of-course is Christian Grey in this case, but with Mrs. Robinson, it was Christian who served her vile sexual desires as her *submissive* owned by her.

Knowing the law, Chrisitan formulated a contract and documented it to save his neck if a fatal incident occurs. Furthermore, Christian Grey did not want to lose control of the *master-sub* realm of his to serve his complexes.

- **Punishment**

“Clothes: During the term, the *Submissive* will wear clothing only approved by the Dominant. The Dominant will provide a clothing budget for the *Submissive*, which the *Submissive* shall utilize.” (p.172)

These lines show Christian’s strong hold on his *subs*. The clothing may satisfy the aesthetic sense but when he provides for the *submissives*, he dominates them in their social lives too. This is contrarily similar to a marriage contract, where a man provides for his wife without a hideous contract. These conditions in this contract make the whole situation uglier, abhorrible, erotic and insane for turning an honorable religious tradition into an ill *master-sub* contract.

“Failure to comply with any of the above will result in immediate punishment, the nature of which shall be determined by the Dominant.” (p.173)

Punishment can be severe. This sounded like reading some ancient medieval rules written for the slaves. It is considerably abnormal, especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century America, where women have equal rights to men.

- **Christian; The Rule Maker, Ruler**

Christian wants to rule over Anastasia’s life.

“he’s too controlling and cold with his employees.” (p.81)

Anastasia refused Christian’s offer to work as an intern in one of his companies for she found him extremely controlling and terribly cold to his employees. Further, Christian Grey wanted to control Anastasia’s career which was also refused by her for she is woman of control. She makes her own decisions, execute them and do not like to be a *Submissive*.



Furthermore, on one occasion he called Anastasia his achievement.

“so many accomplishments, Mr. Grey.” “and the Greatest one is you, Miss Steele” (p.439)

Being a challenge, Anastasia was an accomplishment for Christian but not a reward. Human beings are not called achievements. At this point I learn that objectification is in the roots of this relationship.

“No Anastasia we are going to indulge in my second favorite pastime.’. . . including in you, Miss Steele. That is got to be top of my list.” (p. 449)

Again, the objectification grew deeper as it is revealed that Anastasia is Christian pastime. A pastime; that could be an object, commodity, or game. A person whom we care, we like to share our time with, cherish them, not pastime with them. We pastime with toys, objects and playing stuff.

- **Anastasia Desired from Christian**

There had been many deficiencies in Anastasia’s life. She thought that Christian is the “one” who could fill the vacuum in her life and help Anastasia to overcome her deficiencies as follows,

- i. Anastasia desired for love
  - ii. Anastasia desires for Christian to be hers
  - iii. Anastasia desired Christian to make Anastasia forever his, for Anastasia did not want to be left alone all black and blue, after a certain period, perhaps three months.
  - iv. Anastasia desired from him, natural relationship, natural intimacy in bed and desire to lead the relationship towards an acceptable future.
  - v. Anastasia desired for more than Christian could give. More than what Christian documented. More than what Christian would or could have ever given to any woman in his life.
  - vi. Anastasia desired reciprocal romantic feelings.
  - vii. Anastasia desired to know his truth about his past and its impact on him. For this Anastasia could go as far to negotiate as the deal settles in her punishment.
  - viii. Anastasia negotiates in her mind to give Christian what he wants from her and she desires from him to give her what she needs from him, love.
- In the process she started to losing her self-worth.

After being refused, Anastasia demands to leave and gets away from him, giving every mundane thing back to Christian, telling him that she did not want to keep anything which could remind her of him. Though when Anastasia reached home (where she was staying with Kate). Anastasia grabbed the Charlie Tango and instead of throwing it away, pulled it to her heart. Devastated, Anastasia wept heavily as once Christian promised Anastasia that he will not leave her all black and blue. Christian was incapable of being loved or love a woman in a true sense. Anastasia once said, “boys and their toys.”

Indeed, it was proven true as Christian treated Anastasia as a toy, like the rest of the other fifteen *subs*, though Christian had abnormally physical/sexual relations with Anastasia outside the *dom-sub* (*dominant-submissive*) contract. This man was too experienced for the docile Anastasia and perhaps Jose or Clayton would have been the better choice for Anastasia instead of Christian.

With a calmer heart, she could find a better person. Anastasia’s mom also advised her not to hurry in finalized things with Christian for Annastasia didn’t have much experience. Anastasia’s mother believed Anastasia deserved better. Anastasia’s mother’s experience in men was alarming her but Anastasia didn’t pay any heed.

## **2. Instrumentality, Denial of Subjectivity, Denial of Autonomy, Inertness, Violability:**

Following incidents fall under this theme.

- **Christian Grey and his Gynephilic Objectification of Women**

Christian uses his *subs* as playful toys/objects for pleasure.



Objectification is depicted from each condition of the Christian's contract and its conditions, and this is not as simple as it seems.

"Subject to that provision and to clauses 2-5 above the *Submissive* is to serve and obey the Dominant in all things. . . without query or hesitation offer the Dominant such pleasure as he may require and she shall accept without query or hesitation his training, guidance and discipline in whatever form it may take." (p.166)

These passages commence to explain the *master-sub* relationship that begins as a business deal, crosses all the ethical limits, and converts any woman into an object. This is a complicated situation here.

- **Anastasia's Experience of Objectification, Grows Dense**

Anastasia received a second contract demonstrating the nature of their relationship. She was expected to reflect upon it and sign it. This document made *Dominant* and *Sub* relationship uglier.

- **Anastasia's Chastity Was Looked Down Upon**

Anastasia felt embarrassed and ashamed for keeping her virginity intact till she met the right person, the love of her life. This is very ironic as Anastasia felt discreditable about her chastity and piety due to Christian's response as she faced Christian's fury over her intact virginity which later Christian revealed was not meant for Anastasia but for himself. He revealed that if he knew about it earlier, he would save Anastasia from having that abnormal contract. This seems very unlikely because Christian was after Anastasia and wanted to make her his *sub* at any cost.

- **No Power Over Self**

She was always tracked by Mr. Grey and so she is removed from her power over herself. Finally, she was left no power over herself.

- **Experiences of Anastasia (Feminine to Object)**

Several encounters between Christian and Anastasia, schemed by Christian Grey occurred, who always pretended that they met by chance. Following is the trail of Anastasia's experience of becoming *The Other*, becoming an object. This objectification was thrust upon Anastasia in one burst.

- **Christian's Master Plan**

After their first meeting Christian made his mind to make Anastasia his *sub*. Thus, Christian visited Anastasia at her workplace, Claton's. There Christian pretended to buy some accessories and Anastasia as salesgirl assisted him. These accessories were symbolic for he later used them in Anastasia's objectification in red room.

- **The Second Move**

Second time Anastasia felt sick in the party, being drunk and unaware of her actions called Christian who immediately came for her help. Later took Anastasia to his apartment and slept beside her in the same bed. He did not take Anastasia to her place where she resided with Kate though the best option was the hospital as an appropriate and descent place to take an unconscious woman.

- **Narrowing the Grip**

Christian forbade Anastasia to tell anything to anyone about his proposal for an abnormal contract. And Anastasia planned to sign it. This was Christian's fatal move to push Anastasia towards her objectification. However, He keeps his door open to decline any demand form his *Sub* by only reminding her that it was not Christian who signed the document but the *sub* herself did it. By all the means it was only Christian who had the profit benefit out of their relationship.



- **Humiliation in the Form of Contract**

Anastasia was given a wicked document to ponder over, which, if signed would convert Anastasia into a sex slave to satisfy all normal or abnormal desire of her master. This document which led 15 other women to walk over the same path of objectification, now comes to Anastasia. This is a contract to transform Anastasia into an object (like other women) which is an undignified, unlawful, unethical conduct and an open insult to women.

- **Ill-Natured Relationship**

In the following incident Anastasia here proves that first sight of love is the last of wisdom and thus she accepted being foolish only because she fell in love with Christian.

“. . . and the monster who possess whips and chains in a special room.” (p.102)

This is a fraction of continues thought process Anastasia’s head while roaming around in the Christian’s apartment alongside him. At this moment Anastasia’s mind was lingering over Christian’s suggestion of moving in with him but only on weekends.

“And if I don’t want to do this?” (p.103)

“That’s fine,” (p.103) he says carefully.

“But we won’t have any sort of relationship?” I ask. (p.103)

Anastasia needs to be with him at all cost in her life. she wants a real relationship, instead becoming his *sub*, a playful object or a commodity.

“No.” (p.103)

Christian disapproves Anastasia’s desire as the control freak wants to fulfill his will.

“Why?” (p.103)

“This is the only sort of relationship I’m interested in.” (p.103)

“Why?” (p.103)

He shrugs. “It’s the way I am.” (p.103)

Christian shows no interest in any other category of relationship. He only wants Anastasia to accept the *master-sub* relationship between them.

“The Submissive will obey any instructions given by the Dominant immediately without hesitation or reservation and in an expeditious manner. The Submissive will agree to any sexual activity deemed fit and pleasurable by the Dominant excepting those activities which are outlined in hard limits (Appendix 2). She will do so eagerly and without hesitation.” (p.105)

These lines clearly define the ill nature of the relationship of Christian’s interest. There is not a normal relationship rather making a woman a commodity against her will. The woman has to shed all her rights as human-being to become an object to be used for the playtime of the master.

“He’s complicated . . . he wants to make me his sex slave.” (p.159)

In this relationship Christian requires Anastasia to fulfill all his sexual ill-natured and abnormal desires, after selling herself at the level of slave by her own will.

When Kate enquired Anastasia about the future of the relationship Anastasia has with Christian, Anastasia was unable to provide a fair answer for she was silenced by Christian Grey. Anastasia gave a political statement that Christian is complicated but at the same time she knew that Christian could exercise his will on her and also their contract could end any time he wanted. Anastasia had not yet signed the contract and she knew that ball will remain only for a while in her court, as after signing the contract, it was Christian who will have all the power. Anastasia had full awareness of pros and



cons and still she deliberately decided to ignore the facts and thus Cristian is not fully blamed for he did not compel Anastasia to accept his offer on gun point.

- **Sodomy, Abnormality, Other Than Humanity**

“15.17 The Submissive will ensure that she procures oral contraception and ensure that she takes it as and when prescribed to prevent any pregnancy.” (p.170)

Unlike a matrimonial contract which result in conceiving the fruit of the marriage, in this relation contraception is made an essential and pleasure (lust) becomes the only priority.

“15.20 The Submissive shall submit to any sexual activity demanded by the Dominant and shall do without hesitation or argument.” (p.170)

These sexual activities as documented in the contract had no limit and they may result in some damage to the *submissive*. Christian Grey also spoke of a woman who got injured during an abnormal act of making pleasure.

The following lines reveal the nature of the sexual activities the master like to gain his sick pleasure from.

“The Submissive shall accept whippings, floggings, spankings, caning, paddling or any other discipline the Dominant should decide to administer, without hesitation, enquiry or complaint.” (p.170)

Dominant includes all these clauses in order to fulfill two major purposes which are punishment and pleasure both that seems very abnormal that in relationship the same things serve as punishment and pleasure unlike a normal relation. Unfortunately, this is an abnormal master-slave relation and Christian Grey, being the master chooses to have women as his *subs*.

### 3. Denial of Autonomy, Denial of Subjectivity, Violability

This combination has the following incidents.

- **Negating a Capitalist**

Anastasia defied Christian’s luring and temptations based on riches.

Since the dawn of human civilization, the most popular trick has been to lure women by showing off wealth.

“We’ll go by the helicopter to Seattle? [*sic*]. . . he grins wickedly, “because I can. (p.75)”

Snobbish Christian confides his luxurious life style to draw the attention and gain the favor of frivolous girls. Wealth and luxuries can be weakness of many women. Thus, Christian clutched fifteen *subs* one after another in his paws, who fell for luxuries that strengthened Christian’s habits. His success in this practice reinforced his capitalistic belief of being able to buy anything, even the women and thus these women became objects. While Anastasia failed Christian in all his Capitalistic strategies by just not being a gold digger.

- **Anastasia Gets Spanks**

On the other hand, in *Fifty Shades of Grey* Christian also mistreats Anastasia. He violates her autonomy and subjectivity. Also, he owns her and uses her for his own vile purposes neglecting that Anastasia is not a punching bag who would be spanked over trivial matters. Christian Grey’s treatment technically proves that he treats Anastasia as something, he owns.

- **Christian Grey; Control Freak**

Christian believed to have all rights to objectify Anastasia and he never hesitated to violate hers. Anastasia is used as an instrument for the objectifier’s purposes who unfortunately was the love of her life.

“He takes my hand to the dance floor . . . at his feet”. (p.63)



Christian Grey has personality disorder who likes to take control over situation, things and people alike to which Anastasia refers as control freak more than once in different state of affairs in the novel. The lines quoted above narrate the incident when Anastasia for not being a habitual drinker was sickly exhausted and vomited due to unusual excessive consumption of alcohol. Christian against her will, still took her to the dance floor. Additionally, Anastasia was reluctant for she did not know dancing, but still Christian forced her on dance floor which resulted in her falling unconscious on the floor. Her then took her to his apartment.

“She knew you are here and still alive. I texted Elliot,” (p.71)

Taking control of everything and everyone is the nature of Christian Grey. The subject in this line is of two foster brothers Christian and Elliot who are having a digital communication about the wellbeing of two best friends, roommates, Anastasia and Kate. Christian does not care about other people’s feelings and concern and looks forward only to what he wants.

Christian told Anastasia that he loved to control everything and everyone because it works as a therapy for him; Still Annastasia asked him,

““Why do you want to control me?”” (p.437)

For Christian it is a therapy to satisfy his ego which means that he is either psychopath or sociopath. Narcist he is for sure. The individuality of the controlled person is challenged here, and Anastasia is in the process of objectification.

- **For Anastasia; Obey is the Must**

Christian made it clear from the beginning that there would be only the master-sub relationship between them.

“Obedience: The Submissive will obey any instructions given by the Dominant immediately without hesitation or reservation and in an expeditious manner. The Submissive will agree to any sexual activity deemed fit . . . She will do so eagerly and without hesitation.” (p.172)

Anastasia Steele will have no power over herself, if she signed the contract as there was nothing in the contract which refer to her as a human being with her own feelings.

Well, Anastasia like other *subs*, is asked to obey the dominant (Christian) in a way that reflect marriage proposal’s rules, as I have already discussed. Unlike Christian’s contract, there could be certain things that women in West could also face in their marriages but still they have more liberty to say “no” or walk out of marriage.

- **Old Friend; Child Molester**

Christian once again met Mrs. Robinson, behind Annastasia’s back, whom Anastasia referred as, “The Child Molester”. He though made arrangements that no passenger should sit next to Anastasia on the plane when she left for Georgia to meet her mother but during this time, Christian met the woman, Anastasia detested the most. The dominant in her sexual relationship with Christian in their past. This woman severely damaged Christian who blindfolded refers her as his savior, instead as “some kind of pedophile.” (p.423)

Their meeting angered Anastasia.

While on the other hand The whole time, he spent in Georgia, Christian kept reminding Anastasia that he traveled only to see her, he did but he met the child molester also.

#### **4. Violability, Instrumentality, Denial of Subjectivity**

The following incidents show the involvement of these three elements of the Objectification theory by Nussbaum in the process of Annastasia’s objectification.



- **Christian; a Denier**

From Christian's character it is evident that he is a selfish person. Anastasia's health is not Christian's Priority but he only wants to enjoy her, neglecting her condition, emotions or feelings. Following lines express the notion when on one occasion Anastasia consumed alcohol in excess.

“well, if you were mine . . . I hate to think what could have happened to you.” (p.67)

Christian is concerned about Anastasia who in a celebration got heavily drunk with her friends in the bar and called Christian. Christian rushed to rescue her but there forced Anastasia to dance who vomited several times and was not feeling well. This seems carelessness rooted from the selfishness rather than concern. Christian Grey later brought her to his apartment where he watched her sleeping the whole night which it extremely creepy. Christian thought it was his concern in his very own twisted style but, he being narcissist was denying his feelings and suppressing his growing love for Anastasia. In the beginning Anastasia was like an object, a commodity whose purpose was to sooth his sexual conduct, even if it was as trivial as to dance with her. Later he took care of unconscious Anastasia to sooth her which appears not more than control over her.

- **Anastasia's Subjectivity is Violated**

Christian even punished (sexual assault) Anastasia at his parents' home for Anastasia's planning to visiting her mother for a while in Georgia. During the family dinner she expressed her desire to meet her mother residing in another state, and instantly she sensed that Christian's fury for planning this without his consent. On another occasion he warns Anastasia in the following words,

“and you are hiding something, Anastasia. I may have to torture it out of you.” (p.494)

And Christine choice of torture is indecent that sexually objectifies the victim.

## 5. Inertness, Denial of Autonomy

These incidents show two of the elements of objectification in the occurrence of the following incident.

- **Anastasia is Devoid of Making Decisions for Herself**

Anastasia's autonomy is denied and also her agency. She had an urge to attended Jose's exhibition (her friend). Anastasia found herself bound to ask for Christian's permission as she knew her decisions were no longer hers to make for, she heavily suffered the consequences of her planning to visited her mother in Georgia. Anastasia felt relieved when consented and Christian noticed it which also satisfied him.

## 6. Denial of Subjectivity, Violability, Fungibility, Ownership

This incident shows the involvement of these above elements of the Theory of Objectification.

- **Possibility of Loaning the *Sub***

Dominant shall not loan his Submissive to another Dominant.” (p.169)

Anastasia was shocked as she read this rule in the contract. She believed that Christian would not lend her to anyone for sexual objectification, but still she pondered that why Christian included this point for it seemed extremely hideous among the other vile rules on the list. This point is enough to prove that Christian perceives his *submissive* only as objects though he did not show any intention of exchanging or lending them to any other man, but unfortunately this was still a possibility in his opinion.

Capitalism influences to convince Christian Grey that he could buy, give, or exchange whatever he likes. Christian thought of buying, selling, and exchanging the free women of his country, that clearly is the *othering* of women and thus the objectification of women takes place.



On the other hand, I did not find the elements of ownership and fungibility together in *Fifty Shades of Grey*.

#### **8. Denial of Subjectivity, Instrumentality**

This combination is found in the following incident.

- **Anastasia's Age and Her Passion for Love**

Anastasia's youthful ripe age and blooming personae appealed gynophilic Christian that he left no stone unturned to get her. Anastasia's ignorance to the activities that involved in the master- sub relationship, was also in Christian's favor. Anastasia was only twenty-one when she graduated, and for her this was perhaps the perfect time to meet the man of her dreams.

Anastasia's love for Christian was beyond imagination.

She thinks, "I don't want to disappoint him." (p.251).

Christian realized the depth of Anastasia's feelings and used her emotional condition in his hideous *master-sub* relationship.

Christian thinks, "*I want you to want to please me [sic].*" (p.251)

#### **8. Denial of Subjectivity, Denial of Autonomy, Instrumentality, Ownership, Fungibility**

Following incidents have the combination of the elements of Objectification mentioned above.

- **Harassment at workplace**

In *fifty Shades of Grey* Christian Grey started planning to make Anastasia his *Sub*, the moment he met her in his office. Later, on one occasion he revealed it to Anastasia, "I've wanted to spank you since you asked me if I was gay." (p.287)

This happened during the very first day they met during the interview at his office.

#### **9. Inertness, Denial of Autonomy**

These two elements are denied in the incident.

- **The Dilemma Between Anastasia and Christian**

Anastasia feels happiness around Christian, but most of the time his conduct puts her at unease which remains a constant issue between the two as they both ignored the need of altering the nature of their relationship. Christian is a part of Anastasia's life but tries to become her life by controlling every bit of it.

"will he ever give a break? . . . he is suffocating me (p.304)".

To control Anastasia's life, he even gave Anastasia the gadgets to constantly track her whereabouts.

#### **10. Violability, Denial of Subjectivity, Denial of Autonomy, Instrumentality**

- **Anastasia's Process of Objectification; Twists and Turns**

Anastasia was spanked and physically tortured by Christian on trivial things such as meeting with friends, (with Jose at the bar). Or rolling her eyes on Christian Grey, etc. Anastasia further speaks of herself as a toy in the following words. Still, she decided get along and this was the beginning of her self-objectification.

"He's just looking for a new toy - a convenient new toy that he can bed and do unspeakable things to." (p.201)

This is where Anastasia started thinking of herself as the toy and continued to be objectified willingly.



- **Anastasia Becomes a Situation**

She for the first time was startled when Christian called her “situation”. This might be his register, but it was a very unpleasant remark which Anastasia could not accept.

“*I am a situation.*” (p.110).

Later her *situation* was fixed by Christian, as she loses her virginity to a profound scoundrel Christian.

### 11. Instrumentality, Denial of Subjectivity, Denial of Autonomy, Inertness, Violability

- **Violation of Rules**

Christian Grey violated the rules of his contract and settled in making an extremely intimate relationship with Anastasia Steele. Used Anastasia to gain physical pleasures but also forbade her to love him.

### 12. Inertness, Denial of Autonomy

Christian Grey hides all his matters from Anastasia but always tries to get more information out of her by any means possible. It seems Christian always has the thought that Anastasia could hide things and matters from him. Or perhaps she was able to hide herself, away from him. This characteristic of Christian’s personality deepens the imbalance of their relationship. He does not give her what she desires; his love, instead Christian tries to soothe Anastasia with gadgets, accessories, and luxuries. However, the best toy for her to play with amongst all is “” more.” Christian is selfish for what Anastasia desires as “more,” is “love”, he doesn’t want to give it to her or to any other woman because he is never serious in his relationships, yet he likes to enjoy “more”. Christian is a man who only uses women and changes them as his clothes. Christian tells Anastasia that he wants her to follow the rules every single moment, even outside his playroom, which he refers to as the red room where he fulfills his sexual desires with his subs. Anastasia gives Christian what he wants only in expectation to get in return the thing she desires from him. Anastasia is mistaken for taking a contract according to which the exchange was not meant for the abstract feelings like, love it was a deal where Christian fulfills his desires for an exchange of luxuries. Being capitalist, he believed women as *others* (not human but commodities) and he treated them so to soothe his physical desires and thus the objectification of women forms the foundation of a *Master-sub* relationship.

### 13. Denial of Subjectivity, Instrumentality

In comparison, the second major male character in *Fifty Shades of Grey*, Christian Grey, perceives a university student, as the prostitutes who could very willingly take part, can be his *submissive* in his dirty gynophilic game in the Red Room, just because he is a capitalist. He believed that he could buy anything or anyone with money and even respectable women are also in his reach. Later Anastasia, in the concluding pages of the first instalment of the novel, proves him wrong.

- **Ruthlessness of Christian Grey**

Christian informs Anastasia that he was not a flower and hearts kind of a person and later he said, “once you are enlightened, you probably won’t like to see me again.” (p.74)

He knows the reality of his personal life which could push Anastasia away from him, though somewhere in his heart he knew that he did not want to keep distance from her. Christian was fully aware of his ill sexual behavior and still he did not want to change because he was habitual of enjoying being so.

### 14. Instrumentality, Denial of Subjectivity, Denial of Autonomy, Inertness, Violability

- **The Realization Occurs with Bitter Experience**

Anastasia also decided to leave Christian Grey and it was the hardest decision she ever took to sustain her self-respect.



“Why change a habit of lifetime” (p.512)

Finally, Anastasia realized the chaos of the relationship and the fact that none of her sacrifice could win Christian’s heart. This void encouraged Anastasia to leave Christian while her body and heart were equally aching. Anastasia broke terribly with painful realization when finally, Christian said to her,

“you can’t love me, Ana. No” (p.509)

It was Anastasia’s self-objectification for she believed that obeying was the only way to win her beloved’ heart.

She knew that ultimate objectification was not her cup of tea, still she assumed that it to be her only chance. A loath-full path which Christian chose for his *subs* and Anastasia also was willing to walk on the thorns for him. Though, Anastasia remained unmoved by Christian’s wealthy position and status but her love for him made Annastasia do things against her will. So, she tried her best to win his heart through her love and sacrifice. She deliberately accepted the process of self-objectification which overwhelmed her.

### 15. Inertness, Denial of Autonomy, Denial of Subjectivity

Our protagonist strives against the situations where this combination of theoretical elements, hinder their progress and they sensed objectification happening to them.

- **Fear of Losing the Lost**

The first sight of love, took Anastasia’s wisdom away. She deliberately falls foolishly in Christian’s trap. In the trap where Christian himself was the monster to swallow Anastasia.

“. . . and the monster who possess whips and chains in a special room.” (p.102)

Anastasia thought process is depicted in the line above when Christian was showing her, his apartment. She was reluctant to move in with him for the weekends’ activities.

“And if I don’t want to do this?” (p.103). Anastasia cautiously asked Christian.

“That’s fine,” (p.103) Christian replied carefully.

“But we won’t have any sort of relationship?” Anastasia asked. (p.103)

Anastasia desired Christian to be part of his life. She looked for a genuine relationship where she would not be objectified by her objectifier who was none other the person she loved. To her enquiry Christian replied.

“No.” (p.103)

He disapproves another kind of relationship with Anastasia. Anastasia wanted to know the reason.

“Why?” (p.103)

“This is the only sort of relationship I’m interesting in.” (p.103). Anastasia received a vague reply.

“Why?” (p.103). Anastasia stresses to know the answer.

Christian shrugs. “It’s the way I am.” (p.103)

That which makes a control freak, gynephile, narcissist and probably a sociopath.

- **Anastasia Has Strong Character; Anastasia is a Strong Character**

Anastasia was not passive, neither *submissive*; she in-fact is amongst strongest-willed female characters whom E. L. James placed in a romantically kinky ambiance to execute a comedy with a like fairy tale ending. Anastasia in the beginning told Christian that she was not a *submissive* person

and constantly repeated before him as well as to herself and finally, Anastasia left him for not being “capable of love” (p. 510). Christian had an understanding of this and yet took Anastasia for granted.

Christian occasionally told Anastasia that he will give her more, as well as he kept on retelling her about so many “*firsts*” occurring in his life with her. Several things which Christian did for the first time during their relationship, strengthened Anastasia’s hope that situations will become more friendly to her, which unfortunately did not happen and eventually, she lost her hopes. The worst thing in any relationship, “*I’ hv [sic] left him. The only man I’ hv [sic] ever loved.*” (p.513)

Anastasia endured a gynephilic, vilely erotic relationship with patience and courage for long, in hope of winning Christian’s heart and yet finally gave it up.

#### CONCLUSION:

Angles (2010) explains that capitalism gave power to the men and thus woman became their dependents later this prevailed into the social surroundings where power became a tool that the dominant use to empower the *other*. *The Other* as De Bouvier puts it. Christian used it as a psychological weapon and as an objectifier, he influences and persuades the objectified to change their interests according to the will of the master and forces the objectified to obey as their duty to the powerful. Anastasia thus was sexually, socially, emotionally objectified as well as forced to lose her individuality, self-respect and control over life and self to Christian. Furthermore, tracing objectification led the research to the sexual self-objectification of Anastasia’s and of fifteen other girls who chose to serve Christian as his *subs* as well as the practice of Sadism and Machoism was found in *Fifty Shades of Grey*. According to Freud, S. (1977), “Sadism and Masochism; The most common and the most significant of all the perversions—the desire to inflict pain upon the sexual object, and its reverse—received from Krafft-Ebing the names of ‘sadism’ and ‘masochism’ for its active and passive forms respectively.” It was Anastasia’s immaturity, inexperienced self, sought for love, virginity, literary personae, concerned and caring nature, good heartedness, helpfulness, and sensitivity for other people’s pain, were the prime factors for her fall in Christian’s trap. A person who was more than experienced and instead of cherishing the good in Anastasia, the gynephile Christian converted her into a sexual object/commodity to gain selfish pleasures from her.

Thus, Dworkin 2000 (as cited in Papadaki) believes that Objectification is a wound that originates from the heart of discrimination for those who are treated as objects, and thus they will no longer be fully human in socially, for their humanity is diminished and hurt.” Furthermore, According to Cahill (2012) explains that Objectification is one clever move to limit persona of women to things and thus as non-persons, leading to rob them from the respect that a person demands. Very skillfully women are skillfully shifted to the level of an object or the commodity reduce them as person/human-being to fit to the criteria where they can serve well the gender.”

Nusbaum (1995) strengthened the notion by stating that objectification has penetrated in lives of people. It is witnessed that E. L. James novel *Fifty Shades of Grey* exhibits both the objectified and the objectifiers/self objectifiers on gynephilic scale.

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