

CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

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The Conflict between Assertion and Submission in Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*

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"Women are the only oppressed group in our society that lives in intimate association with their oppressors"

- Evelyn Cunningham

The issues of gender, feminism, and sexuality are the popular thematic subjects of the twentieth century. Middle class women suffered largely from male domination before the twentieth century for men assigned, defined and determined women's roles and behavior. Men framed an ideological prison that subjected and silenced women. This ideology legitimized the oppression of women. Women were imprisoned in the home or private sphere, considered merely as a servant catering to the needs of the family. They were expected to remain righteous and pure in marriage, with their demeanor continuing to be one of reticence. Indian English Women Novelists like Manju Kapur, Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy, Githa Hariharan and Shoba De have done commendable works in order to make others understand these compelling issues with clarity.

Manju Kapur's writings have undoubtedly arrested the attention of everyone at both the national and the international level. She has left her own mark on English novels as all her novels have tried and been successful in portraying today's women who have discarded the mantle of tradition, culture, patriarchy and social customs. Manju kapur has written five novels namely *Difficult Daughters* (1998), *A Married Woman* (2002), *Home* (2006), *The Immigrant* (2008) and *The Custody* (2011) till date.

Difficult Daughters, her debut novel, published in 1998 won her Commonwealth prize for the best first book .It has been translated into Dutch, German, Greek, Italian, Marathi, Portuguese and Spanish.