

Interpreting Masculine Domination in Two Abortion Films: *4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days* and *Vera Drake*

Rica delos Reyes-Ancheta ♦

Abstract: Cognizant that masculine domination is both an explicit and implicit datum in our lived world, this paper demonstrates that a narrative is better analyzed and understood if its implicit socio-cultural background is brought into view. Using the two films, *4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days* and *Vera Drake* as launching pads for analysis, this paper will show how a “face value” may have to be revised into its “true value” as soon as the implicit is disclosed. This exercise intends to uncover both the foreground and background modes of masculine domination in the two films. A re-imaging of female/male identities is done through a critical reading of the biblical Creation Story.

Keywords: Masculine Domination • Patriarchy • Implicit Backgrounds • Narrative Analysis • Socio-cultural Codes

Introduction

Most of us are not critically aware of the many things that comprise as background of our feelings, thinking, and acting. These remain as invisible realities (facts) and are relegated to the backdrop even if working unrelentingly, albeit behind our backs. Background

♦ Dr. Rica delos Reyes-Ancheta is an Associate Professor at San Beda College-Alabang. She earned her M. A. in Education and her Ph.D. in Applied Theology from De la Salle University, Manila. Her research interests are religious studies, culture, care ethics, feminism, school management, and curriculum development. She has published articles in local and international journals. Her latest work, “An Analysis of Gender Stereotyping in the Case of Karen Vertido,” appeared in *Scientia* 6/2 (2017): 77-92.

realities constitute the dense amount of data that make every experience meaningful or significant. Yet, because these are at the background, we seldom bring them out into the open and fail to harness their potential for decoding and interpretation. Background information, whether large or small, positive or negative, are very important interpretative tools. Without these wealth of information, stories are detached from their broader settings that make them more intelligible or meaningful. These backgrounds which ordinary everyday life may not have to grasp up front (otherwise, normal life becomes too cumbersome), are in fact precious components that can aid the task of academic analysis/interpretation.

Cognizant that masculine domination is both an explicit and implicit datum in our lived world, this paper attempts to demonstrate how necessary it is not to be limited and detained, or worse deceived, by what appears or shows explicitly. Using the two films, *4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days* and *Vera Drake* as launching pads for analysis, this work will show how a “face value” may have to be reworked toward its “depth value” as soon as the implicit is disclosed. Thus, this analysis will be aided by a conscious scrutiny of patriarchy playing at life’s backstage. This exercise pays deliberate attention to the two films’ broad “production designs” that evoke the problem of masculine domination.

The method of bringing the implicit into one’s consciousness—something which is not done in the many forms of interpreting personalities, identities, and behavior—hopes to expand the analytic and interpretive approaches to reading and viewing of narratives.

The varied levels of abstractions of patriarchy continue to stir contemporary feminists to rethink the impact of the concept of patriarchy. I argue in this film analysis that patriarchy cannot be properly grasped and

decoded without delving into the implicit backgrounds (as reconstructed culture or social scripts) of behavior or practices. Patriarchal practices are more invisible if we fail to undrape the world of the implicit—as a backdrop of any action or behavior. Rather than just locating patriarchy in biological determinism, theorizing of patriarchy should lead us to unearth a locus of abuse: the implicit drama scripted by personal, social and cultural habits.

4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days: Male Scheming through Pre-established Pathways

The film *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days* chronicles the riveting story of Otilia Mihartescu and Gabriela “Găbița” Dragut, two university friends and roommates who looked out for each other and found themselves in a male trap. The protagonist, Otilia, cares for her friend and roommate, Găbița. When the latter becomes pregnant, she arranges a meeting with Mr. Bebe in a hotel, where he is to perform an illegal abortion.

Găbița’s naïveté has led her to enlist the service of a man who is a total stranger to her. Otilia, who is always in the aid of her friend, has managed to borrow money from her boyfriend who remains clueless about their planned abortion. Despite Adi’s request (Otilia’s boyfriend) to Otilia to attend his mother’s birthday celebration (which she does, after the procedure), the latter has chosen to assist Găbița and fulfill her requests: meet up with Mr. Bebe and get him to the hotel so she can get an abortion.

Otilia does as instructed and tries her best to haggle with the current rental rate of a room in a hotel but fails. When Mr. Bebe begins the procedure, he discovers that the pregnancy is not on the 2nd month as Găbița has told him. It is on its 4th month, thus, he demands an

increased rate for him to do his job. Otilia's pleadings and promises fall on deaf ear. Mr. Bebe ignores their pleadings. He then requires both women to have sex with him as a marked up payment for the abortion. Pressed by the demand of Mr. Bebe and the urgency of Găbița's condition, Otilia, reluctantly gives in to have sex with Mr. Bebe. Găbița passively accepts her fate. After Mr. Bebe receives his 'full payment', he performs the abortion by injecting a probe and an unnamed fluid into Găbița's uterus, and gives Otilia instructions on how to dispose of the fetus when it is expelled.

Otilia goes back to the party to please Adi's family, but Otilia is worried about Găbița who is left alone in the hotel. She asks Adi about their relationship and informs him about her menstrual irregularity, insinuating she may be pregnant. She is uncertain about Adi's decision and tells him she cannot stay while Găbița is in the hotel. Adi dissuades her to go, but Otilia is convinced she has to see Găbița's condition. Otilia does return to the hotel, but does not find Găbița in her room. She scans the place and finds the fetus sprawled on the floor. Despite security risks, she disposes the aborted fetus.

The movie ends with the camera panning on the two friends who find themselves at the restaurant after the tragic ordeal and decides to keep the whole thing to themselves. The audience is left with more questions than answers and more confused about the possible pregnancy of Otilia by her boyfriend. Adi is oblivious of the events that transpired at the hotel.

Vera Drake: Care Condemned

Vera Drake is a 2004 British film about Vera Drake, a working-class woman who performs illegal abortions in 1950 London. She is portrayed as a devoted wife and

mother, caring for her husband and children, her elderly mother, and an ailing neighbor. Her daughter, Ethel, works in a factory, and her son, Sid, is a tailor. The husband, Stanley, is a car mechanic. A strong closeness tightly knits Vera and her family and Vera's kindness is felt by those close to her. This kindness even extends to people whom she encounters outside her home.

Vera works as a house cleaner but, unknown to her family, she also performs backroom abortion. She does not charge any compensation for this, believing it to be an act of charity and assistance to distressed women.

Her illegal "acts of kindness" is discovered after one of her patients nearly dies. Vera is arrested by the police and tried for her misdeed. The family is shocked to discover Vera's wrongdoings. The son, in particular, is devastated by his mother's secret activities and tells his father that he does not think that he can forgive her.

She is sentenced to two and a half years imprisonment 'as a deterrent to others'. This affects all the people who depended on Vera's kindness. The film finally reveals that Vera learned to perform abortion after submitting herself to an abortion for an unwanted pregnancy. Her own suffering and "liberation" from this harrowing experience motivated her to help distraught women whom she thought are also victims of circumstance.

Contrasting Male and Female "Malevolence"

Both films are founded on stories of unwanted pregnancies; such stories are surrounded by the presence of masculine domination. In *4 Months...* male domination is more patent and personified in the male abortionist. In *Vera Drake*, male dominance is more subtle and could only be seen as a symbolic (implicit) form of domination most especially ritualized in the

court sentencing Vera Drake's acts of mercy as illegal. The films, however, merely put the males who were responsible for the (terminated) pregnancies in *4 Months...* and *Vera Drake* as invisible individuals.

Anyone who watches *4 Months...* is transfixed by the glaring "reasons" of the male abortionist who must play both as a sexual aggressor and as "liberator" to Găbița and to Otilia. Masculine domination in the form of the abortionist's cold-blooded extraction of sexual and monetary compensation directly assaults the sensibilities of every moviegoer. We know how terribly wrong it is and we feel the traumatizing experiences of the double sexual assault camouflaged as "fair compensation" for the abortion procedure.

The fair-deal language frames this extraction process and brings out a more "normal" than "abnormal" form of transaction. The commercial script (invented by males) forced on the two women hardly elicits a devious expression on the male character. He only needs to produce the fair-value card in order to extract the suit of consent from the two hapless women. This way, the social script of fair-compensation has reproduced a patriarchal drama imposed on Găbița and Otilia. This does not fail to evoke in the viewers of the film the sense of pity for the two women who would suffer the brunt of a male-twisted culture. The bigger social setting that paints an urban culture of painful gloomy anonymity, dark alleys, carceral inspections, and fragmented bonds loom larger—making the rape and pre-abortion scenes as the expected climax of a dark and disturbing narrative.

These revealing scenarios, however, are still incomplete. These must still be stitched together with the original story of Găbița's unwanted pregnancy—another story of piercing male drive and passion—to make *4 Months...* a more compelling story of female

subjection from beginning to end. The male's advances come to mind, followed by Găbița's "consent". In this regard, one may interject the cultural bias of putting the burden on women and blaming her for failing to say "no" to her boyfriend's advances. Nevertheless, one needs to exert much greater effort in trying to come up with the correlate accusation against the boyfriend for having been, in the first place, the aggressive initiating sexual partner. We are being reminded, to our consternation, that this cultural stereotyping bias has often been invoked resulting in the abuse of women's integrity and rights.¹ Why must we indeed always pass the "original sin" onto the female and accuse her for having "aroused" male drives?

Passing the blame on the woman is an explicit cultural bias that has long been instilled in people's psyche—even a primordial blame-passing story from Adam to Eve to the serpent. An intimate relationship that occurs between a male and a female does not exclude the male in the equation. As covert as male's intentions may be, his advances reveal much about his aggressive sexual desires.

In *Vera Drake*, the abortionist is not a male and the abortion procedure is not served with customary commercial and calculative exploitation. In fact, kind-

¹ See the Karen Vertido case where the Court invoked gender-based myths and stereotyping in acquitting the suspect charged of rape. The gender-biased myths/ stereotyping include 1) that a rape victim must try to escape at every opportunity, 2) that the victim must be timid or easily cowed, 3) that to conclude that a rape occurred by means of threat, there must be clear evidence of a direct threat, and 4) that the accused and the victim are "more than nodding acquaintances" makes the sex consensual. The Karen Vertido decision is in CEDAW/C/46/D/18/2008 and can be accessed at the website of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/jurisprudence.htm>. See also, Rica delos Reyes-Ancheta, "An Analysis of Gender Stereotyping in the Case of Karen Vertido," *Scientia* 6/2 (2017): 77-92.

ness and care extended to fellow women wrap the entire illegal activity. It is no coincidence that kindness and care could be present in abortion when the agent herself has suffered the same fate of having desperately submitted to the same dangerous procedure.

Vera Drake acted as a “wounded healer” who must help those women who succumb to male advances. Although her act of doing abortion is not justifiable, it calls our attention to the reasons why a female does an abortion. We are being asked here to again reconstruct in our minds the picture of males who are more than determined to resolve their sexual tensions at the expense of the female. Again, this original “male advances” scenario makes the whole movie more complete even as it does not dwell on it. We, as critical moviegoers, must supply this original and implicit patriarchal and androcentric scenario to be able to give a less fragmentary evaluation on the quality of Vera Drake’s illegal “acts of kindness”.

The process of abortion was indeed illegal and deemed unethical. Vera Drake’s solicitous character, however, makes her participation in this procedure less revolting than the abortionist of *4 Months....* Thus, when we bring in the original “male advances” factor to the whole equation, Vera Drake’s character becomes more of a symbol of female resistance to or negation of male prerogatives; a revolt and a vengeance against male aggression and dominance, including the court’s hold on the right to sentence her to imprisonment.

To make the two films more complete: we must make explicit the integral stories of possible male extractions of care and pleasure from women that result in unwanted pregnancy and abortion. The two films exclude these original stories or the backdrop of dominating male exploits; but by leaving it out, both films allow the creation of a more compelling

background material that lurks behind every story of unwanted pregnancy and abortion. Indeed, male exploits already make up a more taken-for-granted and acceptable “normal” exercise of male nature. By making this a part of the implicit world, the two films evoke forms of masculine domination as significant elements of every woman’s woes in sex and in unwanted pregnancy.

The norms, which are handed down to every civilization by the males, are consistently reinforced by male reason. It is apparently acceptable that affection for the suffering cannot be allowed to undermine those pre-established norms. In *Vera Drake*, males are shown ignoring kindness and care; as a result, they have inadvertently made these as elements of Vera Drake’s crime. They have allowed kindness and care to get condemned too. But, considering the circumstances in which a woman may find herself in, care could indeed attenuate the impact of androcentrism and question the principles that males have established for their own pursuits.

Patriarchy Embedded and Solidified

Patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men tend to subordinate, dominate, or abuse women, brought into play, in both films, the various sets of ideas that perpetuated, preserved and reinforced male domination that further solidify patriarchal thought patterns—creating a cyclical process of reproducing patriarchy in thought and behavior. Hence, patriarchal dispositions displayed in *4 Months...* (through the abortionist, the hotel’s female clerk, Otilia’s boyfriend) and in *Vera Drake* (through Vera Drake’s family, the legal system, society’s opinion) further fortify the concept and practice of masculine

domination and legitimize or defend the traditional roles of women and children.²

As cultural predispositions, internalized patriarchal ways of feeling, thinking, and acting are displayed in the two films, as already entrenched not only in minds and behavior, but also in behavior-inducing scenarios, in social institutions, and fields of human interaction or geographies (family, hotel, clinic, courtrooms, prison). In this sense, patriarchy is also a social habit, a disposition as well as a feature of built geographies, shared not only by men, but also by women who would unconsciously internalize patriarchy through their participation in the common affairs and pursuits of society. Since this process of internalization starts as early as infancy, patriarchy takes the form of a memory imprint—making it part of an individual's second-nature. Patriarchy, thus, is as effective force as instinctual drives and as resistant to change as memory wounds or woundedness—trauma. Indeed, the two films shock the viewers with various scenarios driven by wounded beings.

Shulamith Firestone reckons that patriarchy is 'an oppression which goes back beyond recorded history to the animal kingdom itself'.³ She posits that it is biological since it is inherent to the basic reproductive unit of male/female/infant. She claims that the subjugation of women is biologically-inherent because first, women are subjected to biological processes like menstruation, menopause, childbirth, wet nursing, and care of infants. These have made them dependent on males in the community and society-at-large. Second, that human infants' process of growth is longer than

² See Pierre Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford, California: Stanford California Press, 2001).

³ Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution*, reprinted (Union Square West New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2013).

animals. This necessitates a sense of dependence on adult males for physical survival. Third, that a basic mother/child interdependency has existed in some form in every society, past or present, and thus has shaped the psychology of every mature female and every infant. Fourth, that the natural reproductive difference between the sexes led directly to the first division of labor at the origins of class, as well as found the basic social stratification in society. Here, Firestone brings the biological into its cultural turn.

Whether it has been intended or not, the “patriarchal order” is as old as civilization itself. Thus, this implies that examining the pervading worldview necessarily requires a constant questioning and deconstructing of a paradigm that has long been made to appear acceptable and natural or essential for humanity.⁴

Even among social scientists, patriarchy has had a long history of usage. Weber used it to refer to a system of government in which males ruled societies. For Weber, patriarchy is the purest logical form of traditional authority. It is a conceptual form through which authority exists. It is also the historical seed of patrimonialism. Weber believes that patterns of governance in a ruler’s or chief’s family and household bring to the fore the authority of males. In one of Weber’s assertions he explained that “the woman is dependent because of the normal superiority of the physical and intellectual energies of the male...”⁵

This is especially interesting because Hartmann⁶

⁴ Claudio Naranjo *The End of Patriarchy and the Dawning of the Triune Society*, (USA: Amber Lotus, 1994).

⁵ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 1007.

⁶ Heidi Hartmann, “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and

argues that patriarchy is a set of social relations between men through which they derive benefits to dominate women. Zillah Eisenstein⁷ refers to patriarchy as a sexual hierarchy in which woman is defined as a mother, domestic laborer, and consumer. Kate Millet utilized the concept of *Herrschaft* by Max Weber to denounce male domination of women and domination of younger males by older males.⁸

There is still a painstakingly slow change in the ways women are treated and valued, despite the rise of feminist thought and advocacies which have given avenues for women to come forward and assert their inherent dignity and rights. Generally, people's high valuation of male rational capacities, accomplishments, and contributions have the effect of further relegating women to second fiddle. Male dominance and superiority are thus embedded in society and solidified in culture.

Partriarchy and Masculine Ascendancy in the Scriptures

Masculine domination has become inscribed and patterned in the culture of patriarchy as a historically-socially conditioned belief that power is to be ascribed and assigned to the paternal/male head. The father, whose strength and power place him at the forefront of familial relationship, is a dominant figure in a household whose members (cf. *Vera Drake*) are

Feminism," in Linda J. Nicholson, ed., *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory*, vol 1 (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 97-122.

⁷ Zillah Eisenstein, ed., *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979).

⁸ Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1970).

subordinate. Primitive roles of males and females emerged from game-hunting of males and food gathering/domestic role of women, which eventually marked the disparity between the two sexes. Mothers are caring agents and children are participants in the mutually caring relationship. Typically, women were deemed as mothers and carers—assigned as supportive roles.

Even in the home, decisions are contingent to their roles and thus, final executory decisions are prerogatives of the ‘father’—the master of domestic production. Marx alludes to this power-play as “the little workshop of the patriarchal master”.⁹ This domestic reality is evidently reflected in the public. The neighborhood as well as the broader public spaces of the market, legislature, judiciary, administrative, and religious halls mirror the dominant and prominent face of the father.

The dominant and prominent figure of the father has been closely associated with the Creation story in the Jewish Scriptures (Genesis 1:26). Although recent scholarship argues that this passage points out a relational link between male and female mirroring the same relationship with God, it is still a distinct passage that creates a binary thinking. Male is superior and female is inferior. The put-down of women has traces in the Garden of Eden.

The image of a woman who has brought sin into a picture of perfect bliss in the Creation shows a highly biased account that specifically denigrates women. Seen in this light, we find the beginnings of social roles and patriarchy’s aversion to Eve. Masculine domination is embedded in the Creation account even in the way it

⁹ See <http://newlearningonline.com/new-learning/chapter-3/karl-marx-and-fredrick-engels-on-industrial-capitalism/> accessed 4 April 2017.

depicts a woman as a collaborator of serpent and the Temptress that caused the downfall of man. Such a picture warrants attention to the implicit reasons for such biases projected on the image of Eve.

The Judaeo-Christian religious heritage has chosen patriarchy over the potential possibility of a flourishing of faith in a Mother Goddess.¹⁰ The Gnostic text, *On The Origin of the World* gives us a glimpse of the homage people give to the Mother of life in pre-historic times:

Sophia sent Zoe, her daughter, who is called “Eve (of Life),” as an instructor in order that she might raise up Adam, in whom there was no soul so that those whom he would beget might become vessels of the light.

[When] Eve saw her co-likeness cast down she pitied him, and she said, “Adam, live! Rise up on the earth!” Immediately her word became a deed. For when Adam rose up, immediately he opened his eyes. When he saw her, he said, “You will be called ‘the mother of the living’ because you are the one who gave me life.”¹¹

The Judaeo-Christian Creation account has countered an early civilization belief in a Woman goddess Sophia, Isis of Egypt, Inanna of Babylonia and Great Mother Goddess to give way to patriarchy’s Yahweh and perpetuate male supremacy. The Father-Creator has thus, fashioned a man; this man-maleness is premised as the primary standard of human qualities. Femaleness is just secondary, having been taken from

¹⁰ Considering that the Greeks recognized *Pistis*, “faith,” as feminine and *Sophia*, feminine Greek for “wisdom.” See, Teresa Morgan, *Roman Faith and Christian Faith: Pistis and Fides in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹¹ Roberts, Richard, *From Eden to Eros: The Origins of Put-down of Women* (California: Vernal Equinox Press, 1985).

the rib of a man, in the whole cosmic opus. Even if “rib” is interpreted as “close to the heart,” females are more identified as processed extracts from the male. This male construct has seeped through our consciousness and influenced concepts of domination and power.

Interpretations of such kind may have to be challenged by an alternative interpretation of the creation account. This will be explicitly reconstructed in this section in order to further assist us in dealing with a patriarchy-skewed understanding of the Creation account.

Woman-*tsela*: Re-imaging¹² Male-Female Identities

Respect, care, and compassion are qualities that find coherence in the identity of woman as described in the Book of Genesis’ creation account—a narrative offering redemptive impulses for the male-directed characters and scenarios of *4 Months...* and *Vera Drake*. Woman in the Hebrew word is referred to as צֵלָה (*tsela*) for she is taken from the rib of a man – “...and He took one of his sides and He filled in the flesh in its place (Genesis 2:21-22).” This meaning, however, is expanded through the texts found in Exodus 25:12. In reference to the rings of gold on the Ark of the Covenant it says, “Two rings shall be on one side (*tselo*, a variant of *tsela*) and two rings on

¹² The earliest use of the word refers to: The action or process of forming a new or different mental or pictorial image. In later use chiefly: the reforming or altering of the image of a person, company, etc. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/re-imaging>, accessed 11 January 2018. The term is also used in computer technology: “Reimage is the process of removing all software on a computer and reinstalling everything. A reimage is necessary if your operating system becomes damaged or corrupted. You may also need to reimage if your system is plagued with spyware problems. The word reinstall is often used in place of reimage.” <https://www.webopedia.com/TERM/R/reimage.html>, accessed 11 January 2018.

the other side.” Moreover, in Exodus 26, the Hebrew word *ul-tsela* is used, meaning, ‘for one side’ of the tabernacle. In both accounts, *tselo* or *ul-tsela* refers to an entire side.

An interesting facet to the meaning of *tsela* is *tsalim*. In 1 Kings 6:34 we see a description of folding doors consisting of two sides or panels (*tsalim* – the masculine plural form). These two panels were identical, each comprising the half of the assembly. Therefore, it would be appropriate to render the word ‘side’ instead of rib as synonymous to the word, *tsela*. It is logical to think that God did not just take a tiny bone from Adam to create a woman for him. God literally divided Adam in half to form a woman.¹³ This act of dividing, a creative act of God, no longer suggests the one-sided dependence of woman on the man—by dividing Adam to produce a woman, God has also rendered a divided man into somebody profoundly vulnerable and dependent on woman.

An important interpretation then of *tsela* is not merely being drawn from the rib of a man. It is recognizing the place of a woman which is at the very heart of a man. This clearly suggests complete mutuality in a state of equality—a co-equal to Adam is Eve who completes the former in mutual union. Besides, *tsela* etymologically means, ‘the half of Adam.’ The Divine Creator fashioned a woman to be co-equal with man. She is thus, substantially as capable, intelligent, adept and qualified as Adam.

The biblical creation stories affirm woman as a partner of man who needs a woman (or a representation of woman) to complete himself. This interrelation of reciprocity is implicit in the Hebrew word, עֶזֶר כְּנָגֶדוֹ (Genesis 2:18ff) meaning a ‘helpmate’. Just as a woman

¹³ Wayne Simpson, “Adam’s Rib,” p.3, [www.jasher.com/ Adam's Rib.htm](http://www.jasher.com/Adam's_Rib.htm), accessed 11 April 2011.

is a helpmate to a man so does a man must also regard himself as a helpmate to a woman. This is a significant shift: from the *patriarchal regard of woman serving man* toward the idea of *man-woman confluence*. This 'help' moves beyond the passive toward the active and mutually rewarding assistance. It lends credence into a woman's help as something significant and substantial. Seen in this perspective a woman truly becomes man's other 'half'.

An equally important perspective is to treat woman as entirely different from a man. These differences are not divisive, but unitive. Human beings, male or female, must forge the idea of wholeness, which could only be achieved through partnership. This mutuality or reciprocity affirm differences and be celebrated rather than distinguished as disparity between the two sexes. This then, makes life more a celebration of richness in diversity.

Conclusion

Patriarchy has made an imprint on the psyche and cultural conscience, which turns many women into subordination and submission. Society and culture have defined women's "feminine" ways of feeling, thinking, and acting—even determining her natural ability to care as under patriarchal drive and order.

Women's experiences depicted in the two films, *4 Months...* and *Vera Drake*, are experiences of women whose stories have often been obscured and trivialized. Unless they are placed in a bigger picture of patriarchal backgrounds, women victimization by males is not fully grasped and understood. The uncovered implicit patriarchal backgrounds have shown how male drives, pursuits, and plans may be perpetuating a paradigm that tends toward women subjection and exploitation.

Through the disclosed implicit patriarchy and androcentrism, we have further exposed the stories of masculine domination and exploitation, which challenge us to work toward a change of paradigm. It is more than apparent that male aggression, drives, and passion can harm women, even in the absence of malicious intents.