



**THE PORTRAYAL OF PATRIARCHY  
IN PAUL THOMAS ANDERSON'S *PHANTOM THREAD***

**A THESIS**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for S-1 Degree Majoring American Studies in the English  
Department, Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University**

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**2021**

## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

I honestly state that this thesis is written by myself without taking any works from other researchers in any university, in diploma degree, S-1, S-2, and S-3 degree. I also ascertain that I do not take any material from other works except from the references mentioned.

Semarang, 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Kezia Gavril Ninda

## **MOTTO AND DEDICATION**

*Take your hands off of what you can't control, and get your hands on what you can change.*

**Min Yoongi**

*This thesis is dedicated to  
my family and friends who have  
always support me and whom  
I keep very close to my heart*

**APPROVAL**

**THE PORTRAYAL OF PATRIARCHY  
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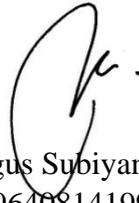
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thank you to Jesus Christ for his mercy and grace that this thesis titled “The Portrayal of Patriarchy in Paul Thomas Anderson’s *Phantom Thread*” can finally be completed. I would like to give my deepest gratitude to my thesis advisor, Rifka Pratama, S.Hum., M.A., for all of his instructions, guidance and advices throughout the making of this thesis which will not be possible without his help.

Furthermore, I would also like to give my greatest thank to the following:

1. Dr. Nurhayati, M.Hum, as the Dean of Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
2. Dr. Agus Subiyanto, M.A, as the Head of the English Department of the Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
3. All of the lecturers of English Department Diponegoro University. The knowledge and advice I have received has helped a lot over the past years and will not be forgotten.
4. My dear parents, Paulus S. Danang Wijaya and Olga Debora Hasan, and my younger sister, Kerenhapukh Gavrila Ninda Wijaya, for all their love and support throughout the making of this thesis.
5. Salsabiela Aisya Wijaya, Audri Arvianty, Salsabila Melati Astri and Desta Edelfridita Sianturi who have been the most supportive and

kindest friends I can ever ask for and giving me the encouragement I needed to finish this thesis.

6. All of my friends who have given me strength and help during the making of this thesis.

I realize that this thesis is far from being perfect and still needs a lot of improvements, therefore I will appreciate any suggestions or recommendation regarding this thesis. Finally, I hope that this thesis will be useful to anyone who wishes to learn something about patriarchy.

Semarang, 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Kezia Gavriila Ninda

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## ABSTRACT

The 2017 film *Phantom Thread*, directed by Paul Thomas Anderson, tells the story about the relationship of dressmaker Reynolds Woodcock and his lover, Alma in London. In this study, the writer analyzes the portrayal of patriarchy through the characteristics of patriarchy and the impact of patriarchy towards Alma seen in *Phantom Thread*. The methods of research the writer uses to analyze the film are qualitative method and library research method, while the methods of approach used in this study are exponential approach and feminist approach. The analysis finds that there are four characteristics of patriarchy that can be found in the film: male dominance, male identification, male centeredness and the obsession with control. Furthermore, the impact of patriarchy to Alma can be seen because it makes her feel inferior, dependent and has a limited self-confidence.

**Keywords:** *Phantom Thread; Reynolds Woodcock; Alma; Patriarchy; Feminism; Film Analysis.*

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

There are certain customs or cultures in society that caused men to be treated as superior to women for a very long time. Women are seen as lesser than men and it leads to women to be oppressed by society. Bell Hooks describes it as the “absence of choices” (2000: 5). The oppression of women happened because men have a bigger power and higher status over women. Jónasdóttir explains that in today’s world, inequalities between women and men continue to exist and women are held back, against or through their will (1994: 1-2).

The mistreatment and oppression that women have to face back then eventually birthed a movement that will be known as feminism. Feminism, as June Hannam defines in her book, is a collection of concepts which explicitly acknowledge the fact that women are inferior to men and the goal is to resolve power imbalances between the genders (2013: 3-4). It is a movement that is cultural and also political, and it impacts the way women think and feel and also influences the way women and men behave and view the world (Hannam, 2013: 2). The feminist movement has been around for many years to fight against these patriarchal values.

Patriarchy implies the representation and establishment of male supremacy in the family over women and children and the expansion of male supremacy in society (Lerner, 1986: 239). In a society which favors men, patriarchal society can make it hard for women in some situations such as finding jobs, getting a higher education and having their own money.

*Phantom Thread* is a film released in 2017 directed by Paul Thomas Anderson. The film stars Daniel Day-Lewis and Vicky Krieps as the main characters. It is a drama about a dressmaker named Reynolds Woodcock and his lover, Alma. This film follows the journey and the ups and downs of the relationship between Reynolds and Alma.

As the main female character, Alma shows a lot of struggle as a woman who is in a relationship with Reynolds, a man who likes to be in control and is essentially, a patriarch. Because of this issue, the writer conducts a study on how *Phantom Thread* portrayed patriarchy by finding the characteristics of patriarchy that can be seen in the film and how it impacts Alma's character. Not only that, but the writer also analyzes three intrinsic elements in the film which consists of character, plot and setting. This study gives a new perspective to people who will watch *Phantom Thread* in the future on how this film depicted patriarchy.

## **1.2 Research Problems**

The research problems that are brought up by the writer in this study are listed below.

### **1.2.1 Who are the characters in *Phantom Thread*?**

**1.2.2** What is the plot and setting in *Phantom Thread*?

**1.2.3** What are the characteristics of patriarchy that can be seen in *Phantom Thread*?

**1.2.4** What is the impact of patriarchy to Alma's character?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

Based on the research problems above, there are four objectives of the study:

**1.3.1** To explain the characters in *Phantom Thread*.

**1.3.2** To explain the plot and setting in *Phantom Thread*.

**1.3.3** To explain the characteristics of patriarchy that can be seen in *Phantom Thread*.

**1.3.4** To analyze the impact of patriarchy to Alma's character.

### **1.4 Previous Studies**

The writer has found several previous studies that analyzes patriarchy depicted in a film or other literary works. The first previous study the author found is an article from a journal in Mulawarman University written by Barli, Sili and Valiantien (2017) titled "*Women Portrayal in Patriarchal Society Through Female Main Characters in Zemeckis' Beowulf Film (2007)*" and it analyzed the way the film portrayed a patriarchal system. The second one is a thesis from Diponegoro University titled "*Patriarchal Practices and Resistance in Roald*

*Dahl's Matilda*" by Anggraeni (2017) that analyzed how the novel portrayed patriarchal behaviors and how the characters fight against it.

The last one is a thesis from Diponegoro University by Shalehah (2018) titled "*The Struggles of the Female Protagonist Against the Oppression in Room a Novel by Emma Donoghue*" which analyzes the patriarchal society the female protagonist is confronted with in the story. This study is different from the studies above because in this study the writer analyzes how patriarchy is portrayed in the 2017 film *Phantom Thread*, which has not been done previously. Therefore, this research is distinctive from the ones before.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study are the characters, plot and setting in the 2017 film *Phantom Thread*, the characteristics of patriarchy that can be found in the film, and how it impacts the character of Alma.

### **1.6 Writing Organization**

The writer divides this study into several chapters. The writing organization is in the order as explained below:

#### Chapter 1 Introduction

In this chapter, the writer explains the background of the study, research problems, objectives of the study, previous studies, scope of the study and the writing organization of the study the writer is conducting.

## Chapter 2 Theory and Method

In this chapter, the writer explains the theories and research method that is used in analyzing *Phantom Thread*. The theories is divided into intrinsic elements, cinematography and extrinsic elements. The research method is divided into two: methods of research and methods of approach.

## Chapter 3 Data Analysis

This chapter contains the analysis of the film conducted by the writer using the theories that have been explained previously on chapter two.

## Chapter 4 Conclusion

This chapter contains the conclusion of the study that has been conducted by the writer.

## References

## Appendix

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THEORY AND METHOD**

#### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

##### **2.1.1 Intrinsic Elements**

Intrinsic elements are the elements that can be found inside the literary work itself. The intrinsic elements that are analyzed by the writer in this study are character, plot and setting.

##### **2.1.1.1 Character**

Character is an important element in a literary work because they push the action of the story (Stoodt, 1996: 37). Characters are the individuals portrayed in a dramatic or narrative piece, perceived by the reader as having unique moral, intellectual and emotional characteristics by observations from what the people are saying and their specific ways of saying it-the dialogue-and from what they do-the action (Abrams and Harpham, 2014: 48). Based on their roles in the story, a character can be a main character or a supporting character. A main character is shown with more depth than other characters in the story, while supporting characters lacks in depth and complexity (Stoodt, 1996: 37).

### **2.1.1.2 Plot**

The plot is the course of action, the events related by cause and effect that happened in the narrative. It unfolds slowly, providing a coherence sequence of cause and effect for the events in the story. A good plot consists of conflict, climax and denouement (Stoodt, 1996: 32-33).

#### **2.1.1.2.1 Conflict**

A conflict means the existence of a struggle, but there is also a motive and an objective that can be accomplished through the conflict. The major issue or dispute should stay beyond the grasp of the main character until close to the end of the story (Stoodt, 1996: 33). Conflict can be divided into two: internal and external conflict. According to Meyer, internal conflict is a conflict that is related to the moral or psychological problem of the character that must be handled. Meanwhile, external conflict puts the character against other characters, society, nature or all of them in a conflicting situation (Meyer, 1990: 46).

#### **2.1.1.2.2 Climax**

Climax marks the highest point of the conflict, where the main character struggles the most. This is also the point where the readers find out how the main character overcome the conflict (Stoodt, 1996: 34).

#### **2.1.1.2.3 Denouement**

The stage where the action falls out which happens as the issue of the story unravel after the climax (Stoodt, 1996: 34).

### **2.1.1.3 Setting**

The setting concerns with when and where a story takes place. The setting in some stories can be very important, while in some stories the setting can remain unknown because it is only a secondary element to the story (Stood, 1996: 40).

Settings in a story can be divided into three:

#### **2.1.1.3.1 Setting of Place**

A setting of place is concerned with the real geographic area and location of where a story happens (Holman, 1985: 413).

#### **2.1.1.3.2 Setting of Time**

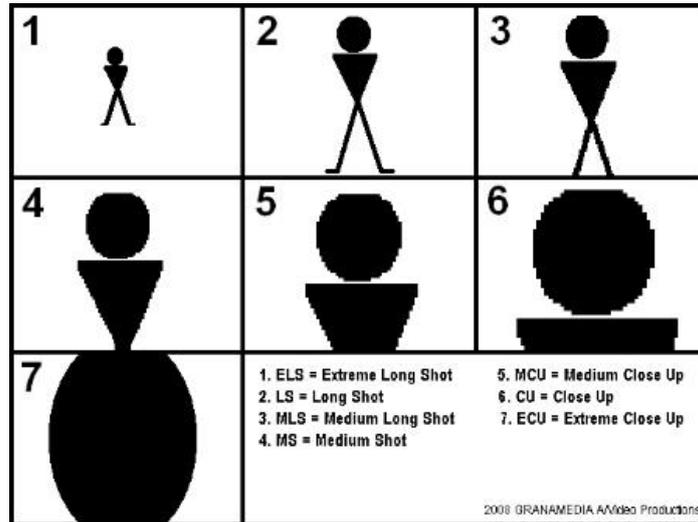
According to Holman, a setting of time is “the time or period in which the action takes place” (1985: 413).

#### **2.1.1.3.3 Setting of Social Environment**

The setting of social environment will concern the professions of the characters and their way of life in the story (Holman, 1985: 413).

### **2.1.2 Cinematography**

As the object of this study is a film, the writer will also be analyzing the cinematography of the film. The method of getting thoughts, sentences, acts, emotional subtexts, tones and all other types of nonverbal communication and turning them into visual terms is called cinematography (Brown, 2016: 2). The aspect of cinematography that is analyzed in this study is concerned with how the shots in the film are taken.



**Picture 2.1**

### 2.1.2.1 Extreme Long Shot

Landscapes, bird's-eye views of cities, and other scenery are best framed with an extreme long shot (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008: 191).

### 2.1.2.2 Long Shot

“In the long shot, figures are more prominent, but the background still dominates.” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008: 191).

### 2.1.2.3 Medium Long Shot

Medium long shots are those in which the human figure is shot from the knees up (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008: 191).

### 2.1.2.4 Medium Shot

“The medium shot frames the human body from the waist up.” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008: 191).

#### **2.1.2.5 Medium close-up**

This is the shot used to frame the body from the chest up (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008: 191).

#### **2.1.2.6 Close-up**

This is a shot that focuses on the subject's head, hands, feet, or a small object. It highlights a significant object, a facial expression, or the detail of a gesture (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008: 191).

#### **2.1.2.7 Extreme Close-up**

This shot isolates and amplifies an object or a part of the face (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008: 191).

### **2.1.3 Extrinsic Elements**

The extrinsic elements in this study will consist of patriarchy and women's subordination.

#### **2.1.3.1 Patriarchy**

Walby defines the term 'patriarchy' as "a system of social structures, and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women" (1989: 214). Patriarchal culture gives men total priority and often restricts women's human rights to some extent. Patriarchy applies to male dominance in the public and private worlds (Sultana, 2012: 1).

Furthermore, patriarchy pushes men to pursue protection, rank and other benefits by power; to be intimidated by the possibility of other men controlling them and to recognize that having control is their best defense towards failure, embarrassment and achieving what they wanted. Control is an important factor in the system of patriarchy. One of the reasons why having the power to control is so important to men is because men simply can't help planning their lives around it (Johnson, 2007: 53). According to Johnson, there are four characteristics of a patriarchal system:

#### **2.1.3.1.1 Male Dominance**

Male dominance causes disparities in power between men and women. This implies that where power is the focus, men are most often the ones to have it. Men are the usual choice (Johnson, 2007: 6).

#### **2.1.3.1.2 Male Identification**

Central cultural ideas about what is considered decent, attractive, acceptable, or common are related to how people think about men and masculinity, patriarchal systems are male identified. There are certain qualities, for example: competitiveness, control and toughness that are associated with masculinity, meanwhile qualities such as kindness, cooperation, caring and expressiveness of emotions are affiliated with femininity (Johnson, 2007: 6-7).

#### **2.1.3.1.3 Male Centeredness**

Patriarchy being male centered suggests that the center of attention is mainly on men and what they do (Johnson, 2007: 10).

#### **2.1.3.1.4 The Obsession with Control**

Control is an integral aspect of patriarchy: by controlling women and everyone else who might threaten them, men preserve their privilege (Johnson, 2007: 14).

#### **2.1.3.2 Women's Subordination**

In a system where men are more superior over women, patriarchy naturally causes women's subordination to exist. Patriarchy, that pre-supposes male over female natural dominance, blatantly upholds the dependency and subordination of women to men in all aspects of existence. Because of this, women have been denied of their legal rights and patriarchal traditions have reasons to limit the participation of women, to reject their independence for themselves and their land (Sultana, 2012: 6-7).

Women's subordination is defined as women's inferior status, their lack of access to resources, making decisions, and the patriarchal supremacy that women in most societies are prone to. The sense of impotence, discrimination, and the perception of limited self esteem and self-confidence only adds to women's subordination. Therefore the subordination of women refers to a condition in which a relationship of dominance occurs and women are governed by men (Sultana, 2012: 7).

## **2.2 Research Method**

### **2.2.1 Methods of Research**

The first method of research used in this study is qualitative method. The qualitative method is concerned with interpreting the events that occur, the data analysis is qualitative and it tries to collect enlightenment and understanding about a phenomenon (Anggito and Setiawan, 2018: 8-9). Qualitative researches analyze things, trying to perceive a phenomena in order to understand the meaning that people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 3). By using this method, the writer is able to produce a descriptive research about the issues in *Phantom Thread* that is analyzed in this study.

The second research method that is used in this study is the library research method. The method of library research entails defining and finding sources that would provide reliable information such as personal opinion on a research topic; it is an appropriate element of any other method of research (George, 2008: 6). This method involves constructing ideas through the collected information. The ideas then lead to the need for more research, which continues until the analysis is completed (Kuhlthau, 1994: 3). The writer also collects the data needed in this research by carefully watching the film *Phantom Thread*. The data comes from the writer's observation of the characters, the dialogues and scenes from the film.

### **2.2.2 Methods of Approach**

The first method of approach the writer chooses is exponential approach. “Exponential approach deals with the inclusiveness of the term suggest at once the several meanings of motif, image, symbol, and archetype.” (Guerin et al., 1992: 197). By using this approach, the writer is able to analyze the characters, plot and setting in the film.

The second method of approach the writer uses is the feminist approach. According to Kiguwa, in order to explain and gain knowledge of how women sociopolitical, economic and other relational aspects of social power, feminist narrative studies seek to examine women’s descriptions of their everyday and social environments. Feminist analysis illustrates the shortcomings of women and their struggle in a patriarchal culture (Kiguwa, 2019: 230). The writer uses the feminist approach to analyze the way the film portrayed patriarchy and how it impacts Alma in her relationship with Woodcock.

## CHAPTER 3

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### 3.1 Intrinsic Elements

##### 3.1.1 Characters

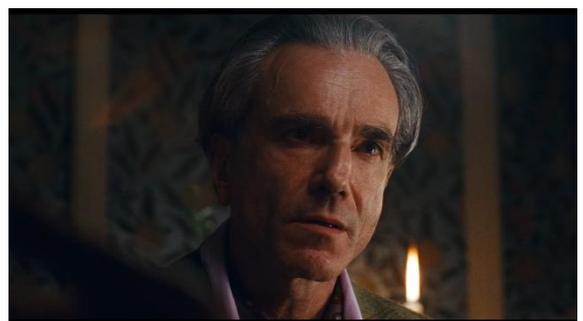
*Phantom Thread* contains characters which helps in running the story. These characters are part of the intrinsic elements the author is discussing. In this section, the author mentions and describes the notable characters that have appeared in the film. These characters are divided into main and supporting characters.

##### 3.1.1.1 Main Characters

##### 3.1.1.1.1 Reynolds Woodcock



**Picture 3.1** (Phantom Thread: 0:10:19)



**Picture 3.2** (Phantom Thread: 1:08:54)



**Picture 3.3** (Phantom Thread: 0:01:55)

Reynolds Woodcock is the main male character in Phantom Thread. He lives in London and works as a dressmaker. It is shown in the film that the dresses he makes are fancy and elegant, and his clients are people who come from high society.

The medium close up in picture 3.1 and the close up in picture 3.2 shows Reynolds as a man with gray hair and a set of thick eyebrows. However, he is quite handsome despite his old age. Reynolds have always appeared clean and well dressed (Picture 3.3).

At the beginning of the film, Reynolds seems to be in a relationship with a woman named Johanna, but it ended because he does not care about her anymore. It is revealed that he has never been married. When asked by Alma why he has never been married, he says: “Marriage will make me deceitful, and I don’t ever want that.” (Phantom Thread: 0:23:05). This means that when he marries Alma later in the film, she is the first ever woman he has ever been married to. Reynolds takes his work very seriously. He does not like noise at the dining table, and likes it when it’s quiet so he can concentrate on his work.

Reynolds : “Please don’t move so much Alma”

Alma : “I’m buttering my toast I’m not moving too much.”

Reynolds : “It’s too much. It’s a distraction. It’s very distracting.”

(Phantom Thread: 0:38:03)

“When I was a boy I started to hide things in the linings of the garments. Things that only I knew were there” (Phantom Thread: 0:18:35). Reynolds’ would often hide things that only he would know in his dresses. Reynolds’ seems to have a close relationship with his late mother because he cares and loves her very deeply. Reynolds says: “Over my breast I have a lock of my mother’s hair to keep her close to me always. She was quite a remarkable woman” (Phantom Thread: 0:18:45). Reynolds also explains that it was his mother that teaches him about his profession. Reynolds is one of the main characters in Phantom Thread because this film focuses heavily on his character, life and his relationship with Alma.

### 3.1.1.1.2 Alma Elson



**Picture 3.4** (Phantom Thread: 0:17:37)



**Picture 3.5** (Phantom Thread: 1:01:27)



**Picture 3.6** (Phantom Thread: 1:34:58)

Alma is the main female character of the film *Phantom Thread*. Although Alma Elson is her full name, she is only introduced as Alma through out the film up until her wedding day where it is revealed that her full name is Alma Elson. She used to worked as a waiter before she met Reynolds. After she moves in with him, she starts working in his fashion house. She is Reynolds' lover until later in the film when she marries him and becomes his wife (Picture 3.6).

As can be seen in the medium close up in picture 3.4 and 3.5, Alma has brown hair. "This is what I want to do and I think it will be very nice. I respect your advice Cyril but I want to know him in my own way" (Phantom Thread: 1:01:24). From this line that Alma says to Cyril, it is shown that she can be very stubborn when her mind is set on something.

"Reynolds has made my dreams come true" (Phantom Thread: 0:00:47). She clearly loves Reynolds very much and their relationship means a lot to her. Alma admits that she has never really liked herself because of how she sees her appearance, she finds that there are many faults in her body: such as her wide shoulders, skinny neck, large hips, strong arms and having no breasts. But because of Reynolds, she feels more confident about her appearance. She feels like she is perfect. Alma is one of the main characters in *Phantom Thread* because this film focuses a lot on the relationship Alma has with Reynolds and how it affects her as a character.

### 3.1.1.2 Supporting Characters

#### 3.1.1.2.1 Cyril Woodcock



**Picture 3.7** (Phantom Thread: 0:10:20)

Cyril Woodcock is a supporting character. She is the sister of Reynolds Woodcock. Her everyday work includes helping Reynolds' manage the office. As his sister, Cyril cares a lot about Reynolds' well-being. When she notices how distressed Reynolds has been, she tells him: "Why don't you go to the country tonight? I'll follow tomorrow" (Phantom Thread: 0:10:49). She is telling him to take a break. Cyril does not warm up to Alma easily at first and the two has different minds that would make them clash. For example, during the time Alma tells Cyril about her plan to surprise Reynolds with a dinner.

Cyril : "I would advise against this Alma."

Alma : "Why?"

Cyril : "Because he doesn't like surprises"

Alma : "He does."

Cyril : "Well he won't like this one."

(Phantom Thread: 1:00:53)

### 3.1.1.2.2 Dr. Robert Hardy



**Picture 3.8** (Phantom Thread: 1:23:25)

Robert Hardy is one of the supporting characters. He is the doctor that came to Reynolds' house after getting called by Cyril. Later in the film, he meets Reynolds and Alma again in a party.

### 3.1.1.2.3 Barbara Rose



**Picture 3.9** (Phantom Thread: 0:52:14)

Barbara Rose is one of Reynold's client who requested to wear his dress for her wedding party. Despite Reynolds' clear reluctant, Barbara begs Reynolds to attend her party. "I'm afraid I must insist that you come." (Phantom Thread: 0:51:25). During the party, Barbara wears the dress carelessly and passes out, angering Alma. Alma believes that she does not deserve to wear the dress.

Barbara's dress was then taken off her by Alma while she was sleeping in her hotel room.

#### 3.1.1.2.4 Henrietta Harding



**Picture 3.10** (Phantom Thread: 0:06:00)

Henrietta Harding is a supporting character. She is revealed to be a countess as Cyril greets her: "Good morning, countess" (Phantom Thread: 0:06:16). She is one of Reynolds' clients in the film until she moved to another fashion house later in the film.

#### 3.1.1.2.5 Johanna



**Picture 3.11** (Phantom Thread: 0:04:18)

Johanna is introduced early on in the film having breakfast with Reynolds. "Where have you gone Reynolds? There's nothing I can say to get your attention

aim back at me, is there?" (Phantom Thread: 0:05:10) This line shows that she is clingy towards Reynolds, and desires to have Reynolds' attention on her. It appears that their relationship is one-sided and ended presumably before he meets Alma because Reynolds has no more interest towards her.

### **3.1.2 Plot**

#### **3.1.2.1 Conflict**

The conflict in *Phantom Thread* is external because the conflict happens between Reynolds and Alma. Because Reynolds only wants for things to go the way he wants to it makes it hard for Alma to be in a relationship with him.

Dr. Robert Hardy : "He's a very demanding man, isn't he? Must be quite a challenge to be with him"

Alma : "Yes. Maybe he is the most demanding man."

(Phantom Thread: 0:01:07)

He would at times care more about his work that he will neglect what Alma wants to do with him, which makes Alma frustrated being in a relationship with him.

Alma : "There's a party at Devonshire Hall to celebrate the new year and I want to go. We need to go dancing. So, what are you going to do about it?"

Reynolds : "I'm going to stay right here and I'm going to work."

(Phantom Thread: 1:42:38)

Alma becomes angry at Reynolds for refusing to go out to a party with her. Instead of doing something that will make her feel happy, Reynolds chooses to work instead. Alma tells Reynolds: "I want the time with you. I wanted to have

you to myself” (Phantom Thread: 1:07:47). She feels like there’s distance between them. She feels insignificant and rarely has time with Reynolds.

### 3.1.2.2 Climax

The climax of the story begins when Reynolds finally reaches his breaking point and admits to Cyril that he can’t handle Alma’s presence in his house anymore.

Reynolds : “I made a terrible mistake in my life Cyril. I made a—I made a terrible mistake. I need you to help me.”

Cyril : “What do you want me to do?”

Reynolds : “I can’t work. I can’t concentrate. I have no confidence. She does not fit in this house.”

(Phantom Thread: 1:50:20)

As he expresses his feelings to get Alma out of his house, he is unaware that Alma has entered the room and has been listening to him, as seen in this medium close up shot.



Picture 3.12 (Phantom Thread: 1:50:55)

### 3.1.2.3 Denouement

The denouement of the story happens as Alma poisons Reynolds’ food as can be seen in this medium close up shot (Picture 3.13). She tells him: “I want you flat on your back, helpless, tender, open, with only me to help.” (Phantom Thread:

1:58:28). By making Reynolds weak and ill, she'll be able to care for Reynolds and make her presence significant again in the relationship because this way Reynolds will need her by his side. Reynolds relents, asking her to kiss him before he's sick and the two carries on with their life as husband and wife. Alma helps Reynolds get better and she helps him on his work.



**Picture 3.13** (Phantom Thread: 1:57:23)

### 3.1.3 Setting

#### 3.1.3.1 Setting of Place



**Picture 3.14** (Phantom Thread: 0:02:03)



**Picture 3.15** (Phantom Thread: 0:04:03)



**Picture 3.16** (Phantom Thread: 0:03:56)

The extreme long shot in picture 3.14 and the extreme close up in picture 3.15 reveal that Reynolds Woodcock's house and office is located in London. This is where he and his employees work to make dresses for their clients (Picture 3.16). During his trip to the country, seen in this long shot in picture 3.17, he stops by a hotel where he meets Alma, who was working in the restaurant.



**Picture 3.17** (Phantom Thread: 0:12:18)



**Picture 3.18** (Phantom Thread: 0:12:33)

Reynolds also owns a house in the country as seen in this extreme long shot in picture 3.19, where he brings Alma to after their dinner together (Picture 3.20).



**Picture 3.19** (Phantom Thread: 0:19:20)



**Picture 3.20** (Phantom Thread: 0:19:39)

### 3.1.3.2 Setting of Time

The setting in *Phantom Thread* takes place in 1955 and during several times. For example, at the beginning of the film when Reynolds' employees arrive for work

and Cyril prepares the office, it happens in the morning (Picture 3.21). In picture 3.22, when Reynolds picked up Alma for their dinner, it happens at night and the sky is dark already. There is also a scene taken from a long shot that shows Reynolds arriving at a party that is held during the new year (Picture 3.23).



**Picture 3.21** (Phantom Thread: 0:02:07)



**Picture 3.22** (Phantom Thread: 0:16:06)



**Picture 3.23** (Phantom Thread: 1:45:22)

### **3.1.3.3 Setting of Social Environment**

The House of Woodcock is a big name in the fashion industry because it is shown in the film that Reynolds makes dresses and have clients that come from the upper class. For example, in picture 3.24 and 3.25, Reynolds is welcoming the arrival of a countess Henrietta who comes to try on her dress.



**Picture 3.24** (Phantom Thread: 0:06:44)



**Picture 3.25** (Phantom Thread: 0:07:15)

His fashion house is also very famous and desirable as well, as shown in the medium shot below in Picture 3.26 where Reynolds were eating in a public restaurant and two young women approach him. One of them tells him: “I would like to say that I hope one day I could wear one of your dresses.” (Phantom Thread: 0:36:06).



**Picture 3.26** (Phantom Thread: 0:36:03)

In Reynolds’ house, Alma mentions that: “There’s always people around” (Phantom Thread: 1:07:56) and she feels like there’s distance between her and Reynolds. When she gets into an argument about living with Reynolds, she tells him to stop playing “this game.”

Reynolds : “What precisely is the nature of my game? You tell me.”

Alma : “Oh this whole—”  
Reynolds : “What?”  
Alma : “All your rules, and your walls, and your doors, and your people and your money, and all these clothes everything! This this this this game!”  
(Phantom Thread: 1:09:42)

From these dialogues Alma has describe the situation of living under Reynolds’ roof and how hard it is for her to live in his house.

## **3.2 Extrinsic Elements**

### **3.2.1 Characteristics of Patriarchy seen in *Phantom Thread***

Johnson states that there are certain characteristics that can be found in a patriarchal system and these characteristics can be seen in the film and it shows how the film portrays patriarchy.

#### **3.2.1.1 Male Dominance**

The aspect of male dominance can be seen in Reynolds’ work environment. As the boss of his fashion house, Reynolds holds the highest power in his job. The long shot in picture 3.27 shows all of his employees are women and the building where they arrive is Reynolds’ place for work, as can be seen in picture 3.28.



**Picture 3.27** (Phantom Thread: 0:02:28)



**Picture 3.28** (Phantom Thread: 0:03:29)

In his house as well, everything seems to have to go according to Reynolds' liking, showing how dominating Reynolds' authority over the household is. It is most described during the dining scene with Reynolds, Alma, and Cyril.



**Picture 3.29** (Phantom Thread: 0:37:33)



**Picture 3.30** (Phantom Thread: 0:38:47)

In this scene, Alma is being loud as she prepares her breakfast in the table, and Reynolds told her "Please don't move so much Alma." (Phantom Thread: 0:38:03) and starts berating her for being noisy. Reynolds are bothered by the noise she is making on the table when he is trying to work, and when Alma talks back to him instead of listening to his words, he walks away from the table angrily. After Reynolds is gone, Cyril says: "Perhaps you should take your breakfast after him or in your room." (Phantom Thread: 0:38:59) and then she tells Alma that it's better not to disturb him during his routine. This conversation

reveals that in this house, everyone must follow along to what Reynolds wants. Reynolds' dominance and power are also described from this line that Alma spoke about him:

Alma : “All your rules, and your walls, and your doors, and your people and your money, and all these clothes everything!”

(Phantom Thread: 1:09:50)

In this film, Reynolds is shown to have the highest power in his job by being the boss and in his house by having everyone follow his rules and having a dominating presence.

### **3.2.1.2 Male Identification**

Reynolds owns several qualities that asserts his masculinity such as control, competitiveness and strong work ethic. He is a person who likes to control, especially to the women he is in a relationship with. This can be seen when he was with Johanna, he told her: “I cannot begin my day with a confrontation, please” (0:05:25) to make her stop pestering him with questions. During his dinner with Alma, he notices that Alma is wearing lipstick and proceeds to wipe it off her because he likes to see who he's talking to, which can be seen in this close up shot.



**Picture 3.31** (Phantom Thread: 0:07:12)

The film also shows that Reynolds is also competitive. When Reynolds finds out one of his clients has gone to another fashion house, he becomes frustrated and angry.

Reynolds : “Where has Henrietta Harding been?”  
Cyril : “She’s been to another house.”  
Reynolds : “Which one? Why didn’t you tell me?”  
Cyril : “Because I didn’t want to.”  
Reynolds : “Is it something I’m unaware of? Because as far as I can remember, all I have done is to dress her beautifully.”

(Phantom Thread: 1:48:27)

When Cyril tries to calm him, He tells Cyril: “It does concern me, it concerns me very much Cyril because it hurt my feelings” (Phantom Thread: 1:49:31). He feels insulted that Henrietta went to another house because he feels like he has done his best for her. He takes his work very seriously and is a very hard worker, which makes him have a strong work ethic.

Reynolds is always seen to be bringing work and doing sketches at the dining table. We know that he has a strong work ethic because when a person is supposed to be taking a break and is eating, Reynolds is working instead as can be seen in these medium shots below.



**Picture 3.32** (Phantom Thread: 0:04:12)



**Picture 3.33** (Phantom Thread: 0:37:25)

When Alma tries to bring him tea when Reynolds is working, instead of appreciating her effort to look out for him, he told her not to put the tray on the table and that: “I didn’t ask for tea.” (Phantom Thread: 0:46:37). This means that Reynolds doesn’t like to be bothered while he is working.

### **3.2.1.3 Male Centeredness**

The attention in the house is mainly centered on Reynolds and what he is doing, which can be seen when the characters have breakfast with Reynolds. Cyril told Alma: “His routine when he’s in it is best not shaken.” (Phantom Thread: 0:39:10). This means that during breakfast it’s very important not to bother and instead please Reynolds. What Cyril said also implies that everyone in the house must adapt to Reynolds’ routine.

### **3.2.1.4 The Obsession with Control**

Reynolds likes being in control of others, which is why he becomes antsy when Alma starts to change things in his office, in his job and in his life. Reynolds told Cyril: “I can’t work. I can’t concentrate. I have no confidence. She does not fit in this house” (Phantom Thread: 1:50:46). Reynolds prides himself in being able to control every aspect of his life, so when he feels like he is losing his grasp on control, he feels antsy, frustrated and threatened by Alma’s presence. That is why he wants Alma gone from his house, so he can go back to how things used to be.

### **3.2.2 The Impact of Patriarchy Towards Alma**

The rules and Reynolds' patriarchal practices are bound to affect Alma in the relationship and the aspect of women's subordination can be seen in the character of Alma.

#### **3.2.2.1 Alma Feels Inferior to Reynolds**

Alma begins to feel inferior to Reynolds, despite being in a relationship with him because every aspect of the house is controlled by Reynolds. During their argument on Reynolds' birthday dinner, Alma tells him: "I don't know what I'm doing here." (Phantom Thread: 1:07:20).

Alma feels insecure of her status and her presence in the house because everything and everyone must follow Reynolds' rules and wishes. She feels like she is not as important as Reynolds is in the relationship.

Reynolds : "When did this happen? What happened to make you behave like this? Is it because you think I don't need you?"

Alma : "Yes."

(Phantom Thread: 1:08:10)

There is a clear power imbalance between the two, Reynolds has more power over their relationship and she is aware of that.

Alma : "I have no idea what I'm doing here in your time! What am I doing here? I'm standing around like an idiot waiting for you—"

Reynolds : "Waiting for what?"

Alma : "Waiting for you."

Reynolds : "Waiting for what?"

Alma : “Waiting for you to get rid of me.”

(Phantom Thread: 1:08:41)

### 3.2.2.2 Alma Is Dependent on Reynolds



**Picture 3.34** (Phantom Thread: 0:33:55)



**Picture 3.35** (Phantom Thread: 1:14:45)

Reynolds : “That’s your room. I’m right next door. Get your rest. We’ll start early in the morning.”

Alma : “How early?”

Reynolds : “I’ll wake you.”

(Phantom Thread: 0:33:50)

Alma lives in Reynolds’ house and she is working in his fashion house as shown in picture 3.34 and 3.35. This makes her dependent on Reynolds. She can be thrown away anytime by Reynolds if he feels like it and it will not impact Reynolds as much as it will impact Alma. If Reynolds leave her, she will not have a place to stay and she will not have a job.

### 3.2.2.3 Alma Has Limited Confidence

Alma : “I never really liked myself. I thought my shoulders were too wide. My neck was skinny like a bird. That I had no breasts. I thought my hips were larger than needed and my arms too strong.”

(Phantom Thread: 0:31:06)

Alma has limited confidence because she only sees the value of herself once she began her relationship with Reynolds. She says: “But in his work I become perfect and I feel just right.” (Phantom Thread: 0:32:11).

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION

*Phantom Thread* is a 2017 film that focuses on the relationship between dressmaker Reynolds Woodcock and his lover Alma. In this study, the writer analyzes the portrayal of patriarchy that can be found in *Phantom Thread*. The portrayal of patriarchy in the film can be seen through the four characteristics of patriarchy and the impact it has on the main female character, Alma. The writer has found four characteristics of patriarchy that is shown in the film: male dominance, male identification, male centeredness and the obsession with control.

Male dominance is portrayed by the power Reynolds' holds in his job and his household. Male identification can be seen through Reynolds' masculine qualities. Male centeredness can be seen by how Reynolds is the center of attention in the house and the others must adapt to his routine. Lastly, the obsession with control is shown through Reynolds' controlling nature. These characteristics that the writer has found in the film created a portrayal of patriarchy in *Phantom Thread*. The writer also analyzes how these patriarchal characteristics impacts Alma and makes her struggle being in a relationship with Reynolds. These patriarchal characteristics makes Alma feels inferior to Reynolds, she is dependent on him and only sees her worth because of Reynolds.

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## APPENDIX

### A. Synopsis of the Film

According to the screenplay of the film, *Phantom Thread* takes place in 1955. Reynolds Woodcock works as a highly respected dressmaker, while his sister Cyril helps him manage the workplace. While having dinner, Cyril advises Reynolds to go to the country after seeing how tired and troubled he looks, which he accepts. During his trip, he goes to an eatery and sees Alma, one of the waitresses who is working there. She approaches him to ask for his order and after serving him his food, Reynolds asks her to have dinner with him, which she happily accepts.

After getting to know each other better during dinner, Reynolds takes her to his country house where they have a little conversation before he asks her to help him with something. Alma accepts, and he takes her to a room where he dresses her in his designs and takes her measurements. Alma then meets Cyril, who stays to help Reynolds take notes of her measurements. When Reynolds left for a while, Cyril told Alma that she is his type.

Their relationship develops, Alma moves in with Reynolds in his apartment and begins to work for him in making dresses. They also attend one of Reynolds's client's party together. During the party, Alma gets angry because the client is not wearing the dress with dignity, and the two end up taking off the dress from the client.

One day, Alma decides to surprise him for his birthday and asks Cyril to help her by having everyone leave the house so that she can have time alone with Reynolds for his birthday. Cyril quickly dismisses her, telling her that he would not like it. Alma insists and upon seeing her determination, Cyril reluctantly agrees.

When Reynolds comes home, he is surprised at how quiet it is. Alma welcomes him at the stairs, but Reynolds instead asks her where Cyril is. Alma tells him that everyone left, including Cyril and tells him that she made dinner to which Reynolds responds that he will come after he showers.

At dinner, Alma tries to ask Reynolds about his latest visit to his client but Reynolds responds to her in annoyance. They begin to argue during dinner, with Alma telling him that she has no idea what she is doing in his house. At the end of the argument, Reynolds tells her that she can leave if she does not like following his rules. Because of this, Alma later poisons Reynolds' tea with poisonous mushrooms and he collapses while inspecting one of his dresses.

Alma takes care of Reynolds while he's ill, which he gladly accepts. When a doctor comes to check on him, Reynolds dismisses him rudely. That night, Reynolds hallucinates that his dead mother is in the same room with him. After he feels better the next morning, Reynolds asks Alma to marry him, and she accepts. The two get married and they are happy for awhile, but one night during a party the two starts to argue again over a game they were playing, and Alma leaves in annoyance towards his attitude.

Back in the apartment, Reynolds seems dissatisfied during one of his client's fittings and goes to Cyril's office. Cyril then tells Reynolds that one of his clients has left for another fashion house, angering him. He then tells her that Alma does not belong in the house and that she is turning everything around, which Alma overhears.

Alma decides to put poisonous mushrooms on Reynolds' egg when she cooks for him. As he chews, Alma tells him that she wants him to fall ill so that she can take care of him. Reynolds smiles, swallows the egg and asks her to kiss him before he falls sick. They continue with their lives as husband and wife and the film ends with Alma imagining her life with Reynolds in the future.

## **B. Biography of the Director**

Paul Thomas Anderson, also known as P.T. Anderson, is an American director, screenwriter and filmmaker. He was born on June 26, 1970 in Studio City, California. His parents are named Ernie and Edwina Anderson, and he is the third youngest out of nine siblings. Anderson did not have a close relationship with his mother, but he shared a close bond with his father, who gave him a Betamax video camera after noticing his passion for filming and encouraged him to be the director he is today.

When Anderson was young, he studied at several schools but his passion always lay in making films with his friends. He was only 8 years old when he created his first ever movie, and began writing when he was 17 years old. Anderson spends a lot of his teenage life shooting something. He went to Emerson

College to study English before he began a career as a production assistant in television films, music videos and games show (Ferrari, 2016). Some of his works includes *There Will Be Blood* (2007), *Magnolia* (1999), *Inherent Vice* (2014) and *Phantom Thread* (2017).