This is to certify that the

dissertation entitled

An Interdisciplinary Approach to Identifying the Creation of Feminist Narrative Spaces in Law & Order: Synthesizing Narrative Analysis, Focus Groups, and Viewer-Response Criticism

presented by

Melissa Camacho

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Mass Media

Major professor

Date May 30, 2001

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO IDENTIFYING THE CREATION OF FEMINIST NARRATIVE SPACES IN *LAW & ORDER:* SYNTHESIZING NARRATIVE ANALYSIS, FOCUS GROUPS, AND VIEWER-RESPONSE CRITICISM

By

Melissa Camacho

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

College of Communication Arts and Sciences
2001

ABSTRACT

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO IDENTIFYING THE CREATION OF FEMINIST NARRATIVE SPACES IN *LAW & ORDER*: SYNTHESIZING NARRATIVE ANALYSIS, FOCUS GROUPS, AND VIEWER-RESPONSE CRITICISM

By

Melissa Camacho

This study is an interdisciplinary feminist exercise in applied media aesthetics. The purpose of this study is to look at specific televisual texts in depth in order to determine how narratives might incorporate points of resistance for women. Accordingly, this research sets out to identify the creation of feminist narrative spaces within a televisual text.

Narrative theory is expanded to reflect multiple subject positions in both verbal and pictorial constructions of ideational space in a televisual text. Specifically, it is expanded to account for the patriarchal point of view from which a text can be understood, and to account for a reverse discourse, which challenges this patriarchy. By expanding narrative theory, one can examine how each of the narrative exchanges identified in a televisual text creates an ideational patriarchal space (CIPS) or a constructed ideational space of resistance (CISR). In determining whether the ideational spaces of each individual narrative support or resist the dominant subject position of patriarchy, one can begin to explore whether a reverse discourse, in the form of a second implied authorship, is present in the text.

Law & Order was selected for this study because it is one of several sophisticated dramas on television today. It is known for its inventive use of story telling, and maintains on-going discussions of real-life events in the text (Unger, 1996). A textual analysis of three *Law & Order* episodes identified a patriarchal story world experience. It also revealed evidence of a reverse discourse or second implied authorship that challenged the patriarchal point of view that guides the text.

The second part of this study looks at the extent to which the viewer of the *Law & Order* text recognizes that these multiple points of view are being circumscribed by the over all patriarchal space of the story world. It is assumed that viewers of televisual media texts are active sense makers of the information being offered in the text (Chisolm, 1991, pg. 389). Wolfgang Iser's (1978) audience-response framework is helpful in understanding this sensemaking process, including the creation of a dominant reading and a resistive reading of a text.

In order to uncover whether a viewer is guided by a patriarchal point of view when watching *Law & Order*, a series of focus group interviews was conducted. The data collected from these interviews suggests that (a) viewers assert a patriarchal dominant reading when engaging the text; and (b) they are able to challenge this patriarchy, asserting a point of view that resists this dominant discourse.

To Mom, Dad, and the Camacho Girls

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I begin by thanking the members of my committee—Dr. Steve Gold, Dr. Joyce Ladenson, Dr. Bruce Vanden Bergh, and my Chair, Dr. Gretchen Barbatsis. Gretchen, you have been a wonderful advisor, mentor, and best of all, Friend. Your support and guidance is invaluable.

God gives us the gift of creativity to allow us to look at old things in new ways (Exodus 31:1-5). Thanks Mom and Dad for the unconditional support and encouragement you have given me always, particularly when I pursue my creative endeavors. Your recognition of my creativity makes my world complete. Thank you Camacho Girls: Aileen, Carin, and Liana, for your continual rallies of encouragement year after year. Even though we are far away you are always a daily part of my life. My deepest love and appreciation goes out to my extended family, from the Camacho-Hernández family in Puerto Rico, to the Vallejo-Limán family in New Jersey, and all of you in between. Thank you for being an important part of my life. Thank you Ivonne, Tameka, Hiromi, Peter, and the rest of my friends for being there for the fun times as well as the bad. And finally, a special thanks to James, for taking it upon himself to remind me, in his own way, that my life is no less wonderful because I chose a different path to follow.

I would also like to acknowledge Charles Kingsley, who passed away before he had the chance to complete his labor of love. Thank you, Charles, for quietly sharing your love of learning with the world.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As feminist scholarship has evolved and become more widely accepted among larger academic communities, so has the acceptance of feminist approaches to television criticism. Since the 1950's, feminist scholars have engaged in feminist television criticism in order explore women's participation in televisual discourse. This exploration, however, has taken place within the context of the different feminist movements that have evolved over time. As a result, feminist television criticism often reflects one or more strands of feminist agendas in its analyses (Kaplan in Allen, 1992, van Zoonen, 1994).

In the 1990's the feminist movement exists as a de-centered, and oftentimes contentious realm (Maglin and Perry, 1996). Yet, amidst the different voices being heard, in feminist television criticism (at least) there appears to be a common thread: the portrayals of women and the issues they face on television today are remarkably similar to the portrayals and issues of the late 1950's. As a result, what appears to be progressive representations of women on television today often continue to do little more than reinforce the male-articulated patriarchal structure of every day life that existed a half a century ago. The difference lies in how their stories are being narrated (Brundson, et.al., 1997).

This study proposes that because women's stories are being told differently, some of the ways that they are narrated resist the patriarchy that is being portrayed on television. Thus the goal here is to look at specific televisual texts in depth in order to determine how narratives might incorporate points of resistance for women.

Accordingly, this research sets out to identify the creation of feminist narrative spaces within a televisual text.

This study, while feminist in nature, is an exercise in applied media aesthetics. It is an attempt at applying a reconceptualized narrative framework in order to understand the conventions of an aesthetic object—in this case, a televisual text. Narrative theory is useful in identifying an intended point of view from which a televisual text can be read. However, in assuming that a televisual text there tells a woman's story in various, and sometimes opposing ways, one must also assume that there can be a variety of points of view from which the meaning of this a text can be asserted. To identify the various viewpoints from which a text can be read, narrative theory must be expanded in order to include them. This study attempts to "open up" narrative theory to include multiple points of view, and apply this expanded conceptual framework to the deconstruction of a specific televisual text.

Law & Order was chosen as the televisual text for this study for several reasons. The show has received critical acclaim, and it is said that it helped spark the growing genre of the "prime time novel" (McGrath, 1995). It contains a complex combination of linguistic and visual narratives. Because of its sophisticated narrative structure, it is an ideal text for identifying multiple and opposing points of view being reflected by the text.

Howard S. Becker (1982) suggests that audiences learn the conventions of an aesthetic object "by experiencing them, by interacting with the work, and, frequently, with other people in relation to the work" (Becker, 1982, pg. 64). To this end, focus group interviews were conducted in order to observe and record how women learned

the conventions that guided their understanding of *Law & Order*. These interviews also provided greater insight into the perspectives offered by participants, including those that were created from the aesthetic conventions of the text, and from personal experiences as well. In allowing for the application of prior knowledge to the sensemaking process, one can have a better sense of how and why a reader creates a particular meaning in relation to the text (Iser, 1978). Wolfgang Iser's audience-response framework is helpful in understanding how and under what conditions a text has meaning for a viewer (Holub, 1984, pg. 82).

This research attempts to understand how interview participants ideate the *Law & Order* text in order to assert that the overarching point of view it is reflecting is patriarchal. It also attempts to identify a participant's willingness and ability to recognize narratives in the text that oppose this overarching patriarchal discourse.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

To narrate is to engage in an act of communication. According to Seymour Chatman, the objective of narrative theory is to pose questions about how narrative structures organize themselves (Chatman, 1978). For this reason, narrative theory is appropriate in identifying multiple points of view in a televisual text. The following discussion elaborates on how narrative theory can be expanded and applied to television. It will also review the application of narrative theory to previous feminist television analyses.

Parts of a Narrative

When examining a text from a narrative perspective, one can analytically separate the narrative *story* and the narrative *discourse*. The *story* consists of the content or *existents* of the narrative, which includes events, characters, and settings. Within the narrative *discourse* one looks at the structure of the narrative transmission and how it manifests itself in the overall text. In short, the story is the content or the "what" of the narrative, while the discourse is the expression or the "how" of the overall communication (Chatman, 1978).

Narrative Space

'Story *space*' is an important aspect of narrative analysis. The reader of a narrative may construct or reconstruct the information in order to make sense of it. The reader cannot avoid interpreting the experience, and she must "fill in the gaps" with possible events, traits, and objects which may have gone unmentioned throughout the

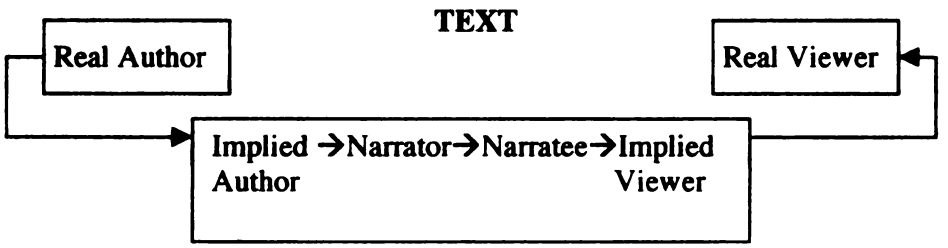
transmission of the narrative. The result of this sensemaking process leads to the construction of objects and/or experiences that only exist when a reader interprets a narrative. Such a construction marks the creation of a metaphorical or "ideational" space"—a non physical space in which the narrative is made sense of, or "performed" by the reader (Barbatsis, et.al., 1999). It is here where words and images of a narrative become concrete.

Television Narrative

In television, as in other visual media, the space in which the narrative is performed is ideational because the viewer performs the image created by a camera. It does not physically exist. The visual story-space is the explicit segment of the world shown on the television screen, and the *implied* story-space is what occurs outside of the frame. Thus, while the viewer does not see the implied story space, the story's characters see, know, and allude to it. The *discourse* space is the segment of the story-world that provides the point of view of the visual text.

Sara Kozloff (1992) argues that the world on television is a world shaped by the rules of discourse (Kozloff, 1992). Because it is a socially produced way of talking and thinking about the world, one must look at the discourse's social experience, social location, and signifying system. Television discourse must be approached by looking carefully at the participants engaged in the telling of and the listening to the story. In order to do so, participants of a discourse can be organized into the following:

FIGURE 2.1: Television Discourse and Narrative Theory



The real author and real viewer are located outside of the televisual text. The real authors of a televisual text are the creators, directors, producers, and writers of the program itself. The real viewers are those who form the television audience. Within the televisual text, the implied author is a textual construct; **the point of view** from which the narrative is being told. It is the organizing force behind the world of the televisual text. In turn, the televisual text creates an implied viewer who is positioned according to the point of view of the implied author (Kozloff, 1992). Also a textual construct, "the implied viewer of television narratives is a position who communes with the implied author perfectly" (Kozloff, 1992, pg. 80). The point of view challenges a reader to take up a particular subjectivity vis a vis the discursive action.

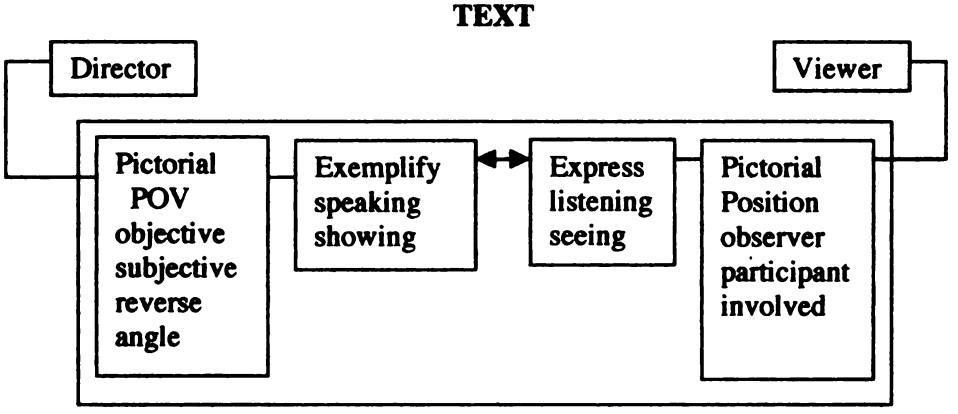
Kozloff states: "Identical story events can seem radically different depending upon the narrator's slant and on the degree of the narrator's power, remoteness, objectivity, or reliability" (Kozloff, 1992, pg. 85). The narrator within the televisual text does not have to be a specific person, although the telling of the tale could be personified by the story-existents telling it. Often the narrator is not personified, but exists as an organizing presence or agency which chooses to tell the narrative a certain way.[i] The narratee can exist as a character (or characters) in the text to whom the story is being told

either verbally and/or visually, and who will respond to what is being said *in the text.* The narratee serves as the only device within the text by which the implied author informs the *real* reader how to perform as *implied* reader (Chatman, 1978). The real reader then, based on the position s/he chooses to take in relation to this action, may opt to make sense of the text according to the subjective position of the implied reader, or s/he may choose to resist it and even engage in an oppositional reading.

Pictorial Narratives

When analyzing a televisual text, one must keep in mind that the visual or pictorial aspect of it provides another source of narration. While on-screen patterns of motion in front of a camera are important for the reader, it is the camera motions and editing sequences that provide a vantagepoint from which pictorial narrative constructs can be read. Each camera shot is purposely constructed and edited to create an aesthetic or ideational space within the pictorial narrative. In this case, however, the "Real Author" of the text is the Director—the person behind the camera, as noted in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Pictorial Narrative



The construction of pictorial narrative is guided by the director's need to clarify and/or intensify an event for the real viewer. It is not just what the camera allows the viewer to "see" through the lens, but also from what subject position or pictorial point of view (POV) the camera is telling the story (Barbatsis, 1999). In what Robert Allen (1992) refers to as the "cinematic mode of engagement" of television, the viewer's knowledge of the television world comes through the camera, "positioned in some place relative to the action in every shot" (Allen, 1992, pg. 117). The point of view of the camera determines the pictorial position the visual structure will take, and presents a way the viewer can interpret the text.

Understanding the subject position created by the camera means understanding how the camera allows the viewer to approach the screen event. As noted in Figure 2.2, an objective point of view shot allows the viewer to approach the pictorial story-world as an observer with no involvement. However, a subjective point of view actively participates in the discourse, prompting the viewer to identify closely with a character or screen event. Meanwhile, an over the shoulder point of view and/or cross shooting will position a viewer to visually enter into a picture world from a vantagepoint of involvement. Such camera shots allow the viewer to become involved in the narrative structure without assuming a subjective viewing position. For example, two characters may be speaking to each other in a televisual narrative. Instead of the two characters facing the camera, they may face each other. As they speak, the camera may shoot from behind one character, looking over her shoulder in order to focus on the other. By cutting back and forth between over the shoulder shots, the viewer becomes involved in the narrative exchange between the two characters in the story. Or the camera may cross-

shoot: looking past a character in the foreground and bring into focus another character in the background so that the viewer may recognize the other character's point of view within the narrative.

The shifting points of view relayed by shooting over-the-shoulder or cross-shooting are highlighted by the use of reverse-angle shots. Camera angles in a pictorial narrative serve to show multiple points of view from which the viewer may choose to see the screen event. The directional shifts that are perceived as changing viewpoints may also serve to intensify screen space, adding a dramatic edge to the visual image. A camera tilting up, or high angle shot, may enhance the image of the individual or object in the frame by making it seem larger, or it may diminish the image by shooting it from above, making it seem smaller. Either angle impacts the way the image is presented to the viewer, and the vantage point from which the story world is experienced.

The ideational space of a verbal narrative and pictorial narrative structure offers a subject position from which the text is experienced. Much of television criticism seeks to determine what the subject position or point of view of the overall text is in order to understand how both the verbal and visual narratives impact the performance of the viewer. Feminist television criticism, however, assumes that the subject position intended by a televisual text is patriarchal, and as a result seeks to understand how these narratives interpolate their patriarchal subject positions.

Feminism(s) and Patriarchy

It is important to begin this section by stating that there is no unified definition of feminism (Oleson, 1994). Among the *feminisms* that exist today, several theorists focus on the need to look at the place in which women find themselves within what these

theorists define as patriarchal structures. Feminist Sheila Ruth defines women's subordination to the masculist ideal as the foundation on which a patriarchal structure rests (Ruth, 1995). She writes that patriarchy "denote[s] a culture whose driving ethos is an embodiment of masculist ideals and practices" (Ruth, 1995, pg. 53). Her model, which reflects what she defines as the two parts of contemporary masculinity, does not exclude women. Instead, it highlights the valuing of men above women, placing women in a position of subordination (Ruth, 1995).

Ruth identifies a need for domination, controlled emotions, eliminating neediness, and protecting the male ego as necessary traits for the contemporary man to have. His personality should also reflect a "machismo orientation", in which unruliness, violence, and sex-as-power is embraced and accepted (Ruth, 1995, pg. 57). Women, on the other hand, negate these imperatives by being sensitive, needy, tender, and emotional. Men, argues Ruth, need this "feminine ideal" to complement them so that they can ultimately reject these traits as signs of male weakness (Ruth, 1995, pg. 62). Thus, the feminine ideal is devalued, and the masculine ideal is presented as universally correct.

Dorothy Smith (1987) takes a more systematic approach, noting that the construction of gender-defined patriarchy as a dominant force does not rest solely with the individual, but is supported and endorsed by the social organization, or institution, of which the individual is a part (Smith, 1987). She defines patriarchal structure as "textually mediated relations of ruling" (Smith, 1987, pg. 3), which include power, organization, direction, and regulation as pervasive structures that permeate the complexly organized practices of everyday life. Families, governments, businesses, and

the legal system, among others, are, in effect, constructed texts that become sites of action.

Multiracial feminists, Third World feminists, and self-identified women of color, approach issues of race, class and gender differently.[ii] Embedded in their definitions of patriarchy are discussions of race and class within feminist thought and practice. (hooks, 1994) Each of these movements recognizes that while gender-based patriarchy is a dominant force, it is not *the* primary dominant force over individuals, and the social, and/or economic structures of which they are a part (Di Stefano, 1990). To assume so, according to bell hooks (1994), is to focus only on the concerns of white upper-class women. This excludes the lived experiences of individuals who live in poverty and/or who are of color. This exclusion, according to Baca Zinn, Cannon, Higginbotham and Dill (1986), "renders feminist theory incomplete" (Baca Zinn, et. al., 1986, pg. 205).

Early feminist television scholarship does not focus on the relationship of class, race, and gender. It also does not recognize any resistance to the masculist ideals being presented. Instead, this early body of work assumes that a woman's presence on television serves to reflect a point of view that defines women as subordinate to men and masculine ideals. The following section highlights some of this research.

Feminist Television Criticism: An Overview

Early feminist television scholarship includes discussions that focus primarily on female stereotypes in television programming. Early sitcoms, such as *The Honeymooners* and *I Love Lucy*, introduce female characters who fulfill the roles of housewife and mother, and who often fall victim to their own far reaching attempts to escape their assigned domesticity (Press and Strathman, 1993). Meanwhile, soap operas provide rich

texts for narrative analyses because of their on-going multiple narrative structures (Brown, 1994). As a result, early scholarly discussions of these televisual texts concentrated on exploring the multiple ways in which women's roles were defined. Often, as scholar Tania Modleski argues, women's domestic roles in soaps were depicted as pleasurable, and it was the day-to-day dramatic events that forced them to interrupt their otherwise pleasant daily responsibilities in the home (Modleski, 1979).

More recently, the attention has shifted from identifying domestic stereotypes to looking at Hollywood's creation of the "New Woman". Reflecting what was perceived to be the more progressive, "liberal" woman of the decade, the 1980's produced a "second wave" of female television characters.[iii] These characters are active members of the professional community, many while simultaneously participating in the domestic roles of wife and mother. Other female characters of this "new wave" move farther away from this role, becoming icons for single motherhood, female friendship, and lovers (Brundson, et. al., 1997).

For scholars such as Marjorie Ferguson the "New Woman" phenomena has born limited change in television's use of female stereotypes (Ferguson, 1990). She and others have suggested that while female television characterizations are seemingly less stereotypical than in the 1950's and 1960's, further narrative analysis reveals that the discourse serves to undermine the supposed progress these women reflect in both the public and private realms of the story-world. Jeremy Butler contends that the dialogue of sitcoms marketed as "women's situation comedies" that appear to provide clear-cut examples of the "New Woman" construction are still overarchingly patriarchal (Butler, 1993). In other words, while there appeared to be evidence of feminist narrative among

the female characters within televisual texts, the narrative was embedded in and overwhelmed by the patriarchal discourse in which it was situated. In fact, much like the stereotypical female character in early sitcoms, the "New Woman" is the source of ridicule throughout the discourse. The female character that personifies the "New Woman" ideals is often demeaned within the existing patriarchal text in which she must exist. For example, Bonnie Dow argues that while characters such as *Mary Tyler Moore* and *Murphy Brown* appear to represent progressive feminism (Dow, 1992, 1994 respectively), "popular conceptions of liberal feminism can be co-opted and used as part of a rhetorical strategy to reaffirm patriarchal definitions of femininity and feminism" (Dow, 1992, pg. 144). Kathleen Rowe parallels this argument, noting the presence of both a strong female figure and as an excessive and unruly spectacle in the popular blue-collar sitcom *Roseanne* (Rowe, 1990). While scholars such as Zita Dresner make similar observations about the sitcom, others such as Janet Lee cite Roseanne as a powerful example of feminist resistance, arguing that Roseanne's contradictions are part of her overall representation of autonomous womanhood (Dresner, 1993; Lee, 1992).

Narrative analyses of television programs in the 1990's have continued to identify dominant patriarchal narrative structures, even though they do not readily appear to be the dominant point of view in the televisual discourse. Alcock and Robson conclude that the discourse of the popular television detective series *Cagney and Lacey*, while seeking to appeal to viewers through its two strong female characters, suggests an underlying opposition to strong women (Alcock and Robson, 1990). As a result, the stronger the women are within the story, the more severe the opposition is evidenced within its discourse. According to Alcock and Robson, this opposition is so strong that

the female existents are punished within the televisual story-world. Similarly, Vande Berg (1993) explores gender ideology within the discourse of *China Beach*, a prime-time dramatic television series that centers on the role of women in the Vietnam War. She argues that while the central characters of this show are women, the narrative reaffirms patriarchal masculinity and militarism by employing narrative strategies that feminize war in order to provoke a backlash against feminism.[iv]

Overall, feminist television scholarship has identified a patriarchal reading as the dominant reading of these texts. However, it is important to point out that it is a singular subject position that is being looked at; for the narrative analysis of a text only yields itself to a single point of view. Unlike previous scholarship, the first half of this research attempts to open up narrative theory in order to include more than one point of view in the text. Developing a multi-narrative framework allows for resisting positionality to patriarchy within a televisual text possible. The second half of this research is designed to apply this multi-narrative framework.

Before opening this framework to look at points of feminist resistance within a televisual narrative, it is helpful to provide some general discussion of feminist resistance in dominant patriarchal social structures. It is with these approaches in mind that one can proceed to devise a means of expanding narrative theory to include feminist narratives as an important part of the overall narrative structure of a televisual text.

Feminisms, Space, and Points of Resistance

The idea that the everyday world is created, defined, and reflected by patriarchal social systems suggest to some scholars that society is largely white-male dominated. As a result, they argue, women have become invisible in patriarchal social structures because

they are being controlled, silenced and/or ignored by men (Smith, 1987). Men, according to this definition, are acting out in ways that are defined by the social organization(s) they are part of, and by the texts from which these organizations are created. Thus, a space within these institutions and their texts needs to be created for women's absent voices (McCall and Wittner, 1990, Morris, 1995).

According to Doreen Massey, space is defined by gender (Massey, 1994). Traditionally, physical space has been defined in terms of "public" and "private": *public* referring to a space which is regarded as that which exists within a realm of working professionals, and *private* referring to the home. Women's work is often viewed as existing within the private domain of the home (Spain, 1992). Massey claims that "[t]his gendering of space and place both reflects and has effects back on the ways in which gender is constructed and understood in the societies in which we live" (Massey, 1994, pg. 186).

The concept of space not only defines the physical places in which a woman finds herself, but the ideational space created by "...the simultaneous coexistence of social interrelations and interactions at all spatial scales" (Massey, 1994, pg. 265). Therefore, the constant and dynamic social intricacies of everyday life create a text within which women have to perform. The ideational space created by these performances can serve to form, resist, and/or transform the overall text through their own performance. For example, women can operate within the institution in which they find themselves, such as in a police precinct, or in a courtroom. If the institution is controlled by a patriarchal order of some kind, these women may either be coerced or persuaded to limit their participation to smaller, less important dynamics of the institution. However, these same

women may create an ideational space of their own through their voice or actions, while still operating within the confines of the patriarchal system. A person may vocalize her disapproval, may choose not to follow the rules of the institution, or openly rebel. She may, through her performance within the space she has created, be able to create a sense of empowerment for herself. This sense of empowerment is extremely important to recognize, regardless of whether an individual is able to escape from a patriarchally structured physical space. Her attempts to create a site of resistance should not be downplayed or ignored, for it is often these attempts that provide the foundation for transformation later on.

Narratives and Reverse-Discourse

The act of narrating or "telling" is a way of creating an ideational space, where empowering moments can be created for the narrator, and a moment of potential consciousness raising for the narratee. Personal narratives can be perceived as a means of resisting a dominant patriarchal position. As Kathryn Anderson states: "When women speak for themselves, they reveal hidden realities: new experiences and new perspectives emerge that challenge the "truths" of official accounts and cast doubt upon established theories" (Anderson, et.al., 1987, pg. 104).

Scholar Chris Weedon argues that this kind of story telling can serve as **reverse discourse** (Weedon, 1997). Discourse exists as relations of power that take on specific forms in particular societies. She defines power as a "relation, exercised within discourses" by the way in which it constitutes and governs individual subjects (Weedon, 1997, pg. 110). Reverse discourse serves to challenge the meaning of the power within which the individual finds herself to allow for the production of new, resistant discourses.

By engaging in opposing positions to that of the dominant power structure, Weedon argues the dominant discourse can gradually be over taken.

Reverse discourse exists in oral and written narratives, as well as in the social practices of everyday life (Weedon, 1997). While there are multiple ways in which one can engage in reverse discourse, personal story-telling allows for a narrative approach to feminist texts (Reinharz, 1992). Furthermore, if the social organizations that comprise everyday life are manifested through texts, and reveal a patriarchal consciousness, the narratives voiced by women within these social organizations may reveal a feminist consciousness of resistance.

Opening Narrative Theory: Multi-Narrative Televisual Texts

A narrative approach to a televisual text usually accounts for only one point of view—the dominant subject position of the overall text. However, if one were to open narrative theory in order to look at alternative perspectives within the same text, it would be also be possible to identify points of resistance against the dominant subject position. For this to happen there is a need to expand narrative theory in order to reflect multiple subject positions in both the verbal and pictorial constructions of ideational space in a televisual text.

If one assumes that a text may contain more than one narrative, there is a possibility that, while embedded in the dominant discourse, an ideational space can be constructed in which an alternative subject position is developed. For example, character to character story-telling is a narration embedded within the overarching discourse of narrative agency (Kozloff, 1992). One might envision, then, a character-to-character story-telling structure that contradicts the point of view of the dominant or overall

narrative structure. That is, what the characters are discussing may serve to create an ideational space where a point of resistance is being created. Note, however, that instead of an extended verbal narration, this resistance may come in the form of a question or seemingly inconsequential remark. Accordingly, the ideational space created by this opposition (however slight) potentially becomes a resistive space with a narrating voice different from that of a dominant narrative discourse. Because the narration is performed in her own words, providing her own point of view, the ideational space she creates as a result of her narration(s) serves as an indicator that there is a second implied authorship within the text. This implied authorship or point of view serves as a reverse discourse because of its reflection of an alternative subject position to that of the overall discourse space.

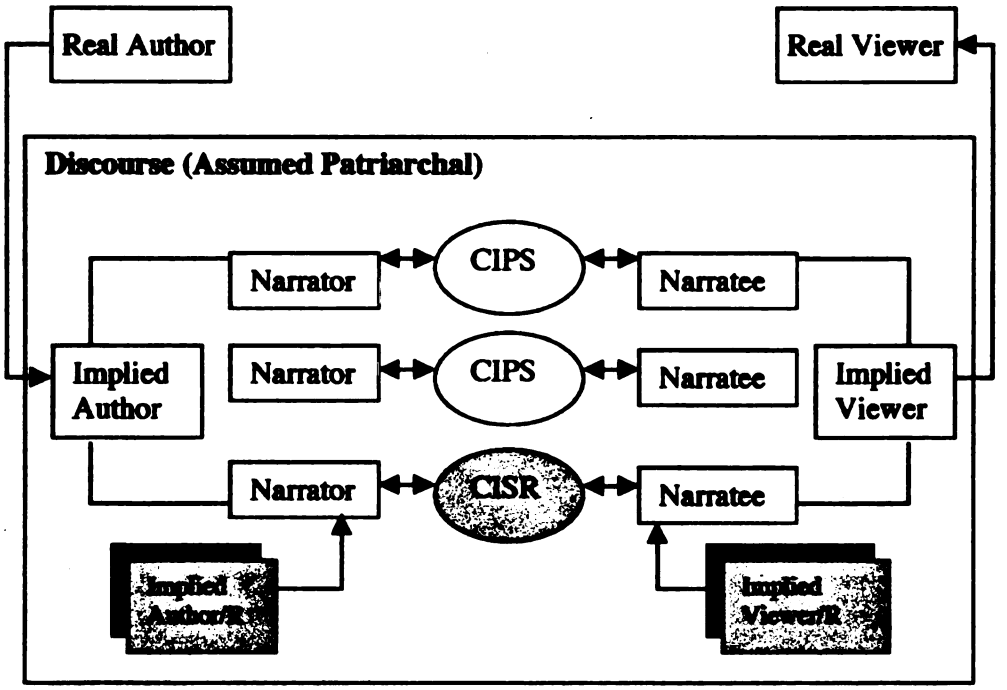
A Feminist Approach to Multi-Narrative Televisual Texts

In Women Watching Television, Andrea Press (1991) suggests that television functions "complexly and paradoxically in our society, simultaneously fostering conformity and encouraging resistance to it among dominated groups" (Press, 1991, pg. 177). If one continues the tradition of early feminist scholarship, one begins with the assumption that the dominant point of view in a televisual text is patriarchal because it is a point of view what Ruth defines as the male ideal. The narrating voice is one that will organize the power relations of the story world accordingly. In turn, a feminist narrative can been defined as "a system of representation that confronts [patriarchal] practices" (Butler, 1993, pg. 20). Thus, a feminist narrative seeks to resist what is recognized as the this masculine or patriarchal discourse in which it finds itself, and the ideational space it constructs is one which reflects a reverse discourse of resistance.

As noted in Figure 2.3, the resistant space constructed by a reverse discourse leads to the creation of a second implied authorship (implied author/R), a point of view which reflects this alternative discourse. It also creates a second implied viewer (implied viewer/R), which supports the performance of this construction as a potential ideational space of resistance. Theoretically, because all the narratives are affected by the patriarchal discourse, they either reflect or resist this patriarchy in some way. Accordingly, a constructed ideational space of resistance (CISR) impacts and is impacted by both implied authorships. This expanded narrative model reflects the various ways in which the patriarchal discourse might impact multiple narratives presented in a text.

Figure 2.3: Feminist Narrative

Constructed Ideational Patriarchal Space (CIPS) and Constructed Ideational Space of Resistance (CISR) In Multi-structured Narrative Discourse



The patterns of motion that take place in front of a camera, and/or created by the camera and editing sequences contribute to the overall creation of an ideated space of resistance. Shifts in points of view in the screen space resulting from these patterns may help create and/or enhance a pictorial resistance to patriarchy, or reflect a dominant patriarchal discourse. Furthermore, the use of non-verbal sound in a television text may serve to enhance the sense of space both in front of the camera and off-screen (Zettl, 1990, pg. 345). Off-screen sounds, referred to as "background music", may serve to implicate particular physical spaces that contribute to the over all narrative. It is a production element often used in a televisual text to predict situational changes within a scene (Zettl, 1990, pg. 346). However, such predictors may also identify potential shifts in point of view within the text, particularly when accompanying a verbal narrative.

For these reasons it is imperative when conducting feminist television narrative analysis to examine each of these elements. It is possible for tensions to be created between what is being structured verbally by a character and the pictorial and non-verbal sound cues present in the overall text. The co-existence of these narratives within an overall televisual text may reflect a single point of view, or may act as subtle points of resistance.

Summary

This chapter reviews the theoretical frameworks that are being opened up in order to develop a multi-narrative approach to narrative theory. Expanding upon the frameworks of Kozloff and Chatman, an expanded narrative framework will be able to incorporate multiple points of view by allowing for the inclusion of a reverse discourse in the narrative analysis. The recognition of a reverse discourse in a televisual text will

provide a new approach from which feminist television analysis can be conducted. Discussions of patriarchal media texts can be expanded to include any resistance to the masculist points of view being offered by the implied authorship of a text. The following chapter will apply this multi-narrative framework developed here to a textual analysis of a televisual text.

---

[1] Because the presence of the narrator is difficult to define and often impersonal, it is sometimes substituted by a human face or voice-over which serves to solidify the narrator's role in the discourse-space (Kozloff, 1992, pg.79). This is different, however, from a narrated text in which the narrator addresses a studio audience or a camera lens directly, and in order to acknowledge the presence of both a narratee as well as a real television audience. In this case, the narrator, while still inside the text, is not a participant in the story-events. S/he is simply transmitting the narrative to the listener and/or viewer.

[2] Multiracial feminism asserts that race as a power structure is central to the understanding of unequal power relations in the United States. See Baca Zinn, Maxine, Thornton Dill, Bonnie. (1997) Theorizing Difference from multiracial feminism. In: Baca Zinn, Maxine, et. al (1997) Through the prism of difference: readings on sex and gender. Third world feminists (which include those feminists from lesser developed countries and minority peoples in the United States),despite existing socio-historical differences, share a common struggle against structures that are sexist, racist, and imperialist. See Mohanty, C.,Talpade. R, A. & Torres, Lourdes. (1991)Third world women and the politics of feminism. However, not all minority women in the US view themselves as "third world women", but as women of color. See Anzaldúa, Gloria. (Ed.) (1990) Making face,making soul/haciendo caras.; Moraga, C. & Anzaldúa, G. (Eds.) (1983) This bridge called my back: writings by radical women of color. In both cases, gender issues are viewed within the context of cultural differences, and are analyzed within a culturally relevant framework.

[3]Late in this second wave, feminist television criticism also shifted towards the analysis of female viewership response to televisual texts. In particular, female oppositional readings to the narrative was being recognized as being fundamental in the understanding of women's responses to television. For more extensive examinations of female viewership, see Press, Andrea. (1991) Women watching television; Joyrich, Lynne. (1996) Re-viewing reception. See also Jenkins, Henry III. (1988) "*Star Trek* rerun, reread, rewritten: fan writing as textual poaching" Critical studies in mass communication; Ang, Ien. (1990) "Melodramatic identifications: television fiction and women's fantasy" In: Mary Ellen Brown (ed.), (1990) Television and women's culture: the politics of the popular.; and Thomas, Lyn (1995) "In love with *Inspector Morse*". Feminist review 51, (4) 1-25.

[4] According to Vande Berg, the strategies employed include portraying women as volunteer sex objects in order to reaffirm central masculinity; portraying men as

'victims', which allows them to appropriate female loss and suffering, and appropriating male military perspectives to female characters, establishing a 'male spectacle' which establishes the warrior as an erotic figure.

CHAPTER 3

A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF LAW & ORDER

The case study discussed in this chapter applies the multi-narrative feminist framework described in Chapter 2 to the contemporary televisual text *Law & Order*. In a multi-narrative patriarchal discourse, various narratives can be identified by who the narrators and narratees are, as well as the content of their exchange. By applying the framework outlined in Figure 2.3, one can examine how each of the narrative exchanges identified may serve to create an ideational patriarchal space (CIPS) or a constructed ideational space of resistance (CISR). By determining whether the ideational spaces of each individual narrative support or resist the dominant subject position of patriarchy, one can begin to explore whether a reverse discourse, in the form of a second implied author, is present in the text.

Created by Dick Wolf for NBC television, *Law & Order* is the longest running prime-time television melodrama on network television (Back Stage, 1997). Filmed on location in New York City, the show is well known for its "realistic" portrayal of how both sides of the criminal justice system work towards solving crimes and convicting the guilty (Weber, 1992, Miller, 1995). Its straightforward two-part formula separates the main cast of characters from each other. This includes, on one side, a Police Lieutenant and two detectives (Law), and on another side a New York District Attorney and two of his Assistant District Attorneys (Order).

Law & Order is one of several sophisticated dramatic television programs classified as "prime time novels" because of their inventive use of epic story telling

(McGrath, 1995). It distinguishes itself from other television dramas of this type because of its discussions of real-life occurrences. (Unger, 1996).

Throughout its ten seasons on the air, there have been ten character changes, some specifically made in order to include more women (Rudolph, 1998). Many critics argue that the show has managed to survive these changes because the television program is completely story-driven, suggesting that the events being discussed by the characters appear to be much more important than the characters themselves (Meisler, 1994, Higbie, 1995).

The three episodes selected for this case study include one of the three different female Assistant District Attorneys. Each provides examples of the ADAs serving as actual litigators in the courtroom. All three episodes were dubbed onto videotapes and transcribed. These transcriptions include a word-for-word recording of every word spoken by every character, identifying the narrator and narratee. Also completed was a frame-by-frame transcription of the production elements of the story-world.

Coding

Drawing on what Larry Gross (1974) calls "modes of communication", the narratives of the three *Law & Order* episodes are coded into four primary categories: verbal or *linguistic* narratives, *gestural* narratives, *iconic* narratives, and *musical* narratives (Gross, 1974, pg. 60). The first category, linguistic narratives, is broken down into three secondary modes, or subcategories. The first subcategory includes those narrative exchanges that serve to provide general information necessary for the successful telling of the overall story. These narratives consist of characters speculating about pieces of the storyworld, which are not clear to them as they proceed with their discovery

process. The second subcategory includes those narrative exchanges that are life histories: individual narratives told by characters describing personal experiences and their thoughts and feelings about them. Finally, the third subcategory identifies those narratives that appear to be life histories because they include the telling of experiences, thoughts, and feelings about a specific character, but are told by someone else. In this instance, the character's voice is not her/his own.

Both the gestural and the iconic categories are used to organize particular elements of the pictorial narrative in order to determine the pictorial point(s) of view within the text, as noted in Figure 2.2. The gestural category includes actions (including gestures)that indicate the intentions of the characters in the text (Gross, 1974, pg. 67). This includes the motion of the actors as they move in front of the camera, as well as their expressions. The iconic category includes camera movements and motion induced by editing sequences, also known as secondary and tertiary motions respectively (Zettl, 1990).

Musical narratives are sounds that originate off-screen. Background noise and/or music is coded into two separate but related subcategories: sound effects used for spatial orientation, and sound effects and/or music that are used to predict upcoming events. The repeated use of predictive sounds, or leitmotivs, are also noted (Zettl, 1990).

Each narrative is examined to see if it reflects a dominant patriarchal subject position, or if it offers a space in which points of resistance to this position are being formed (Riessman, 1993). Specifically identifying and analyzing each of these narratives, one may reveal whether the point(s) of view of each clarifies and/or intensifies the subject position, whether it be a patriarchal or resistive.

Findings

The following analyses include a summary of the episode in its entirety, as well as sample transcripts from each one. Each episode is analyzed independently from the others in this section. Conclusions drawn from the comparisons between them are discussed in the next section.

Sample A: Humiliation

Synopsis: The murder of a prostitute leads to the conviction of Dr. Danforth, a prominent plastic surgeon, in Assistant District Attorney Clare Kincaid's first homicide trial. After the conviction, Kincaid suspects that Mrs. Julia Danforth's testimony was a deliberate attempt to secure her husband's conviction. After revisiting the evidence, against the advice of Executive ADA Jack McCoy, Clare Kincaid uncovers Julia Danforth's plan to have her husband imprisoned for the crime she committed.

The shooting death of Gwyn George is initially presumed to be a drug-related killing because of a crack pipe that is found in her possession at the murder scene. Because she is identified as a prostitute, the crime sparks limited concern from police detectives Briscoe and Curtis. Despite their lack of interest in her murder, they are ordered to pursue an investigation by their superior, Lieutenant Anita Van Buren.

Table A.1:
Scene 3. Lt. Van Buren's Office (Cat. 1)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
Briscoe: We figure she finished her business, ducked into the alley to do some crack and never knew what hit her. V. Buren: You run down the local dealers? Curtis: Waste of time. She had $2000 in her purse. If there was a dealer, there'd be nothing left. Briscoe: Lovely lady. Twenty-five years old. Out on bail for possession. Six arrests for prostitution two for public disturbance, one for attempted grand larceny. V. Buren: What? She Tried to rob a bank? Briscoe: She blackmailed One of her Johns, some Ambassador from the Mideast. Curtis: Two grand...she Might be at it again. V. Buren: But don't you think her mark would have shot her before he gave her the money? What else? Briscoe: A meatball Hero from Little Tony's. I missed breakfast.	[hand held camera] Back of V. Buren sitting at computer. Camera pans left past Briscoe, follows V. Buren as she gets up and walks past Briscoe sitting next to the computer, in front of camera past Curtis. Camera follows V. Buren walking around office, then rests on Briscoe. Briscoe walks towards camera,towards V. Buren. Cut to V. Buren, over shoulder of Briscoe. Cut to Briscoe (med. close). Can see Curtis on far right, in back. Cut to V. Buren, over Briscoe shoulder. Cut to Briscoe, walks towards door past Curtis. Briscoe stops, turns. Cut	Office activity (phones, doors, muted voices), and traffic noise (sirens, horns, etc.)

V. Buren: You know what? Lion King's playing at the Cineplex. Maybe after your sandwich you can catch an afternoon show.	to Van Buren. (close-up) Cut to Briscoe.	
Briscoe: Come on, a junky hooker? I don't think we need the cavalry.	Camera pans left to Curtis, who approaches Briscoe and walks towards V. Buren.	
Curtis: I think what Lenny means is, we don't have any witnesses, we don't have any evidence.	Curtis grimacing. Cut to Van Buren, over Curtis shoulder.	
V. Buren: Oh, what a relief. For a minute there I thought he didn't give a damn. Who posted bail?	Cut to Briscoe	
Briscoe: Jaleel Washington. (grimaces)	Cut to V. Buren, over Curtis shoulder.	
V. Buren: Well it could be her pimp. You wanna get on it?		

While this exchange allows the viewer to follow the discovery process along with the detectives, it also demonstrates Lt. Van Buren's resistance to apathy of the two detectives. She must exert her authority in order to have them pursue the case. The use of reverse angle shots throughout the scene reflects the opposing viewpoints being presented by the characters. Cutting back and forth between the characters using over the shoulder shots allows the viewer to "see" where the balance of power lies among the three characters—the final cut to Van Buren indicates that she has the final word.

The investigation leads to the arrest of surgeon Mark Danforth. Dr. Danforth never admits to killing the woman, but does admit to soliciting George and other prostitutes on previous occasions. As a result, there is a certain amount of sympathy for him on behalf of the male attorneys, who find it unfortunate, but not disturbing, that Danforth was apprehended as a result of these solicitations. It is Assistant District Attorney Clare Kincaid who reminds the male prosecutors of the criminality of solicitation. Furthermore, it is Kincaid who is determined to convict Dr. Danforth in order to seek justice for Gwyn George. The power relationship between the prosecutors is different from that of the police. While Van Buren may not change the opinions of her detectives, she is in a position that allows her to exercise authority over them. Kincaid is neither in a position to change Jack McCoy's attitude, nor can she compel him to argue the case in front of a jury. She is, however, able to openly contradict the patriarchal perceptions being upheld by her male counterparts, both verbally and visually, as noted in Table A.2.

Table A.2:
Scene 31. Assistant D.A. Jack McCoy's Office (Cat.1)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
Clare: Briscoe and Curtis are right, she's obviously lying to protect him. Jack: She takes this 'til death do us part' thing seriously Clare: I don't think the vows include committing perjury for a murderer. Jack: We still don't have enough to prove	Looks at Jack McCoy's back; McCoy typing on computer. Medium long looking from behind Clare Kincaid. Can see Kincaid's arm at right of screen. McCoy turns to Kincaid. Cuts back and forth between two characters. Clare is looking down at McCoy. McCoy seated throughout entire	Office noise(phones, muted voices)

that Danforth killed Gwyn George. Clare: What about the calls from the phone booth on the corner where Gwyn did business? What? They're just coincidence? Jack: He stopped for cigarettes, maybe he called in for messages. Clare: You believe that? Jack: We don't have a murder weapon, Clare. If the wife sticks to her story, we can't prove motive. Face it, we don't really have a case. Clare: (Pause) I think we do. Jack: Then go ahead. You try it.	discussion. Cut to McCoy from behind Kincaid. Camera pans right, following McCoy rolling his chair from computer to behind desk. Cut to Kincaid. (Medium Close) Kincaid folds arms in front of her. McCoy looks up, waves hand up at her. Kincaid wears expression of determination.	

While McCoy's gestures and position in the screen may signify his indifference about the case, Kincaid's position in front of the camera, as well as her gestures, demonstrate a strong willingness to counter this indifference. For example, while she voices her concerns, the camera tilts up as Kincaid stands over Jack McCoy as he remains seated at his desk. She is not shot over McCoy's shoulder, but is viewed from a medium close shot that allows her to be the central point in the scene. The camera allows a viewer to clearly see her facial expressions, as well as other gestures that record her determination

to resist the patriarchal point of view being offered by McCoy. Her resistance to their points of view lead to her being given the authority to try the case herself. Thus, while they are still exerting authority over her, she is given leave to seek justice for Gwyn George through the legal system.

Kincaid succeeds in convicting Dr. Danforth as a result of his wife's, Julia Danforth, inability to present coherent testimony on the witness stand. Left uneasy by this, Kincaid begins to question the validity Dr. Danforth's conviction, as noted in the table below.

Table A.3:
Scene 39. McCoy is being seated. (Cat.1)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
Jack: Two days of victory celebration, a little excessive, wouldn't you say? Clare: I was checking up on Mrs. Danforth. Jack: The case is over, Clare. Clare: Actually, I think it is just starting. I checked with vice, it seems this wasn't her husband's first stop in Hell's Kitchen. Jack: So? Clare: (Quieter) So what if Julia Danforth knew all about it? The night of the murder, Dr. Danforth's car was reported in the neighborhood twice.	McCoy walking towards camera. Camera turns left and goes behind him as he sits down across from Kincaid and smiles. See Kincaid ruefully smile over McCoy's shoulder. (Medium Close) Cross over to McCoy, as he smiles, shaking head. (Medium Close) Cross over to Kincaid. (Medium close) Waiters and movement behind Kincaid. Over shoulder to McCoy (Medium Close) Cross over, tighter shot over McCoy's shoulder as Kincaid leans in. Holds up two fingers. Over Kincaid shoulder.	Muted voices and bustle of restaurant activity.

Jack: So there's more than one concerned citizen.	Over McCoy shoulder.	
Clare: Sure, that's a logical conclusion, only the second call to the cops was at 10:30. Danforth was already on to his second Scotch by then.	Over Kincaid shoulder.	
Jack: And, maybe, concerned citizen number two paused to make himself a sandwich before he called the police.	Cross over McCoy shoulder.	
Clare: I thought about that. But it seems extremely curious that the second call was placed by a woman, who conveniently forgot to give the cops her name. Julia Danforth had no idea Abe Pomerantz was recording the license plate numbers. If she wanted us to suspect her husband...	Over Kincaid shoulder as McCoy leans in. Cross over McCoy. Cross over Kincaid shoulder. McCoy looks away (towards left) in reaction to her words. Has doubtful expression.	
Jack: You think Julia Danforth killed George?		
Clare: I don't know what to think. But there's a chance she's been manipulating all of us to assure her husband's conviction.	Cross over McCoy shoulder.	
Jack: (Pause)Then why didn't she give us the gun. Ballistics would have matched, conviction would have been a slam	Cross over Kincaid shoulder as McCoy smiles slightly.	

dunk. Clare: I talked to her. She's a very smart lady. If she gave us the gun, Dr. Danforth would have known she was involved. No one else had access to it. Jack: Do you know what I think? I think you've been reading too much James M. Cain. Clare: Maybe. But if this were your case, what would you do?	Cross over McCoy shoulder as Kincaid shakes head. Cut to McCoy, looks suddenly taken back.	

Note the last sentence in transcript A.3. By asking McCoy what he would with the case, Kincaid relinquishes some of her authority over it. As a result, McCoy helps Kincaid instigate an unorthodox scheme to prompt Julia Danforth to confess to the crime.

It can be argued that Clare Kincaid's non-traditional actions empower her, because she is able to pursue justice for Gwyn George within the patriarchal confines of the criminal justice system. However, it can also be argued that Kincaid does not solve the crime alone, nor does she succeed in changing the preconceptions held by her male counterparts. McCoy underscores this fact by reminding her that her victory will not prevent Dr. Danforth from soliciting another prostitute in the future.

Julia Danforth also manipulates the system: instead of going through divorce proceedings, she chooses to frame her husband for the murder of Gwyn George in order to avenge his extra-marital activities. She shares some of this frustration with her husband and Clare Kincaid, as noted in Table A.4 below.

Table A.4:
Scene 43. (excerpt) District Attorney's Office (Cat. 2)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
J. Danforth: What does it matter where I found it? Just test the ballistics....	[hand held camera] close-up: J. Danforth (sitting at conference table) on right side of screen...see her profile. Dr. Danforth facing camera on left, farther back.	(Muted background traffic noises.)
Kincaid: I don't think we Have to, Mrs. Danforth, (shaking head) We both know this gun killed Gwyn George.	Cut to Kincaid, standing up over conference table. (high angle)	
J. Danforth: I'm telling you, Mark didn't...	Cut to J. Danforth: close-up, facing camera. Looking up at Kincaid.	
Kincaid: No, but you did.		
Dr. Danforth: What the hell are you talking about?	Cut to profile of J. Danforth, can see Dr. Danforth facing camera on left with puzzled expression.	
Kincaid: Your wife wasn't at the movies, Doctor. She was on West 47th the same you were. She used this gun to kill Gwyn George and to frame you. The money, the phone calls, everything.	Cut to Kincaid.	
	Cut to McCoy, standing away from conference room near window.	
	Cuts to Dr. Danforth, can see J. Danforth's profile on far right of screen (half of her is cut off)	
Dr. Danforth: This is crap! Come on!	Cut to Kincaid.	
Kincaid: Did you kill Gwyn George, Doctor?		
Dr. Danforth: Of course not!	Cut to defense attorney, standing quietly against bookcase away from table.	
Kincaid: 'Cause the ballistics on this are gonna match. Now if you didn't do it, who else	Cut to Kincaid (close-up as she leans forward toward J. Danforth) Cut to close-up: Dr.	

could've? (long pause) You can wait for ballistics, Mrs. Danforth... J. Danforth: You should understand... Kincaid: Murder? I don't think so. Dr. Danforth: You conniving... how the hell could you? J. Danforth: Me? You can't keep it in your pants. And I'm supposed to smile, and fix you breakfast and bounce around the bed once a week. Dr. Danforth: This girl...it was meaningless. J. Danforth: Well, how the hell do you think that makes me feel? Dr. Danforth: You're unhappy, so I should go to jail for the rest of my life? J. Danforth: I want you to hurt. Hurt as bad as I do. For the record, what was it that turned you on? Was it the cheap lipstick? The short skirt? Or just doing it in the back seat of a car? I married you, Mark. That's supposed to mean I can trust you!	Danforth (realization) Cut to close-up of J. Danforth, turning to Kincaid. Cut to Kincaid. (cross shoot) Cut to Dr. Danforth. See partial profile of J. Danforth, which looks diminished. Cut close-up of Dr. Danforth, over J Danforth left shoulder. Cut Mrs. Danforth (close-up)/over Dr. Shoulder Cut Dr. Danforth (over shoulder of J. Danforth) Cut J. Danforth (over Dr. shoulder) Cut Dr. Danforth (over shoulder) Cut J. Danforth (over shoulder) Cut Dr. Danforth (over shoulder) Cut J. Danforth (over shoulder) Cut to Kincaid standing with arms crossed.	[MUSIC BEGINS.]

Julia Danforth's comments do not take away from the fact that she committed a crime. Nonetheless, her narration defines her criminal behavior as an attempt, in her mind, to resist what she recognizes as her husband's abusive behavior. While her plan to frame her husband failed, her attempt at resisting this abuse is not completely lost. By creating a space where she can voice her frustrations about the patriarchal relationship between her and her husband, she challenges it.

This resistance is noted in the visual narrative as well. As Kincaid reveals Julia Danforth's criminal plot, only a partial profile of Julia Danforth can be seen in the frame. She is visually diminishing. High angle shots reveal Kincaid looking down on her. However, when she begins to give the reasons for her actions, she faces the camera in close-up shots. She becomes larger and stronger visually. While over the shoulder shots reveal her husband's disbelief in her reasoning, they also reveal how Julia Danforth truly believed that her actions were justified in resisting her husband's behavior.

By murdering Gwyn George, Julia Danforth may have succumbed to a criminal justice system that is male dominated. However, at the individual level, her actions can be interpreted as a means of resisting the overarching patriarchy of her marriage. Her actions also suggest that she, like the detectives, placed little value on Gwyn George's life. Her reaction to Dr. Danforth's involvement with the prostitute appears to be a motivating factor behind the murder. One can also question whether she would have been as willing to commit this murder had Gwyn George not been involved in the sex industry. As a result, it appears that Julia Danforth, while resisting patriarchy on the one hand, appears to have reinforced patriarchy on the other.

Sample B: Ritual

Synopsis: The discovery of Mr. Moussad's body near a residential parking lot uncovers a secret plan by traditional Egyptian family members to circumcise Allison Martin, the daughter of American Eric Martin and his Egyptian wife Noreen. While Executive ADA Jack McCoy pursues the prosecution of Eric Martin for the death of his wife's uncle, ADA Jamie Ross goes to family court in order to remove Allison from her home, away from the influence of her conservative Egyptian grandmother, Amira Wassir. Eric Martin argues that he murdered Moussad to protect his daughter, but agrees to a plea bargain on the grounds that Allison is placed in the custody of his parents, away from both Egyptian women.

Ritual attempts to cope with the conflicting efforts of a multicultural family to protect a young daughter. The issue of female circumcision serves as the focal point of tensions between US-Anglo patriarchal culture and the patriarchal cultural traditions of Egyptian immigrants in New York City. In the center of the dispute is thirteen year old Allison Martin, who is being raised in this dual cultural system. She is half-American. She does not speak Arabic. But she is being brought up in a matriarchal household where Grandmother Amira Wassir speaks in the voice of the traditional Egyptian matriarch, a matriarchy that is controlled by the Egyptian male. In accordance with Egyptian tradition, Grandmother Amira asks her brother to arrange the ritualistic procedure for Allison in order to preserve her virginity until marriage. For Grandmother Amira, to not perform the ritual would be a disgrace to the family, and would sever the few ties Allison has with her Egyptian heritage.

A message left on Moussad's answering machine in Arabic leads detectives to initially suspect a terrorist plot in the works. It is not until they discover that the individual who left the message was a gynecologist who was flown in from Egypt to secretly perform the circumcision. Further complicating the issue is Allison Martin's insistence that her mother, Noreen Martin, followed Moussad out of their apartment after he visited them on the night of the murder. It is not until Allison is forced to tell the truth that Eric Martin concedes to the crime, and is forced to testify in front of the Grand Jury, As he testifies, Martin combines his personal story with some narration about his wife. As seen in transcript B.1, he serves as narrator for both himself and Noreen.

Table B.1:
Scene 40. (excerpt)
Eric Martin testifying before the Grand Jury (Cat. 2 & 3)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
E. Martin: The night this happened I was supposed to go to a hockey game. When I got home Uncle Joseph was there. I found out he and Allison's grandmother had paid a doctor to come from Egypt to do this... (pause)...operation. they were going to cut out Allison's clitoris the next day. I couldn't believe it. We started screaming at each other. They told me it wasn't any of my business. This was how things were done in their culture. The worst part is that my wife just sat there. She was just going to let them do it. Uncle Joseph	hand held remote Camera (180°) around Eric Martin, sitting in Witness box. Martin looking at Jury box. (close-up) AMERICAN flag clearly visible in back of Martin as camera continues to move. Cut to jury box, see 1 male/1 female African -American sitting still, expressionless, motionless. (med.close) Cut to Eric Martin. (close-up)	

left even though nothing had been resolved. I went out after him. I knew where he parked. He wouldn't listen to me. He said it was his duty to see that Allison became a proper woman. When I heard that I just lost it. I grabbed him and threw him down against the wall hard...(pause)...had to stop him. It was either that or have him destroy an important part of Allison's life. (pause) My wife had this thing done to her when she was a little girl, so I know about the effect. She's always been embarrassed to talk about it, even to me. But I can tell. She worries that I'm not satisfied with our sex life, and there is a sadness... (quietly) that never really goes away.	Martin looks directly at McCoy at his right; camera then cuts to McCoy and holds. McCoy has no reaction. (med. close) Cuts to jurists, holds on Af-Am. woman sitting in the middle of two men. Cuts back to Martin. Cut to McCoy, who looks down. Cuts to Martin close-up. Looks down.	

Martin describes the shame associated with the ritual which he claims Noreen is unable to talk about. By placing the discussion of the murder in the context of her shame, the issue moves away from the crime committed against Moussad to what he perceives as a crime that was to be committed against his daughter.

Martin alludes to the cultural tensions that exist in his family. During Eric Martin's testimony, the camera constantly reminds us of the cultural tensions present in the case by allowing the viewer to see the American flag, and to see the diverse make-up of the grand jury. In these instances the pictorial narrative makes visible the underlying

cultural tensions which exist in the criminal justice system, potentially negating the idea that 'justice is blind'.

Assistant D.A. Jamie Ross openly sympathizes with Eric Martin's desire to protect his daughter, but it is not enough of a defense for Jack McCoy, who insists on pursuing a murder conviction against Eric Martin. McCoy's disinterest in pursuing the allegations of a proposed circumcision prompts Jamie Ross to pursue represent Allison Martin in family court. She does this "pro bono", and without the support or compensation of the District Attorney's office. Jamie Ross' decision to represent Allison Martin in family court allows her to serve as Allison's voice, and the voice of countless other young girls who are subjected to the ritualistic practice. Her personal relationship with her own daughter, as well as her commitment to protect the rights of children, appears to provide the reasons for her moral aversion to the practice itself.

Professionally, Ross is prompted by the New York justice system's disregard of the immediacy of the problem. McCoy is unwilling to enter into a battle against the ritualistic practice. Once in family court, Ross finds herself facing a judge who dismisses the idea of female circumcisions being performed in New York City as too fantastic (Scene 45). As a result, Ross is prompted by McCoy to negotiate what is in the best interest of both Eric Martin and Jack McCoy: a lighter jail sentence for Eric Martin in exchange for the removal of Allison from her mother's custody. Eric Martin accepts, but only after he is promised some authority over his daughter's custody arrangements in the future.

Noreen Martin must contend with the authoritative role her husband now plays in her ability to raise their daughter. This is compounded by the tensions she feels exist

between a conservative Egyptian way of life and the permissiveness she perceives from "American" culture, as seen in Table B.2 below.

Table B.2:
Scene 43. (excerpt) N. Martin in Family Court (Cat. 2)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
Noreen: My mother is from a different culture. Jamie: And she wanted Allison to have this operation? Noreen: Yes. Jamie: Did you object? Noreen: My mother says it is the only way we can protect her. And the family honor. Jamie: Did your mother protect you when you were a little girl? Noreen: (low voice) Yes. When I was eight. Jamie: In a hospital? Noreen: No. Jamie: Was anesthesia used? Noreen: No. Jamie: (Quietly)Did you want to have this done? Noreen: They don't ask the child. Jamie: Then somebody	[hand held camera] Cut to Grandmother Amira, sitting in back of courtroom close-up. Cut to Noreen Martin close-up. Cut to Jamie Ross sitting at table. (medium)Cut to other attorney. (medium) Cut to Noreen close-up. Cut to Ross medium-close. Cut to Noreen close-up, looking away and wiping tears. Cut to Ross, who stands up and walks towards Noreen (towards camera). Cut to Noreen close-up. (cross shoot) Cut to Ross close-up. (cross shoot) Cut to Noreen close-up.	

must have held you down. Who did that?	(cross shoot) Cut to grandmother looking sad but slightly nodding. Cuts back to Noreen.	
Noreen: (after pause) My mother and my aunt.	(close-ups)	
Jamie: And who performed the surgery?		
Noreen: A man in the village.	Wipes away tears.	
Jamie: Did they explain to you that they did this because they didn't trust your judgement?	Cut to Ross close-up. (cross shoot)	
Noreen: They said it was a passage to womanhood.	Cut to Noreen close-up. (cross shoot)	[MUSIC BEGINS]
Jamie: And this what you were willing to have done to your daughter?	Cut to Ross close-up. (cross shoot)	
Noreen: Everything here, the magazines, the television, it's all sex. Little girls dressing like prostitutes, school girls having babies (pause) Where are the parents? I was afraid for her.	Cut to Noreen. (cross shoot) Cut to Grandmother close-up, slightly nodding. Quick cut to Noreen close-up.	

In telling her story, Noreen Martin reveals the paradoxical situation in which she finds herself. She wants to protect her daughter from the ritualistic practice that has caused her pain, but also alludes to circumcision as a means of protection from the promiscuity North American culture appears, in her mind, to tolerate. Yet, while Noreen verbally expresses an understanding for the importance of the ritual, the close-ups on her tearful face indicate resentment towards her own circumcision.

Noreen Martin appears to be trapped between two patriarchal systems, and is at a disadvantage in both of them. She must cope with her subordination to her American husband, who, with the help of the American criminal justice system, can exercise some authority over the placement of their daughter. She must contend with the patriarchal customs of her Egyptian heritage, which are imposed upon her by Amira Wassir. Yet, while she loses her daughter, she finds her voice long enough to oppose her mother, as noted below.

Table B.3:
Scene 44. (excerpt) Outside of Court Room (Cat.1)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
	Jamie Ross leads Grandmother Amira to room next to Family Court room. Ross does not close door completely behind her.	
Amira: In this country your children turn out no better than dogs!	Cut to Ross Cut to Amira	Hear limited background noise (muted voices in hallways)
Jamie: In this country, you abuse a child you risk the penalty...		
Amira: It is not abuse, it is a family matter. We are saving Allison...	Cut to Ross Enter Noreen behind Ross.	
Jamie: By maiming her?		
Amira: Allison is none of your business. You Americans think you are better and smarter than we are.	Cut to Amira.	
Noreen: Mother, she is only trying to help Allison.	Noreen approaches mother, tearful. (Medium long shot.)	

Amira: She is not helping. She will bring disgrace to our family. This woman will never understand. But you know it is true. Noreen: All I know is what I have lived with since I was eight years old. How could you love me and do this to me?	Cut to close-up of grandmother. Cut to Noreen, hand held camera. Grandmother shakes head slightly, apparent shock and sadness.	

The exchange between the three women indicates the different perceptions surrounding the importance of female circumcision. Grandmother Amira's reaction to her daughter's opposition indicates a loss that she herself is experiencing amidst the efforts to stop the practice. She loses a brother. She loses the right to have contact with her granddaughter. And what she finds to be the most tragic is the breakdown of her family and the cultural traditions that protect her family's honor.

The cultural tensions that are present between two cultures are reflected in the racial tensions that exist in the United States. This is highlighted early in the episode when, in a separate but related incident, Lt. Van Buren announces to Briscoe and Curtis her intent to file a racial discrimination lawsuit against the police department. Van Buren's announcement serves both as a reminder to others about the oppressive system she must operate in, regardless of her position of authority over her detectives, and to announce her intent of resisting this system. This is reinforced visually, as the detectives appear slightly larger in the frame and closer to the camera, despite the fact

Table B.4:
Scene 7. (excerpt)Lieutenant Van Buren's Office. (Cat. 2)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
	[hand held camera] Med. shot following detectives from behind walking towards V. Buren's door as blonde woman in business attire walks out.	(can hear office bustle: phones, voices, echoes, footsteps of detectives.)
Briscoe: Who's she? The new community affairs liaison?	Detectives glance towards direction of departing woman.	
V. Buren: No. What do you have?	V. Buren turns sharply into office. Detectives look back at woman, exchange glances. Camera continues to follow detectives from behind as they walk into office. V. Buren turns from staring at bulletin board.	
Curtis: C'mon L.T. what's up?	Cut to V. Buren who turns to them with arms crossed (facing camera). Can see her between detectives (facing her), looks "surrounded" by them.	
V. Buren: Better you hear it from me. She's my lawyer. I was up for captain. One Police Plaza passed me over.		
Briscoe: You're suing the department?	Cut to detectives (med shot). Cut to V. Buren (med close)	
V. Buren: Title Seven. They promoted a white woman with the same score on the exam. I have the seniority.	Cut to face detectives from left side.	
Briscoe: Sorry we asked.		
V. Buren: (sarcastic inflection in voice) Right. Your turn.		

that their backs are turned. Van Buren, seen from behind and between the detectives, appears as if she is being engulfed. Finally, Briscoe's lack of enthusiasm for her efforts suggests that her declaration of resistance, while not immediately dismissed, is not embraced. Thus, Van Buren's effort to fight what she perceives as discrimination is challenged by the lack of support from the two men, exemplifying the reasons for her lawsuit.

Sample C: Harm

Synopsis: Briscoe and Curtis' attempt to find a motive for the assault of a retired divorce lawyer leads the way to a homicide investigation of thirty-five year old Mrs. Gerard, who died during a routine gynecological surgical procedure. ADA Abby Carmichael pursues the case, despite the misgivings of Executive ADA Jack McCoy. As a result of her own investigation, Carmichael discovers that Mrs. Gerard's doctors allowed a salesperson for the Biotech Medical Equipment company to operate malfunctioning equipment as part of a promotional scheme. During the trial, one of OB/GYN group members commits suicide, but not before informing his attorney that his colleague, Dr. Peter Rudnick, had agreed to receive kickbacks and rebates from Biotech if the hospital agreed to purchase the equipment. Carmichael successfully convicts Dr. Rudnick on manslaughter charges after the judge orders the defense attorney to reveal this information to the jury.

The story begins with the assault of a retired divorce attorney by a disgruntled divorcée. Kelly McFarland's personal story below leads to the investigation of her ex-husband, Dr. Robert Weiss, and of his former colleagues at the Medical Offices of Rudnick, Weiss, and Michaels.

Table C.1:
Scene 14. (excerpt) Interrogation Room. (Cat.1&2)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
McFarland: I wasn't trying to kill him!	[hand held camera] close-up on McFarland sitting down at table.	
Mr. Shay: Kelly, I think you should wait.	Cut to Briscoe and ADA Abby Carmichael, who are standing (medium).	
McFarland: No, no, I want to tell my side. I don't know how he did it, but my ex-husband bought Slattery off.	Cut to McFarland close-up.	
Carmichael: Ms. McFarland, I'm not interested in...	Cut to Briscoe and Carmichael (medium)	
McFarland: We had a summer house in Duchess County. To keep it out of my hands he used an old power of attorney and sold it to his brother for a tenth of what is was worth. That's what Jacob does.	Cut to McFarland.	
Briscoe: Right. Every ex-husband is the bad guy.	Cut to Briscoe and Carmichael.(medium)	
McFarland: I played the game too, I'm not saying I didn't. But Ken Slattery lied. He knew. I didn't waive away my rights. I went to see him to beg him to just tell the truth. And he refused.	Cut to McFarland close-up.	
Carmichael: So you hit him?	Cut to Carmichael, who sits down near McFarland at table (medium close).	[MUSIC BEGINS]
McFarland: He tried to push me out the door.	Cut to McFarland close-up. Cut to Shay, standing next to McFarland.	

And I was just in such a rage I...I picked up this mug and I...I swung it at him. Mr. Shay: It sounds like there's a lot of mitigation here, Ms. Carmichael. Curtis: A million and a half dollars' worth. McFarland: Oh, No. I ...I don't care about the money. It's Jacob. You don't' understand what it's like to...to fight somebody who always gets in his way. Carmichael: Alright, we'll look into it...	Cut to Curtis standing (med. close). Cut to Carmichael over shoulder of McFarland) Cut to McFarland close-up. (cross shoot) Cut to Curtis close-up (cross shoot) Cut to Carmichael, who stands up, walks past Curtis and camera. Cut to McFarland close-up, looking down.	

It is McFarland's narration that sets into motion a series of events that lead to a criminal investigation of Dr. Rudnick and Dr. Michaels. As a result of the detective's investigation into Dr. Weiss' finances, they discover that Dr. Weiss is selling his share of his medical practice in order to disassociate himself from a series of malpractice claims lodged against the two doctors. Their investigation leads them to the suspicious death of Maureen Gerard.

Indicating a strong prejudice against male doctors and the attitudes they may have towards female patients, Abby Carmichael takes it upon herself to investigate and issue indictments against Glynnis Ward, the sales representative responsible for illegally operating machinery during Dr. Gerard's surgery, as well as Michaels and Rudnick. In doing so, Carmichael has to confront both the medical community and the District Attorney's office, as noted in Transcript C.2.

Table C.2:
Scene 33. D.A. Adam Schiff's Office. (Cat. 1)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
Carmichael: Criminally negligent homicide. I feel like I'm going to the prom with the stamp club geek.	[hand held camera] Carmichael pacing, camera pans past her towards right, holds on McCoy and Schiff.	Background traffic noise
Schiff: Two to four, maximum security. No picnic for a couple of Park Avenue doctors... if we make it stick. That's the problem.	Camera pans left, following Schiff as he walks in front of camera past Carmichael. Camera holds close-up on Carmichael	
Carmichael: The nurse who saw the sales rep in the operating room couldn't pick her out of the photo array.	Cut to Schiff sitting down.	
McCoy: It may be time for us to make the best deal we can with all of them. Two years probation, fine...		
Carmichael: Oh, a fine, ouch! Poor doctors might have to hock one of their Porsches.	Cut to McCoy.	
McCoy: Abby, there isn't much of a case left.	Camera pans left to Carmichael.	
Carmichael: But there's still a victim. Jack, she went in a healthy woman. She came out a corpse.	Cut to McCoy over Carmichael's shoulder.	
McCoy: Between us, depraved indifference was a reach. Criminally negligent homicide is a gift, I wouldn't squander it.	Cut to Carmichael close-up. Cut to Schiff medium close-up. Cut to McCoy over Carmichael shoulder.	

Carmichael: You make excuses, I'll make the case. Schiff: Death by a salesman. Just put it in the win column.	Cut to Carmichael over McCoy shoulder. Cut to McCoy over Carmichael shoulder. Cut to Schiff, medium close, picking up telephone.	

Both the medical and criminal justice institutions fail to recognize Gerard's death as a homicide, insisting that it is an issue of medical malpractice. Carmichael's determination in pursuing a murder conviction against the doctor's responsible for Mrs. Gerard's death clearly goes against the judgement of Jack McCoy. For McCoy, the case cannot stand on its own merits within the context of the New York State penal code. For Carmichael, however, the case is not about the code, but instead about seeking justice for Maureen Gerard and all other patients whom may have shared the same fate.

The strong feelings Abby Carmichael has about the case are further evidenced by her presence in the frame. She is constantly moving, the camera being forced to follow her as she argues her point of view with her male counterparts through a series of pans and cross over shots. However, her clear resistance to McCoy's interpretation of the case is highlighted by a final close-up on her face, showing the intensity of both her opinions and of the moment.

As the victim, it is impossible for Maureen Gerard's to narrate her own story. As a result, others serve as her voice in the courtroom. Witnesses such as her husband and attending nurses, describe the events that led to her death. In some cases, Maureen

Gerard's story is intermixed with the narrator's personal story, as noted in Nurse Panati's testimony below.

Table C.3:
Scene 37. (excerpt) Nurse Panati on Stand. (Cat. 2 & 3)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
Panati: Dr. Rudnick came in. He had another surgery scheduled for nine o'clock, and he had a patient in labor. He told us we'd have to be finished with Mrs. Gerard by 8:45.	Cut to Carmichael, who walks away from hand held camera towards prosecution table...turns to face Panati. Cut to Drs. (med. close)seated at defense table.	Echoes of slight movement in the courtroom. (Attorney's footsteps, etc.)
Carmichael: And what happened during the surgery?	Cut to Carmichael (med. close)	
Panati: We were going at a pretty good clip. Ms. Ward was administering the electrolytic fluid. Then halfway through I noticed that the fluid wasn't draining out of Mrs. Gerard. I told the doctors. Dr. Rudnick said he didn't see a problem and he didn't want to stop the surgery.	Cut to Panati, med. close-up centered in middle of frame. Cut to Dr. Rudnick, camera pans right to Dr. Michaels.	
Carmichael: And what did Dr. Michaels say?		
Panati: Nothing. He just ignored me.	Cut to Panati.	
Carmichael: What happened when the surgery was over?	Cut to Carmichael.	
Panati: The lights had been dimmed for the video monitor, and when	Cut to Panati.	

they came back on, we all saw that Mrs. Gerard was bloated and in a lot of distress. Carmichael: How exactly did she look? Panati: Her abdomen was severely distended, her arms and legs were puffy, her face was swollen, she was hardly recognizable. They rushed her to the ER. Carmichael: Were you later able to determine how much fluid had been pumped into Mrs. Gerard? Panati: Yes, just under ten liters. Carmichael: And how much is considered safe? Panati: Three to four liters. Carmichael: Thank you. Brolan: Ms. Panati, if you were convinced Mrs. Gerard was in danger, wasn't it your duty to warn the doctors again, even to stop the surgery? Panati: If I had tried to do that, Mr. Rudnick would've fired me. Brolan: (to Judge) Move to strike.	Cut to med. close of two female jurists. Cut to Carmichael, camera follows her, walking left. Cut to Panati. Cut to med. close of Mr. Gerard behind prosecution table. Cut to Carmichael close-up as she moves closer to Panati...slight high angle. Cut to Panati, close-up. (cross shoot) Panati grimacing, pausing. Cut to Carmichael, who walks away from camera. Camera pans right towards defense table, then left as Defense Attorney Brolan walks towards Panati. Cut to Panati close-up. Cut to Brolan (med. shot) Cut to judge behind bench. (med. long)	

Judge: Denied. Brolan: Nurse Panati, you testified that ten liters of fluid were pumped into Mrs. Gerard, yet the charts only indicate four liters. Panati: (broken voice) I wrote that. Brolan: You falsified these documents? Panati: Yes. Brolan: Why? To cover up your own failure to act? Your own negligence? Panati: No. I did it to protect Dr. Michael's. Brolan: No more questions.	Cut to Carmichael sitting behind Brolan, over Brolan's shoulder. Cut to Panati, close-up. Eyes well with tears. Cut to Brolan, medium shot. Cut to Panati close-up. Cut to Dr. Michaels (med. shot) Cut to Panati close-up. Panati tearful.	MUSIC BEGINS

Nurse Panati's testimony reveals the suffering endured by Mrs. Gerard during the operation. However, this narrative is also a personal one, as she reveals her own attempts to protect Dr. Michaels, despite the fact that she admits that he ignored her in the operating room. Close-up shots of Panati's expressions while she is testifying suggest that she knew her behavior, and that of Dr. Michaels, was criminal.

In assembling the separate narratives, Carmichael is able to piece together Maureen Gerard's story, revealing the true reasons behind her death for the jury. The ability to do so despite the obstacles placed in front of her by both the medical and legal professional clearly empower her. Despite this fact, she is not convinced that her work is

enough to convince the jury to find the defendants guilty of murder. These doubts are further compounded by the death of Dr. Michaels, who commits suicide after Carmichael refuse to plea him out on a lesser charge.

Table C.4:
Scene 42. Carmichael and McCoy at Courthouse (Cat. 1)

Linguistic Narrative Space	Pictorial Narrative Space: Iconic and Gestural	Musical Narrative Space
	[Hand held] Camera follows McCoy following Carmichael as she walks out of Courthouse (from left). Raining, wet, lots of movement as people with	Traffic noise. Thunder and wind, as well as rain falling on pavement.
Jack: Nice finish.	umbrellas and rain gear go up and down the long Court	
Abby: It wasn't enough.	House steps. Can see large marble columns. McCoy	
Jack: Hung jury?	follows Carmichael, who is looking dejected.	
Abby: Smells like.		
Briscoe: Counselors! Guess who won't be making any more house calls. State police in Putnam County found Dr. Michaels in his car at the bottom of a gully.	Camera turns left towards voice, as McCoy turns left. Lenny Briscoe enters from back left side of screen. Camera follows Briscoe as he approaches the ADAs and stops when they are together.	
Jack: Accident?	McCoy looks at Briscoe,	
Briscoe: No skid marks, but no proof it's a suicide.	Abby looks down as Briscoe speaks. Person crosses in front of them. Can see street and	
Jack: Thanks...that's one verdict you don't have to worry about.	cars behind them. Lots of movement. Briscoe nods and turns, walks back towards	
Abby: Jack, Michaels came to me asking for a deal. He said he had evidence to convict Rudnick. I might have	direction he came from. Abby looking down as McCoy begins to walk away, towards camera. Turns back towards Carmichael, who is	

set terms he couldn't live with. Jack: No, no, no, no. no...his choice, Abby. His lawyer know he asked for a plea? Abby: Yeah, his lawyer was there. Jack: Call the judge for a conference.	looking upset. She looks up at McCoy, her gaze aligned with the marble columns (vertical vectors). Over Carmichael shoulder to McCoy. Camera moves towards the left, allowing profile of Carmichael to be seen, while getting full view of McCoy. Carmichael nods. McCoy nods, giving her a reassuring look, turns to walk away, Carmichael follows.	

The largess of New York City seems to surround Abby Carmichael as she discusses Dr. Michael's death with Briscoe and McCoy. There is a lot of activity surrounding their conversation, the hand held camera following some of this movement. Carmichael appears to be looking up at McCoy as they are speaking, the direction of her gaze paralleling the vertical lines carved into the marble columns of the Courthouse. However, while both are in the frame, McCoy seems larger than Carmichael, and appears to be standing over her, much like the architectural design of the Courthouse. Only a profile of Carmichael is seen when McCoy offers his advice.

Up until this point, McCoy's involvement in the case, despite his doubts, is noted only by his presence in the back of the courtroom during the trial. When Carmichael finds herself turning to McCoy after Michaels' death, he takes some control over the case by insisting that Carmichael call the judge. As a result, it is both McCoy and Carmichael that convince the judge to coerce Michaels' defense attorney to reveal the testimony Dr. Michaels had planned to offer. In succeeding to enter this normally protected speech into

evidence, Abby Carmichael convicts Dr. Rudnick and Ms. Ward, and dismantles the corrupt medical practice. However, as a result of his own actions, Jack McCoy remains unconvinced that the case was won on its own merits, pointing out in the end that the real reason behind the victory was convincing the judge to ignore "attorney-client privilege". What he suggests, in essence, is that his involvement in the case minimizes Carmichael's successful prosecution of the case.

Discussion

Law & Order depicts the criminal justice system working as two separate but equal units when attempting to solve and try a criminal case. Theoretically, each unit works as a team towards the same end. However, the obstacles faced by Lt. Van Buren and each of the female ADAs within the New York criminal justice system reveal that this is not the case. What is seen, instead, is an unyielding patriarchal institutional system that puts these women in marginal positions of power and authority (Corcos in Jarvis and Paul, 1998).

The cases dealt with in these three episodes are clearly 'women centered': the death of a female prostitute, female circumcision, greedy gynecologists. While these criminal acts are a violation of the statutes of New York, they seemingly carry little weight in the eyes of the system. It was only because Jack McCoy saw the cases of having limited legal merit within the scope of the law, that the ADAs were given the authority to prosecute these cases.

The character to character narrations that take place when addressing the merits of these issues, and the true victims of the crime, reveal a dominant patriarchal subject

position from which the text can be read. However, in these narratives the four women often voice objections, offer resistance, and/or reject this patriarchal system. Their words and actions offer a different subject position from that of the dominant patriarchal point of view. Van Buren's admonishment of Briscoe for his lack of interest in a prostitute's murder, as well as her plans to seek legal action against the department despite the detective's lack of support evidences this fact. The female ADAs' insistence on pursuing these cases in court, despite the objections and criticism of their male superiors, also implies the existence of a reverse discourse. These are feminist spaces in which the viewer can perform the text.

Jack McCoy's character reminds the viewer that ideating these spaces of resistance does not necessarily change the balance of power within the system itself. His comments about the merits of each of the cases presented here serve to assert the patriarchal nature of the legal system, and reassert his interest in supporting that patriarchy. The actions of both McCoy and his female counterparts suggest that that they are not able to win by working within the criminal justice system, so they have to manipulate it in order to succeed. Nonetheless, while they appear to be working together, McCoy's comments often serve to discredit the efforts made by the assisting DA. He consistently reminds her that it was their manipulation of the system, and not the value of her argument, that allows her to "win" that case.

This does not, however, minimize the significance of the spaces of resistance these women reflect. While the overall patriarchal point of view of a male dominated criminal justice system remains unchanged throughout the text, this point of view is

indeed being challenged. These challenges come in the form of both speech and action, as being presented by the pictorial narratives.

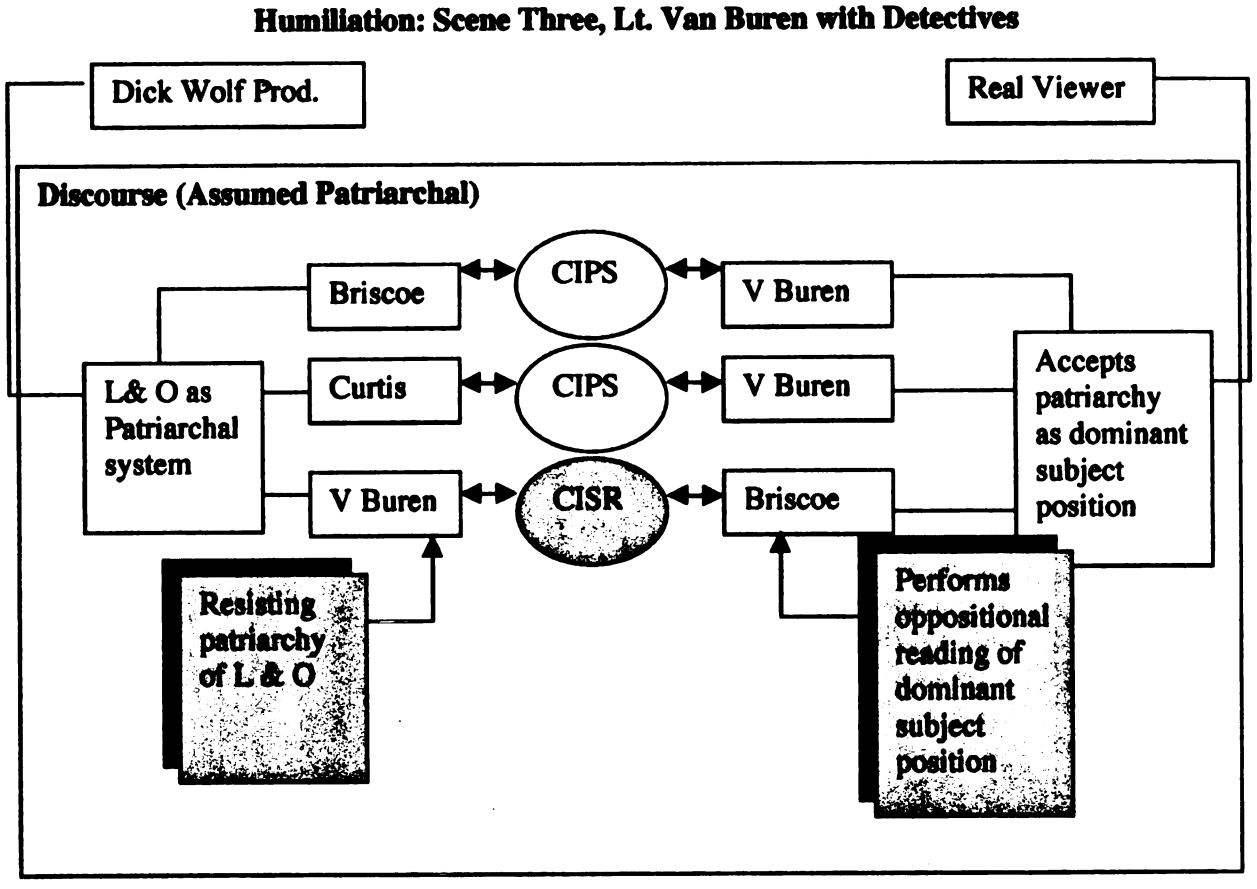
Those who are not part of the criminal justice system, but are forced to work within it as a result of their actions or the actions of others, are also subject to its masculist ideals. Gwyn George, despite being a homicide victim, is all but blamed by the detectives for her murder. McCoy dismisses Allison Martin's planned circumcision as a secondary problem to that of Mr. Moussad's homicide. Maureen Gerard's death is classified by both McCoy and Schiff as a mere case of medical negligence. Because the victims are not able to articulate a resistive space, they must rely on other members of the system to help them. If it were not for the Lieutenant and the assistant DAs working against the patriarchal system, justice would not have been served.

The choice to engage in criminal behavior by some of the defendants also reflects the creation of resistant spaces. Julia Danforth murders Gwyn George and attempts to frame her husband in an attempt to punish him for his extra-marital activities. Martin kills Mr. Moussad in order to prevent him from orchestrating Allison Martin's circumcision. Kelly McFarland assaults Slattery as a result of her resisting her ex-husband's attempt to steal from her again. Their actions were attempts to resist a patriarchal system in which they were living at the time. While these defendants are ultimately punished by the system they are resisting, the transition from being a victim of the system to an empowered resistor of the system is apparent when describing their illegal actions. Their personal narratives contribute to an overall ideational space of resistance in the text, as does their unwillingness to turn to the criminal justice system to confront the injustices.[i]

The number of character to character narratives that reflect a resistance to the dominant patriarchal position of the criminal justice system suggests that a reverse discourse is present in the overall *Law & Order* text. If one were to apply the expanded narrative framework outlined in Figure 2.3, it is possible to extricate a feminist narrative from the episodes analyzed here. Using the third scene of *Humiliation* (Transcript A.1) as an example, one can interpret Lt. Van Buren's responses to Briscoe's dismissal of Gwyn George's homicide as a reaction to the dominant patriarchal position the text is implying. As noted in Figure 3.1, Van Buren's comments to Briscoe can be performed *both* as a narrative that reflects a dominant patriarchal subject position, and as a narrative that opposes this patriarchy. This suggests that the scene is a multi-narrative text from which multiple point of views can be asserted.

Some of the stories told by the female characters suggest that they are caught between these two conflicting points of views within the story world. Noreen Martin is caught between the two patriarchal systems influencing her life, which includes the patriarchal cultural traditions of her Egyptian heritage and the custodial constraints placed on her by the criminal justice system. She is also torn between the importance of protecting her daughter from the ritual, and protecting her from engaging in sexual behavior with men before marriage. Meanwhile, Nurse Panati struggles with her desires to be loyal to her male superiors, particularly Dr. Micheals, while recognizing that Mrs. Gerard had been a victim of their gross malpractice. Hence, both Martin and Panati pay a price for their struggle: they ultimately lose the people they are trying to protect altogether.

Figure 3.1: Feminist Narrative in Law & Order



In *Law & Order*, the focus is on the narrative; there is very little action. The viewer is present when the participants of the criminal justice system question what is around them, simultaneously engaging in the discovery process with the characters in the story. An objective hand held camera acts as the viewer's eyes, follows the dialogue as it is being spoken. It often lingers on one character, as if mulling over what s/he was saying, while another character begins to speak.

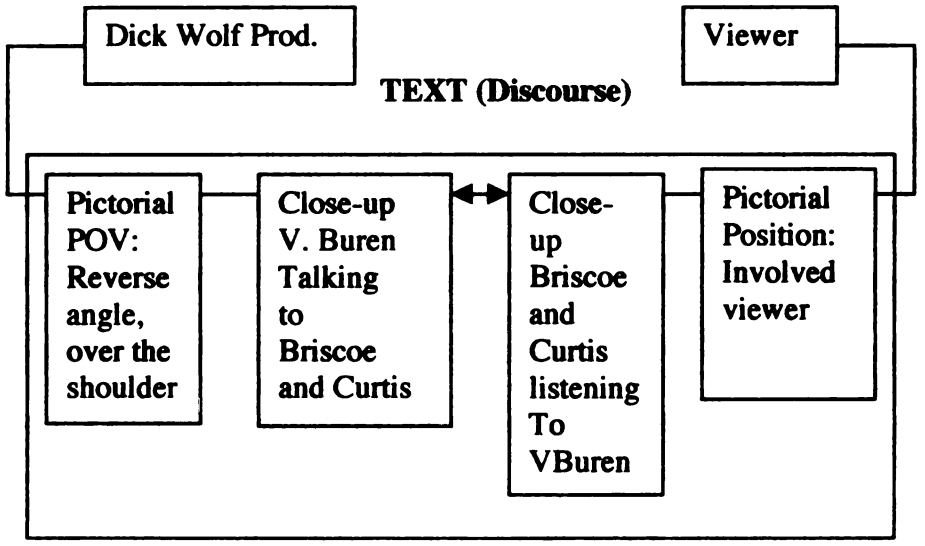
The pictorial narrative also combines reverse angle camera shots when guiding the viewer through each verbal narrative. By reversing the angles throughout a scene, the camera permits the viewer to recognize shifting points of view during character to character exchanges. By allowing the viewer to become more involved with the text through the eyes of the camera, the viewer can take a closer look into the process of criminal justice. For example, the inclusion of high angle shots of ADAs standing over defendants serves to remind the viewer of the power the criminal justice system has over individuals who seek to challenge it. Meanwhile, the continual use of over the shoulder shots allows the viewer to "listen in" on more intimate exchanges during a defendant's confession, which may reveal conflicting points of views among the characters as noted in Figure 3.2.

As the camera cuts back and forth throughout the exchange between Van Buren and the detectives, it reflects the presence of two points of views being reflected by the text. The pictorial point of view during this exchange includes a series of reverse angle shots, including some over the shoulder, opening the pictorial narrative for reverse

discourse. This allows for a pictorial reading of discussions between the characters in the scene, and suggests that the pictorial position of the viewer can be more involved in

Figure 3.2: Pictorial Narrative

Humiliation: Scene Three, Lt. Van Buren w/Detectives



negotiating the significance of their conversations to the over all narrative discourse if the viewer so chooses.

Note, also, the number of close-ups while each of the individual defendants is narrating his/her story. These shots are also used to intensify the empowering moments of the characters as they create their ideational space. The use of cross-shooting techniques in the pictorial text allows for these close-ups during narrative exchanges. By centering the character in the frame, and by allowing the viewer to get closer, the character visually appears larger and stronger. Being alone in the frame reflects the

character's success in securing a space for her/himself within the pictorial narrative structure, from which s/he can reflect a reverse discourse.

There is a limited use presence of musical narrative throughout the *Law & Order* text. The use of sound effects depicting off-screen activities such as office activity and city traffic continually remind the viewer of the active space of the story world in which the narrative is taking place. This is most notable during discussions in offices and conference rooms. However, when in court, background noises are subdued. For example, the individual testimonies of the Martins, and that offered by Nurse Panati, are heard without off-screen sounds to complement their narrations. The camera allows us to get close to them through the use of close-ups and cross-shots, but there is limited gestural movement outside of the attorney questioning the individual on the stand. The controlled use of sounds and movement makes the linguistic narrative central to the scene.

Throughout select narratives, the same brief musical score indicates a point of view being asserted by the narrative discourse. This leitmotiv is introduced to the viewer when a defendant or a witness' actions and/or feelings are being narrated. In each of these cases, the tone of the music indicates an admission to their violation of the overarching social and/or legal norms by their actions. The accompanying explanations, however, reflect alternative points of view that resist the overarching patriarchal structure.

Summary

This analysis is an initial attempt at opening narrative theory in order to recognize alternative readings to that of the dominant subject position found in a televisual text.

The findings indicate that, by expanding narrative theory, it is possible to identify multiple subject positions in both the verbal and pictorial constructions of ideational space in a televisual text. In *Law & Order*, the dominant point of view of a patriarchal criminal justice system that represents and defends masculist ideals is challenged by the numerous attempts by characters within the story world to resist it through both word and action. Character-to-character storytelling provides a number of narratives that do not reflect the dominant subject position, but instead yield a position that appears to resist and/or reject it. While this alternative position does not replace the dominant point of view, its presence suggests that both positions can co-exist within the same text.

---

[1] It is possible that some feminists, power feminists in particular, would argue that violating the rules of the criminal justice system, such as committing acts of violence against others, are not empowering. Instead, they are viewed as using their own victimization as an excuse to commit criminal acts. For a further discussion refer to Maglin, Nan. B. & Perry, Donna. (1996) "Bad girls" /"good girls": women, sex, & power in the nineties. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

CHAPTER 4

AUDIENCE RESPONSE THEORY

The textual analysis in Chapter 3 identifies a patriarchal story world experience that guides the *Law & Order* text. It also reveals evidence of a reverse discourse or second implied authorship that provides an alternative point of view to that of patriarchy. Keep in mind, however, that up until this point the concern has been specifically about the televisual text, and the multiple points of view from which a viewer can engage it. In the following chapters we move on to look at the extent to which the viewer of this text recognizes that these multiple points of view are being circumscribed by the over all patriarchal space of the story-world.

To begin investigating this question, one must assume that viewers of televisual media texts are not passive recipients, but instead are active sense makers of the information being offered in the text (Chisolm, 1991, pg. 389). Like any other aesthetic object, the conventions of a televisual text are dictated by what Howard Becker (1982) refers to as the "abstractions to be used to convey particular ideas or experiences" (Becker, 1982, pg. 28). However, viewers of televisual texts rely not only on these conventions, but also on their prior knowledge to contribute to their interpretation of the text. In order to understand the process of how this sensemaking takes place, the focus of this research moves from narrative theory to theories of reception. *Reception theories* refer to a body of work that shifts the focus of concern from an author and a work to a text and a reader (Holub, 1984). For the purpose of this research, the theoretical work of Wolfgang Iser, which falls under the umbrella of reception theory, is the most useful.[i]

Iser, Audience Response, and the Text-Reader Relationship

Wolfgang Iser's audience response framework specifically looks at how and under what conditions a text has meaning for a reader (Holub, 1984, pg. 82). While Iser's work focuses on literary texts, it can be equally applied to televisual texts. To this effect, the following discussion replaces the term "reader" with the more appropriate term of "viewer". Iser's work is based on the assumption that the text is a set of instructions that guides a viewer into an intended aesthetic experience. This aesthetic experience, or story world, is created by the ideations of a viewer, which are stimulated by a text (Iser, 1978). A textual system of information that is given and not given also guides the production of meaning. It is in the engagement of text and reader where meaning is produced (Allen, 1994, pg. 102).

A narrative text is made up of segments of ideas, where each segment provides an opportunity for the viewer to create meaning. According to Iser, it is what is implied within a text that gives "shape and weight to [its] meaning" (Iser, 1978, pg. 168). As discussed in the previous chapters, the implied author(s) of a narrative offers a point of view a viewer can assert as s/he maneuvers through a text. However, unlike narrative theory, audience response assumes that the way in which a viewer is instructed to adopt a text's point of view relies not only on the text, but also on a viewer's prior knowledge acquired through her/his prior experiences. Thus, while the information provided by the text does not change, the way in which the reader can ideate a story world, regardless of the information provided, may vary.

A viewer's prior knowledge is not randomly brought into the story world, but is guided, ultimately, by the implied authorship of the text. As a result, the viewer modifies

her/his knowledge in order to construct a story world in accordance with the set of instructions in the text. Over time, as a viewer is guided through a text, s/he begins to comprehend the text as a sum of her/his ideations.

A text is comprised of potential meanings that stimulate the ideational process of the viewer who is engaging it. This results in the construction of an aesthetic space. It is not a reproduction of a referenced reality, nor is it a recreation of the viewer's personal experience. A viewer is guided by the points of view offered by a text without being able to respond or question it. This establishes a contingent relationship between a text and viewer that is not only indeterminate, but, as Iser argues, asymmetrical in nature (Iser, 1978).

Blanks and Negations

Between the segments of a narrative are *gaps* that break up the continuity of a text and stimulate a viewer's ideation process. Within these gaps, the viewer relies on what Iser refers to as *blanks* that are in a text to be guided into the intended story world. Blanks stimulate ideations that bridge together those segments that appear to follow a pattern of meaning. When confronted with a blank in a text, a viewer is able to bring forth her/his experiences to the text, and still be guided by the segments themselves, allowing a balanced text-viewer relationship to continue.

However, a viewer may come to a segment in the text where the ideation stimulated fails to create a logical connection to the next one. This *negation* prompts the viewer to (a) consider that something might be different in the connection, or (b) reevaluate the ideations s/he has already made (Holub, 1984). As Iser points out, negations are "an active force that stimulates the reader into building up the ideational

space of the text" (Iser, 1978, pg. 213). Therefore, by negating what the viewer has brought to the text at the moment, the text guides the viewer into a different, but intended, point of view. As a viewer's familiar experiences are brought to a text and negated, they are not eliminated. S/he continues to draw upon her/his familiar points of view while searching to create images that will allow her/him to adopt a position "commensurate to the intentions of the text" (Iser, 1978, pg. 214).

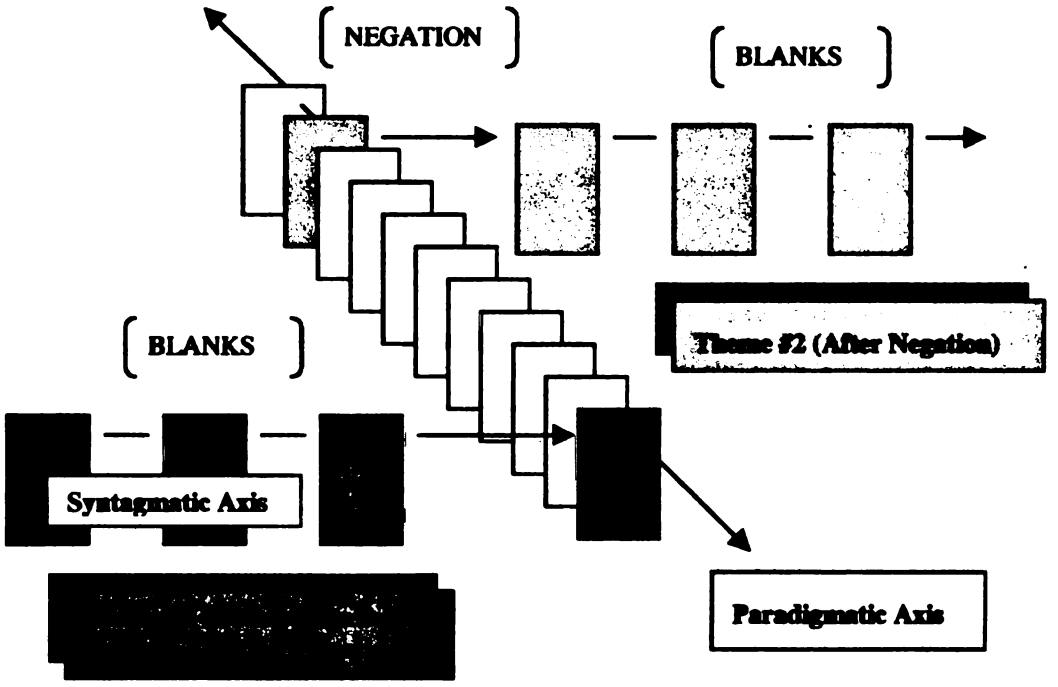
Often, blanks appear in a text because the real authors seek to enhance the viewer's ideational experience through a structured uncertainty. For example, withholding details or purposely providing misleading information in a text may provide the viewer with the opportunity to experience suspense, fear, or other intense emotions that contribute to the process of creating a specific aesthetic space (Iser, 1974, 1978). However, if a viewer is unable or unwilling to engage a text according to the guidelines, regardless of the experiential opportunities they offer, the text-viewer relationship will ultimately break down. In short, disorientation occurs, and the viewer may stop engaging the text altogether.

Themes and Horizons

Multiple points of view arise from encountering blanks in the texts, specifically when they guide a viewer away from her/his own views and those implied in the story-world of the text. Iser argues that the multiplicity of ideas that arise from this process is a result of the shifting or "wandering" viewpoints, which "allows the reader/performer to perform multiple and interconnected textual perspectives that are offset whenever there is a switch from one viewpoint to another" (Iser, 1978, pg. 118). However, a wandering viewpoint is actually structured because it follows a "theme and horizon" order that is

accomplished through the structure of blanks and negations. As noted in Figure 4.1, when creating blanks along a syntagmatic axis of a text, the reader is following a specific theme. When new information is introduced, resulting in a paradigmatic shift or negation, a new theme emerges, relegating the old theme to a horizon. Over time a reader can note a pattern of thematic change which allows the text to be understood as a sum of a viewer's ideations, as opposed to multiple individual points of view. A viewer must combine these wandering viewpoints in order to establish a sense of coherence when the ideation process is taking place (Iser, 1978). If the engagement of a text is successful, the understanding of it will ultimately fall within the parameters offered by the inscribed implied author or point of view in the text.

Figure 4.1: Following a Theme and Horizon Order of a Text[a]



Audience Response and Patriarchal Space

Recall that the successful engagement of a text relies on the understanding of that text within the parameters offered by the inscribed implied author or point of view. The analysis in Chapter 3 demonstrates that narrative theory can be opened up to allow for a reverse discourse to challenge what is asserted by the reader/viewer as the dominant point of view of the text. The co-existence of multiple viewpoints in the story world of a text provides a viewer with more than one set of instructions to guide her/his ideational process. Recall that the contingent and asymmetrical relationship between a text and viewer must be maintained throughout the ideation process in order to guide the creation of a story world. For a viewer to experience an ideated non-patriarchal space within the story world, s/he must be able to do so while still engaging the overarching patriarchal narrative text. Therefore, a viewer must contend with several sets of instructions within the text in order to engage in a reverse discourse within a patriarchal text.

Pictorial Narratives and Audience Response

When engaging a televisual text the process becomes more complicated, as the viewer must engage not only the verbal narrative, but pictorial and musical narratives as well (Allen, 1992). These narratives come together in a single text, upon which the viewer must rely to create a story world through the ideational process.

Within a pictorial narrative one must look at the use of space, or "spatial arrangements" that are given or present within a frame (Barbatsis, 1993, pg.10). The viewer is guided not only by the linguistic narrative, but also by the presence of reverse angles, point of view shots, cuts, and other visual cues offered by the gestural and iconic

narratives in the frame. The viewer makes sense of the patterns or images created by these cues. However, what is not seen within the frame is also significant. What is not seen in the frame functions as a "pictorially structured gap" which the viewer must fill in order to understand the significance of what is being seen within it (Barbatsis, 1996).

The viewer must also fill the gaps created by musical narratives, including those that do not correspond to the events occurring directly in the frame. In engaging the musical narrative, several things may happen. A viewer's performance of a text may be facilitated by the predictive nature of off-screen music and/or noise (Zettl, 1990, pg. 345) of the musical narrative, which complements the linguistic and/or pictorial narratives. On the other hand, a viewer may be guided towards a point of view if the musical narrative contradicts what the viewer sees and hears on-screen. The negation that results from this incongruence may prompt the viewer to reevaluate what s/he has heard and seen within the frame. Thus, the potential exists for a non-linguistic narrative to serve as a narrative of reverse discourse, creating an ideated space where alternative point of view can be asserted.

Audience Response and Feminism

Audience response criticism is helpful in understanding the sense making process that occurs when a viewer engages a televisual text. This aesthetic framework allows the researcher to think about how a viewer is guided by the text's dominant subject position. How a viewer does so allows for the identification of less obvious but no less important competing points of view within a text (van Zoonen, 1994).

Summary

The goal of this study is not to "tell" viewers what the dominant reading should be, but to induce information that will allow the researcher to note whether viewers interpret the *Law & Order* text as asserting a patriarchal point of view that is defined by masculist ideals. Furthermore, by looking at the process by which the viewer ideates meaning when engaging this text, it can be identified if a viewer, within the parameters of the patriarchal text, is willing and able to ideate spaces within the story world that reflect an alternative or 'competing' point of view.

---

[1] According to Robert C. Holub (1984), there are several features that separate reader response criticism from reception theory. Reader response is not a critical movement; reader response critics influence each other very little. On the other hand, reception theorists present themselves as a more cohesive group, representing a more collective undertaking. The work of Wolfgang Iser is, thus far, the only contact between reception theory and reader response theory. See pp. xi-xiv.

[2] This diagram was adapted from Camacho, M. & O'Gorman, K. "Developing a Universal User-Created Homepage Interface to Address the Specific Needs of Unique Communities". Presented at the Conference on Theory and Research of Communication and culture, California State University at Fullerton. March 29, 1996.

CHAPTER 5

METHOD

In Chapter 3, a textual analysis of *Law & Order* revealed a dominant patriarchal discourse in which resistive spaces to this patriarchy were identified. At this stage of the project it is important that viewers of the same text be allowed to describe, in their own words, the process of creating a dominant reading. It is helpful to understand the process of ideation that occurs when these viewers engage the *Law & Order* text. The audience response framework facilitates this understanding. By analyzing their reactions to and observations about the televisual text, researchers can note if they identify the dominant discourse in the text as patriarchal, as well as identify any ideated spaces they construct that resist that patriarchal point of view.

Qualitative techniques are welcomed tools for many feminist and critical scholars who study television because it allows them to collect and analyze data that exposes "both the conscious and unconscious construction of meaning by media producers and audiences" (van Zoonen, 1994, pg. 135). The method most useful for this research must allow for open expression and opinion building. Because focus groups interviews produce qualitative data that provide insights into the attitudes, perceptions, and opinions of its participants (Krueger, 1994), this research instrument is most useful in obtaining data regarding the process of the viewer as s/he engages in a text-viewer relationship.

Focus groups are samples of shared experiences where participants build on each other's verbalized ideas (Fingerson, 1999). The group interaction that takes place has the potential of providing greater insight into the perspectives offered by each of the

participants. The focus group presents a more natural environment than that of other kinds of interviewing methods because participants are influencing and influenced by others, similar to what is experienced in real life (Krueger, 1994). Furthermore, in the process of self-disclosure, participants provide the potential of allowing the researcher to hear their reality with a minimal amount of assumptions being created by the researcher beforehand. This potential is further realized when the moderator provides the space for participant discussion by minimizing her/his interruptions of the conversations. Not only does this provide an atmosphere of open exchange among the participants, but it also reduces the unbalanced power relationship that is often present between a researcher and a research participant (van Zoonen, 1994).

Focus Groups and Feminist Scholarship

Reducing the power relationship between the researcher and a research participant makes focus group research attractive to feminist researchers. For feminist media scholars, focus groups are both suited to feminist research as well as media scholarship. According to Fingerson (1999), television and media content are often talked about and interpreted within groups, thus making focus groups particularly useful in mass communication research. As Lunt and Livingstone (1996) point out, "focus groups is a method in tune with current media research, which are redefining media processes and the conception of the audience" (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996, pg. 90). They are used to examine the everyday ways in which audiences make sense of television, helping to uncover the process by which meaning is "socially constructed through every day talk" (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996, pg. 85). As a result, focus groups provide an additional advantage for feminist scholarship, because they enable a participant to enhance the

"awareness of their situation in a way similar to the processes of consciousness-raising groups" (Callahan, quoted in Reinhartz, 1992, pg. 223).

Focus Groups and Television

Audiences use television and other media in their daily lives as a means of creating meaning and developing an understanding of the world around them (Fingerson, 1999). Focus groups facilitate this process of meaning creation by encouraging interaction with others in a group while discussing televisual texts. The social interaction between members of the group may also facilitate the discussion of the multiple points of view that are offered by the text's verbal, visual, musical, and gestural narratives. The information generated from these focus groups allows an inductive search for emergent patterns in the data, permitting the researcher to look for major themes and corresponding points of view that are tied to the critical viewing process.

Focus Groups and Self-Reflexivity

Methodological concerns often arise when a textual analysis is previously performed on a television text that participants will be viewing and discussing. The possibilities of not only exploring a participant's experiences, but exploiting them for the purposes of research is a difficulty often experienced in data interpretation (Reay, 1996, pg. 63). Scholars must consider, when working with this data, the ways in which her/his own points of view impact both the story that is being told, and the discourse that is produced (Anderson, et. al., 1987, Reay, 1996).

Issues of self-reflexivity when conducting qualitative research is of paramount importance to the feminist researcher (Reay, 1996). In an attempt to overcome the exploitation of a participant's voice in feminist research, same-sex interviews are often

conducted in order to establish a shared understanding of the stories being told. While helpful, "gender congruity" is often not enough to overcome the misunderstandings that often take place between an interviewer and a participant (Reissman, 1987, pg. 188). Careful attention must always be paid to racial and ethnic differences, as well as to differences in social class and cultural values. Failure to recognize the unique and diverse nuances of a discussion between an interviewer and a participant will lead to incomplete and inaccurate data.

One must question at all times what story is being told: that of the participant, or a story that results from the collaboration between participant and researcher (Anderson, et. al., 1987). To alleviate this, steps are taken so that the original voice and intent of the participant can be heard, understood, and recorded. (Reissman, 1987). Proper interviewing skills, listening without analyzing, probing for explanations, and recognizing the context in which stories are told, are all techniques that a facilitator should employ to allow for the appropriate recording of a participant's self-expression.

The most important way of alleviating methodological concerns is by ensuring that the research tool is appropriate in both design and effectiveness (Krueger, 1994). Specifically, the success of a focus group interview relies primarily on the effectiveness of the questioning route. This predetermined guide is designed to elicit responses about the research topic in a participant's own voice, and on her/his own terms, without compromising the quality of the information being provided. It is also simultaneously providing mental cues which may spark spontaneous discussions among participants, allowing for the exploration of the "range of perceptions" about the topic (Krueger, 1994, pg. 54).

Discussing *Law & Order*: Data Collection

Chapter 3 reveals an overarching masculist point of view in the *Law & Order* text, as well as the simultaneous existence of a reverse discourse that rejects this patriarchy and attempts to assert a feminist point of view reflected by the same text. In order to identify whether a viewer is guided by the intended patriarchal reading of the text, a series of focus group interviews was conducted. A questioning route was designed to serve as a means of guiding the focus group conversations towards a discussion of the reactions of the participants. The following is a detailed account of this data collection process.

Sample

Because this is a foundational study intended to identify feminist perspectives of a televisual text, the focus group participants were female. Women attending undergraduate school at Michigan State University were recruited from four separate courses in Advertising, Telecommunication, Women's Studies, and Video Production. These courses were selected based on the professor's willingness to provide extra credit points as an incentive for participating in the focus group interviews. Women who are fluent in English, including those who consider English their second language, were invited. Forty-nine women participated in six focus group interviews.

In order to maximize the effectiveness of the research method, the first focus group served as a pilot or initial 'run-through" of the focus group procedure, questioning route, and audio recording. Sixteen students, both male and female, were randomly invited to participate in this session by word of mouth and email. Seven agreed to participate. In order not to risk changing the dynamics and/or seriousness of the

interview, the students were not informed that this was a pilot session. Their discussions were recorded and transcribed, but the data was not analyzed for this study. Based on the dynamics of the initial focus group, the questioning route was slightly tailored in order to ensure more quality responses.

Scheduling and Procedure

The seven focus groups were conducted in approximately a week and a half in early February 2001. The sessions were held during the afternoon on weekends, and on Thursday and Friday evening. Because no more than twelve participants are desired for a focus group discussion (Krueger, 1994), students were pre-assigned a date and time to participate and were issued reminders by electronic mail and by phone. Because the meeting times coincided with lunch or dinner hours, those who appeared at their assigned session were provided a meal of pizza and a variety of snacks and beverages.

The meetings took place in a classroom that was set up for audio recording, including suspended microphones from the ceiling and soundproof walls. An assistant was responsible for the recording of the conversations in an adjoining audio laboratory. At the beginning of each interview the assistant drew a "seating chart", allowing her to record where each participant was seated in the room in order to assist in identifying participant's voices on the audio tape later on. She also used this chart to write the names of each participant, their racial and ethnic characteristics, and salient comments, gestures and other points of interest corresponding to each particular individual. Following each focus group interview, the assistant transcribed the recorded discussions with the assistance of the seating chart. The researcher then reviewed each tape and transcript.

At the beginning of each of the 11/2hour focus group sessions that were moderated by the researcher, participants were asked to complete a university-approved consent form. Following this, the researcher/moderator briefly explained the purpose of the research and the focus group format. She also explained to the participants that there were no "right" or "wrong" answers to the questions being posed, inviting each participant to simply share what s/he felt was relevant to the discussion.

Once the recording began, participants were asked to introduce themselves by their first name, and to tell the group how often they watched *Law & Order*. This opening question was asked not only to "break the ice" between the participants and the respondent, but to also assess the familiarity of each of the participants with the text, as noted in Appendix A. While previous experience watching *Law & Order* could enhance a viewer's sensemaking process, a participant who already knew the outcome of the specific episode could have potentially impacted the ability of other participants to speculate about the outcome of events in the story world. To avoid this, an alternative viewing session was scheduled for those who had already seen the episode.

Next, a taped episode of the *Law & Order* episode *Humiliation* was shown in five separate segments. The end of each segment coincided with the beginning of a commercial break. At each of these points, a discussion was initiated and sometimes guided by the predetermined questioning route. Each of the discussions lasted from seven to fifteen minutes, depending on what the participants chose to discuss at length. A ten-minute break was taken after the third discussion.

The Questioning Route

Recall that the purpose of the focus group interviews is to identify what viewers assert as the dominant point of view of the overall *Law & Order* narrative, and to note if any of them ideate a narrative space that resists this patriarchy. By discussing the viewing experience with others, it was hoped that participants identify the conventions of the text as well as the prior experiences that guided their sensemaking experience when engaging in the text-viewer relationship.

The questioning route is a sequence of questions designed to encourage participants to discuss the points of view being asserted by the narrative structure. It is a tool that stimulates discussions about the changing perceptions about what participants are viewing as the television narrative progresses. The questioning route also provides the opportunity for participants to identify specific examples from the text that evidences their responses.

Recall that feminist research has traditionally defined 'patriarchy' as a system that places women in a position of male subordination. The textual analysis in Chapter 3 applies this definition of the term. For this study, it was important to identify if participants also defined patriarchy as a system of masculist ideals. Participants were asked questions in order to determine if they asserted the reflection of this patriarchal point of in *Humiliation.* They were also given the opportunity during the interview to define patriarchy differently. Both kinds of questions gave the researcher a context within which to categorize the assertions being made while they engaged the text. Furthermore, based on the participant's definition(s) of patriarchy, the researcher could note if participants asserted a point of view that challenged this patriarchy.

Introductory, transitional, and key questions asking for responses about specific events in the text were carefully organized to elicit reactions about the segment of the text the participants just viewed (Krueger, 1994). Open-ended questions were posed throughout the discussion to provide an opportunity for participants to relate the discussions of what they had just seen with earlier discussions about previous events. After each segment, the researcher/moderator also repeated a series of open-ended questions, including an invitation to comment on the pictorial narrative. The researcher/moderator then summarized the responses at the end of each segment in an attempt to establish a sense of cohesion among the varying perspectives offered by the participants. By offering a summary at the end of each segment, they were better equipped to recall information from the segment during later discussions with a bit more ease. The participants were also invited to add additional comments to the summary that they felt were important to add, as well as to offer perspectives that they felt had been left out.

Before returning to the viewing of the text, the researcher/moderator concluded the discussion by asking ,"Based on what you have seen so far, what do you think is going to happen next?" By speculating about a future sequence of events, based on the pattern of sensemaking established up until that point between the text and themselves, participants provided examples from the narrative that reinforced their interpretations. When events in the discourse unfolded differently from their expectations, participants were asked to describe what they felt when they realize that they earlier interpretations were incorrect.

Sample Questions

Following the first scenes of the show, including the opening credits, a series of introductory questions was offered to begin easing participants into critically thinking about what they were viewing, as noted in Sample 1 below.

Sample 1/Segment 1:

1. **During the opening of the show, what were some of the things that you noticed?**
2. **Was there anything that struck you about**

   2-a. events that took place in the opening scenes?

   2-b. the characters? Gestures, facial expressions...?

   2-c. music, noise, sounds effects?

   2-d. production elements, such as lighting, camera angles ...?

Transition questions were asked after the second viewing segment in order to stimulate a discussion about the actual events in the text, as noted in Sample 2 below. This encouraged participants to begin broadening the overall topic while focusing on the criminal aspects of the case.

Sample 2/Segment 2:

2. **What opinions, if any, do you have about any of the characters and their discussions about the moral and criminal implications of soliciting a prostitute?**

After the third viewing segment, a combination of transition questions and key questions were asked in order to begin facilitating discussion about the point(s) of view being offered by the text. As noted in Sample 3, transition questions were first

introduced to allow participants to begin organizing, among themselves, the sequence of events up until that point in the text.

Sample 3/Segment 3:

1. **Any comments or observations you have about what you've just seen?**
2. **If you were to the list the reasons behind Dr. Danforth's ultimate arrest, what would you include?**

Note that the above question asked respondents to list a series of events that resulted in a major development in the text. By doing so, it helped clarify and sum up what has occurred so far in the text, and it also provided a specific context in which to begin talking about what had happened in the story world so far. This was particularly important to do after the third viewing segment, because the televisual text changed direction as it switched from focusing on events about the "law," to focusing on events about the "order" of the criminal justice system.

Key questions were introduced after the third segment to initiate discussion about the intended reading of the text. They were designed to stimulate discussions about the ideas participants previously had about the text. Throughout the discussion, they were asked to return to those ideas to see if they had changed. These questions were intended to bring to the conversation discussions about a dominant patriarchal point of view in *Humiliation*, as noted in the sample questions below.

Sample 4/Segment 3:

2-b. Some researchers would describe male behavior as macho centered, and/or wanting to be dominant and powerful. Do you think this applies to

what you've seen so far? Why? Does this have anything to do with Dr. Danforth's arrest?

3. Who appears to be more dominant in the text, the men or the women? Can you share your reasons behind your opinion(s)?

The questions in Sample 4 have two very specific functions. The first is to provide a definition of patriarchy that participants could use, add to, or discard. By doing so, the participants were given the opportunity to offer their definition of patriarchy, if they have one. Second, they are specifically being asked to think about patriarchy within the context of the televisual text, and to apply the concept to what they see. By offering perspectives about what they have seen, they are offering the subject position(s) from which they are engaging the text up until that point. Participants were encouraged to provide examples in the text that supported the point of view from which they were viewing the text, and where other points of view may be asserted in the discursive space.

A discussion of the model developed by the researcher in Chapter 3, Figure 3.3 is initiated following the above discussion.

Sample 5/Segment 3:

Take a look at this model. It's trying to outline where different points of view come out in the story. Do you think this is useful in trying to describe where there is a shift in the points of view?

In order to facilitate the discussion, the researcher/moderator passed out copies of the model to the viewers, allowing time for them to read and reflect what they saw in the hand out. Participants were encouraged to ask questions about the model, and were asked

to apply it to the narratives offered by the characters that reflected the points of view from which they were viewing the text.

The introduction of key questions about the text and the points of view being reflected by it continued to be introduced after the fourth viewing segment. This set of questions was specifically designed to initiate discussion about the details surrounding the legal aspects of the case, as well as the relationship between the new set of characters they were being introduced to in the second half of the episode.

Sample 6/Segment 4:

3. How do you feel about Kincaid's willingness to prosecute Dr. Danforth?

2-a. How would you characterize McCoy's attitude towards Kincaid her efforts in trying and resolving the case? What did you see or hear that led to that opinion?

2-b. Did her having doubts contribute to your characterization?

2-c. Do you have any specific thoughts about the relationship between the McCoy and Kincaid? Do you think gender plays a part in this specific relationship?

The final key questions were posed after the fifth viewing segment. These questions helped identify shifts in the thinking of the viewers as a result of the resolution of the criminal case. They also encouraged participants to reconnect with the responses they offered earlier about the events and characters of the story-world.

Sample 7/Segment 5:

1. Now that we all know that Mrs. Danforth, and NOT Dr. Danforth committed the murder, what are your ideas about her reasons for murdering Gwyn George?

1-a. Do you think her reasons in some way justify her actions?

1-b. Can you describe your feelings about Dr. Danforth while Mrs. Danforth admitted to the killing?

1-c. Can you recall some of your thoughts about Mrs. Danforth before you knew that she killed Gwyn George? Did your opinion of her change at the end of the program? If so, how?

Asking viewers to connect their discussions with previous points made in earlier segments gave them an opportunity to look at the text as a whole, and not simply a series of segments. It encouraged them to discuss interpretations of the over all narrative, and to return to earlier interpretations. This helped determine what stimulated changes in how they made sense of the text.

Coding and Analytical Framework

Recognizing that what are being analyzed and discussed in the following chapters are the reactions, opinions, and attitudes viewers had about *Law & Order*, it is understood that "the thematic content of the discussions among the participants is the unit of analysis" (Lunde and Livingstone 1996, pg. 92). In order to identify these themes, the viewer's responses were coded and analyzed according to the perspectives they offered about the structure and content of the narrative.

The initial analysis of the data looked at how viewers characterized the structure of the text, noting comments made about the linguistic, pictorial and musical narratives in the *Law & Order* text. Specific events in the story that created moments of confusion about specific events, caused intense moments of emotion, or prompted speculations about the outcome of the show are also identified. These particular moments in the

discussion can provide the researcher with concrete examples of events that guided a viewer's interpretation of the narrative space.

To facilitate this analysis, the data was organized into content categories generated by the questioning route in order to provide a more systematic presentation of the viewer's sensemaking process, as noted in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Content Categories

CATEGORY ONE:	Identification of patriarchy and patriarchal structures.
CATEGORY TWO:	Specific examples of *where* and *how* patriarchy is evidenced in the discourse.
CATEGORY THREE:	Participant reaction to the criminal aspects of the case.
CATEGORY FOUR:	Participant reactions to the legal aspects of the case.
CATEGORY FIVE:	Attitudes about the relationships between the characters in the text.
CATEGORY SIX:	Shifts in assertions about the intended reading of the text that result from viewing the conclusion of the episode, including comments that re-connect with specific responses offered earlier by participants about the events and characters of the story world.
CATEGORY SEVEN:	Shifts in assertions made after thinking about the episode in its entirety, including those responses that return to questions asked earlier in the focus group interview.

The second level of analysis includes identifying the shifting or "wandering" attitudes and opinions that viewer's asserted when engaging the text. In doing so, the ability and willingness of viewers to assert a patriarchal point of view as the story unfolds

is identified. Responses are further examined to see if viewers identified narratives in the text that resisted this point of view.

Summary

The method discussed here is useful in collecting data that helps researchers understand how viewers make sense of a televisual text. Focus group interviews are a valuable tool for understanding how assumed subject position of a text can guide a viewer to assert a particular point of view while engaging it. It is also an ideal tool for feminist researchers because it allows participants to articulate and discuss ideas in their own words and on their own terms. In this study, focus group interviews not only enables viewers to share the dominant point of view they assert when viewing the *Law & Order* text, but also allows them to assert points of view that may challenge this dominant subject position.

The next chapter reviews the data generated by the focus group interviews. These results will indicate if participants assert a masculist-centered patriarchal position when viewing the text. The results will also identify additional points of view from which they are interpreting the text, including those that challenge the dominant patriarchal narrative discourse.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS

Focus group interviews were conducted to permit viewers to voice their reactions about the *Law & Order* text. The data generated from these interviews was recorded and is being introduced in this chapter. Participant's reactions to *Humiliation* are analyzed to see if (a) participants assert a patriarchal dominant reading when engaging the text; and (b) they become resistive readers, providing opposing interpretations of *the Law & Order* discourse. To provide a more organized presentation of the results, content categories have been generated from the questioning route. These seven categories include

1. defining patriarchy and patriarchal structures;
2. examples of patriarchy in the discourse;
3. reactions to the criminal aspects of case;
4. reactions to the legal aspects of case;
5. attitudes about relationships in text;
6. shifts in assertions about the intended reading of the text following conclusion of episode; and
7. shifts in assertions about aspects of the text as a result of thinking about the episode in its entirety.

Comments about the linguistic, pictorial, and musical narratives are folded into corresponding categories to provide a more complete understanding of the participants' assertions about the narrative spaces generated by the discourse. If a specific element or event in the text prompted similar remarks throughout the interviews, a sample comment

that best reflects the over all reactions of participants was recorded in the corresponding table. Comments were also subcategorized in order to reflect the main ideas that define each category as identified by the interview participants.

Viewer Profiles

Out of the forty-nine women who participated in the study, forty are White/Caucasian. (See Appendix A.) Six participants are African-American, two are Asian, and one participant identifies herself as Latina. Thirty-eight of these women reported that they had never seen an episode of *Law & Order*, or that they had only seen one or two episodes in their lifetime. Two participants reported watching an episode once or twice a month, and two participants reported watching the show weekly. Only five participants stated that they watched episodes of *Law & Order* several days a week. Among all the participants, only one woman indicated that she was familiar with *Humiliation*, but stated that she had only seen part of the episode and had not seen the conclusion.

Category 1: Patriarchy as the Dominant Point of View

Most of the women who participated in the study asserted that the way they made sense of the text was guided by what they argued to be a "male point of view'. However, several women rejected the idea of gender based patriarchy as a guiding force behind the construction of the discourse space, stating that they did not think it was "necessarily a gender issue". Other participants did not reject the notion that the text reflected a predominantly male point of view, but argued that it was a combination of factors, including gender, race, class, and age, that guided their sensemaking process.

Category 2: Identification of Patriarchy and Patriarchal Structures in the Text

Participant's definitions of patriarchy were offered without using the specific term "patriarchy" or 'patriarchal structures'. Instead, they were embedded in their comments indicating attitudes and beliefs about gender relationships they see on television, as well as the attitudes and beliefs about gender relationships they possessed based on prior experiences in their personal lives. There was a strong sense among many of the viewers that there was an unequal power relationship between men and women throughout the text. When reviewing the data, it was found that participant's interpretations of these unequal power relationships consisted of comments (1) characterizing the television show as patriarchal; (2) generally defining patriarchy; and (3) describing the relationship between patriarchy and prostitution.

Table 6.1: Defining Patriarchy and Patriarchal structures

Sub-Categories	Sample Interview Responses
Show as patriarchal	• Show 'based around guys..." • "They don't show many women..." • "There are more men than women in the show". • "Men are more dominant than women in the show" • "I think this show really delves around a weak woman..."
General definitions of patriarchy	• "The men are macho..." • "Men see women as objects...she's just a trophy". • "Men judging women by physical appearance is typical behavior." • "Women must work harder to prove themselves at work because of stereotypes." • "Women have emotional responses to problems, men do not".
Patriarchy and prostitution	• "Relationships between women and their "johns" is a power issue, because women are always in a less powerful position then that of men..." • "Women are there to serve men". • "Men don't think going to a prostitute is a big deal..."

Participants suggested that men "dominated" women because men outnumber the women in the episode. For example, "Liz," along with several other focus group participants observed that "all the cops on the street were male...", which, in her opinion, reflected the balance of power men have over women in society. Viewers drew upon their general feelings and opinions about gender issues as they interpreted character behavior. "Gina" argued that women "men bash" because of the patriarchal or "macho" behaviors of men, some of which are depicted on the show, "...so, he (Dr. Danforth) judges women by physical appearance...she (Julia Danforth) could very well be an object...the trophy wife". Meanwhile, many participants, including "Leslie," argued that the gender stereotyping of women impedes their job performance. According to "Leslie," Lieutenant Van Buren's presence in the text characterizes this problem, " ...having a position where she's been boss she maybe has to, maybe she feels like she's got to work harder because she is a woman and there's already stereotyping of women's ability to do the jobs that traditionally men have done..." "Euny" added that a woman's job performance was also affected by the idea that a woman's approach to a problem is "more emotional".

Prostitution was identified by most of the viewers as an occupation that is motivated by the patriarchal position that assumes that women are subordinate to men. "...[I]t's still like the whole power issue, like women are there to serve the men, and it just keeps putting them in a lower place..." said one participant, who argued that men who solicit prostitutes are not viewed as negatively as the women they are soliciting. As a result, many sympathetically argued that the prostitutes were, in effect, victims of this

gender-based patriarchal structure. However, all the women in the group did not share this interpretation. "Lori" laughed as she announced her disinterest in Gwyn George's demise, "I really don't care that the prostitute died. I know that sounds mean, but I don't...". When asked by other viewers to explain her attitude, she stated, "When you have a job like that, when you know that you are probably going to die or asking to die, I don't feel bad for you".

The responses recorded in Table 6.2 indicate specific events in the *Law & Order* text participants interpreted as examples of a patriarchal dominance. These televisual events are characterized by the events in the story world that the characters in the text discussed, and how they discussed them. Both iconic and gestural narratives are also identified. Most of the responses included in Table 6.2 are reactions to how male characters voiced opinions that contributed to a patriarchal reading of the *Law & Order* narrative. For example, "Melissa" reacted to the words being used by the police officers, stating that "the language that they used to talk about the prostitutes and stuff was really vulgar." "Jacquelyn" added another perspective to the discussion, noting that the men being questioned about soliciting prostitutes are "not ashamed at all" of their behavior. This particular comment sparked questions from several viewers about the legality of prostitution.

Briscoe's attitude towards prostitution was also interpreted as gender-biased, which prompted some negative reactions to his opinions about marital infidelity and hiring prostitutes, "...he said after the honeymoon, you know, everything just kind of goes like to hell from there...to him it's no big deal". However, some of the women were not as willing to include Detective Curtis in this criticism, as one woman stated, "I

Table 6.2: Specific Examples of Patriarchy in Law & Order: Humiliation

Sub-Categories	Sample Interview Responses
Prostitution	• Male cops discussing and treating prostitutes in a manner that "disrespects, degrades, and objectifies them" during the opening sequence. • "The police seemed to say that because she was a prostitute she couldn't be raped. That just isn't true". • Dr. Danforth maintained a power relationship over Gwyn George by not giving her his name. • Detective Briscoe's and other men's attitude towards men cheating on their wives and soliciting prostitute, "It's no big deal..." • Dr. Danforth tells detectives that he has a beautiful wife, and therefore has no need for soliciting a prostitute... "She's like a trophy..." • The prostitutes go to jail, and the men (johns) don't". • Prostitute takes off blouse in front of Kincaid, exposing a red brassiere... "Gratuitous change of clothes..."
Women care more about the prostitutes then the men	• Detective Briscoe unwilling to pursue investigation "because Gwyn George is a prostitute". • "She (Lieut.) had to force them to investigate the case..." • Lieutenant Van Buren's attitude towards death of prostitute is "impacted by her gender and rank"... "It's her job to care..." • Kincaid's attitude towards death of prostitute is more personal..." • Male District Attorneys appears to feel more sorry for Dr. Danforth then the murdered prostitute.
Depiction of women in episode	• "Dead prostitute was seen as 'a dead dog'". • Females(Van Buren, Kincaid) give orders, but men are more dominant • "She (Van Buren) has to use humor and sarcasm to defend her position." • Julia Danforth is presented as a "blonde bimbo", "weak", "floaty", and "stupid"... "The camera was always close up on her expressions"

guess my attitude toward [Curtis] changed a little bit when I saw some of his values coming through, at least with respect for his wife, and how he felt bad for the wife of the

guy that was getting prostitutes". "Diana" noted that Curtis also voiced his support for the investigation when he admitted that it was a "...homicide, just like any other".

Viewers also identified linguistic cues in the narrative that suggested the women working within the criminal justice system appeared to care more about the resolution of the crime then their male counterparts. The reactions of Lieutenant Van Buren and Clare Kincaid's towards their male colleagues' indifference to the crime suggested to some participants that the two women appear to take a special interest in seeking justice for Gwyn George. The Lieutenant's interest in solving the murder is highlighted, according to some participants, when she orders her detectives to proceed with the investigation. "In the beginning", stated "Alexis,, "when he was talking about going to lunch...she was like, kind of yelling at him in a way, it seemed like she was doing that maybe because she was like the woman". However, other participants interpreted the Lieutenant's efforts to impose authority over the two detectives as being counterproductive. "Alyssa" agreed that, as the superior, the Lieutenant was trying to be "dominant". However, she felt that her use of sarcasm when addressing the detectives took away from her authority, "I think that if she just told them directly you have to do this, you have to do that, I don't think they'd like her as much...she's more feminine towards them. It's almost like she's not really their boss..." "Heather" argued that Van Buren had to be a "smart ass" to get her point across, suggesting she had " to take a different route to be the authority figure. They just don't seem to have a lot of respect for her." "Becky" echoed this sentiment, remarking that "she just couldn't say 'do this because I told you to'."

Kincaid's conversations with her colleagues in the District Attorney's office caused some of the participants to question her "dominance" as well. While "Julie" felt

that Kincaid's image was strong "because she admitted she was wrong and wanted to fix the case", other participants argue that the way the detectives and the DAs discussed the case with her indicates that they were actually "working against her" instead of supporting her efforts. "Rachel" pointed out that Kincaid appeared to have "some kind of authority" over the detectives, but her authority was demeaned when Briscoe made a comment about her breasts. According to her, "it was kind of like them saying, 'Oh well, you're a woman, I'm just going to bring that up again so that you know that you don't really have authority over me'." Schiff and McCoy's expression of sympathy for Dr. Danforth upon his arrest was also perceived as "really degrading to all women".

When asked about production elements they may have noted during this part of the interview, participants began to identify both iconic and gestural narrative elements. "Camille" noted that there were "a lot of medium shots, a lot of seeing a part of one character and then another characters there, and how they're conversing...". "Alexis" argued that Briscoe did not smile a lot, and is "really stern" when he discussed the case. Yet, "Gina" found that when Briscoe made quips about Gwyn George's death, camera angles were used to make him appear amusing. She stated that "when [Detective Briscoe] was on the stand and he said 'She would never make $2000 a night, she doesn't work for Heidi Fleiss'...[there was] a quick shot over to the jury and everybody was laughing." Other participants noted that the camera "made them focus" on Julia Danforth's expressions, stating that she "seemed confused" and that "she always had that weird smile..."

A medium shot on Gwyn George's roommates undressing in front of Clare Kincaid prompted a reaction from many of the focus group participants. Viewers

questioned the necessity of the visual image for their understanding of the discourse. "Kate" speculated that she didn't "know if they were trying to make it like, 'Oh, this is what prostitutes do. You know, they're not women, they're just whores. They just strip down all the time'." Others interpreted the choice of including it in the scene by simply stating that it made the show "definitely a show for guys".

Category 3: Reactions to the Criminal Aspects of the Case

The responses in the first two questionnaire-generated categories assert a gender-based patriarchy based on masculine ideas as the dominant subject position of the text. The next two categories, which organize participant reactions to both the criminal and the legal aspects of the case, identify how viewers make sense of the events in the story world within the context of this patriarchy. Category 3 organizes those responses that appeared throughout discussions of the events surrounding the criminal investigation. Participant comments indicate that they were thinking about the crime more in-depth, and as a result were identifying details about the characters in the story world. Remarks were made about Gwyn George, McCracken, and other characters in the story world that were regarded as suspicious by the detectives.

During these discussions viewers began to rethink earlier ideas they had about Gwen George's death. As participants began to piece together the narrative some of the ideas about the crime that were offered earlier in the interview were rejected. In particular, events surrounding Julia Danforth prompted some reevaluations of earlier opinions.

Table 6.3: Participant Reactions to the Criminal Investigation

Sub-Categories	Sample Interview Responses
Following the leads offered by the Detectives while investigating the case	• The detectives investigating the homicide originally leads to the belief that Gwyn George was blackmailing Dr. Danforth. "She saw a guy with MD plates and charged him more..." • Shop Owner (McCracken) appears suspicious at beginning because "he clearly does not want the prostitutes near his store". He also provides conflicting stories about his whereabouts on the night of the murder. "He changed his story..." • Expectations that Roscoe (Gwyn George's pimp) will be in some way connected to her death. "He was a bit shaky..." • Homeless man rouses some suspicion because "...they (police) are too casual about his innocence". • Accountant appears suspicious, because "he stands to lose a lot of money if Danforth goes down".
Suspicions regarding Julia Danforth as a result of the narrative. (Causes shifts in attitudes and opinions about events)	**Julia Danforth arouses suspicion when interviewed by Detectives:** • "Her reaction when she can't find the gun was weird..." • "She had a "flaky" approach. • "When Julia says "What money?" "She seemed to make it up as she went along". **Julia Danforth's reaction to her husband's conviction arouses suspicion, particularly after being unable to produce evidence explaining the missing money from the ATM:** • "I felt that she was guilty". • "Husband's attorney looked surprised at her answers on the stand". • " I'm thinking that her naivete covers her motive". **Julia Danforth's conversation with Kincaid also adds to the suspicion:** • "When Julia says to Kincaid seriously 'I don't think he did it' it was the only time she seemed sincere. When she discussed him cheating on her she was more emotional: 'What am I supposed to do?' It seemed to indicate something." • "She had a creepy smile". "She seems like she's lying...isn't convincing". • "She is obviously staging it. ATM Withdrawals, phone calls, purchases, missing gun...it's not convincing". • "I think that Julia Danforth KNOWS that Dr. Danforth did it". • I think she (Julia) did it!"

When making sense of the events surrounding the trial and conviction of Dr. Danforth, puzzled expressions worn on the faces of the attorneys and on Julia Danforth's face served as pictorial cues for some viewers. "His wife's involved somehow..." stated "Bethany," who noted that while the detectives had some good leads, they appeared to be missing something. Others confessed that while they were not sure of the reason, they kept wondering about Julia Danforth, "I keep coming back to the wife, like all along I just kind of get this creepy sense from her...she's got something kind of up her sleeve." Julia Danforth's reaction to her husband's arrest also suggested to many that she was somehow involved, "I was expecting her, when they found him guilty, to stand up and say, 'It was me!'...They're just kind of overlooking something, they're not looking deeply enough into something."

As participants listed the events leading up to his arrest, some of the women began to speculate about specific events in the text that appeared to be redirecting their understanding of events, "I think that [Gwyn] called the doctor from the pay phone. Then the lady (Julia) followed her husband. Then he went there to meet the prostitute. When he left she gave her the $2000 and killed her. Told her to leave her alone or whatever..."

Category 4: Reactions to the Legal Aspects of the Case

In Category 4, the events relating to the prosecution of the case prompted participants to reevaluate certain details they noted earlier in the text. "[The detectives] are getting evidence, and evidence, and evidence, and they're getting ideas from it all, but Clare was the only one who said that there's something strange about this", said one woman. Participants also noted Kincaid's efforts to convince witnesses to provide more

detailed testimony. For instance, a participant claimed that she was unfairly manipulating an antique dealer, claiming that "she blackmails the guy there about the sales tax bureau..." Kincaid's actions, according to participants, prompted them to rethink earlier ideas about the case and about her ability to try it.

Perceptions of the crime began to change when Kincaid successfully convicted Dr. Danforth, and continued to change during the events that followed. Because of her facial expression following the announcement of the verdict, as noted in Table 6.4, participants began to question the resolution of the case. "I don't think she was happy" was a comment heard following this specific scene. Kincaid's subsequent decision to revisit the case altered earlier opinions about her personality. "She seems to have more instinct...", and in some cases, more respect, as "Vanessa" indicated, "...it's good she followed her mind...that takes a lot of courage to stand up and do the right thing and not

Table 6.4: Reactions to the Legal Aspects of the Case

Sub-Categories	Sample Interview Responses
Reasons for Kincaid's desire to try the case against Dr. Danforth	• "She (Kincaid) takes the case more personally because she is a woman and young". • "Lack of support from male District Attorneys eggs her on". • "She seems to favor the women (Gwyn George and Julia Danforth) and wants to find justice for them...The men appear to support the men..." • "Kincaid stands for the 'female point of view' "...she has the most instinct among the characters".
Conviction of Dr. Danforth	• "Kincaid's expression was strange... • (Kincaid) "didn't seem happy when they found him guilty. Like she made a mistake or something". • (Julia) was unprepared on the stand, "I think (Kincaid) is not buying".
Attitudes at District Attorney's Office	• Kincaid must defend the need to try Dr. Danforth as the male DAs appear to be sympathetic. "He felt sorry for they guy." • "McCoy just didn't think there was enough evidence..." • "McCoy didn't seem to care either way..."

worry about what you are gonna look like".

The tension between Kincaid's commitment to the case and McCoy's attitude to towards the case was an issue for some participants. "Katy" interpreted McCoy's attitude towards both Kincaid and the trial as professional disinterest, "I think he's like, 'I don't want to waste my time, so if you want to do it then do it.' It didn't seem like he even cared either way." A few participants supported his decision, claiming that the case was "circumstantial." "He didn't want to waste his time with it because he didn't think they'd win, argued "Erin". Once the doctor was convicted, Kincaid's feelings about the resolution of the case led some participants to re-evaluate the detectives' and McCoy's efforts:

> I think [Kincaid] felt like nobody else was willing to do the footwork, to fill in the holes. And she felt like at that point it was her job to take over and to do that. She had to fill in the empty spaces that weren't taken care of by the detectives...because [McCoy] made it sound like the case was basically impossible...

Some of the participants argued that Kincaid's strong interest in the case was a result of her "favoring women" over men, stating that if Gwen George had been a man she would have been disinterested. Others suggested that it was not simply gender, but her age that influenced her as well, arguing that her youth influenced her decision to "take the case more personally". "Melissa" argued that it was both Kincaid's age and her inexperience that impacted her behavior, "I think maybe [Kincaid's gender] has something to do with it, and I also think it's because she's the youngest of all three of them". Julie questioned this as well, stating that "maybe both in the sense that she's a woman, and she's young, so it's kind of like a double negative". But for "Kristen," Kincaid's actions were the

result of "not having support from the two men" in the District Attorney's office, particularly that of Jack McCoy.

Category 5: Relationships between Characters

The relationships between the characters in the story world reflect a subject position from which a narrative can be read. Here, participants offered interpretations about all the relationships they felt contributed to the dominant point of view reflected in the *Law & Order* discourse. In particular, they noted a pattern among the relationships between the characters that supported their patriarchal reading of the televisual text.

Because most of the focus group participants had limited or no previous viewing experiences with the *Law & Order* narrative, their comments about the relationships between characters in the story world were not segregated into primary or "regular" characters and secondary characters in the show. As noted in Table 6.5, their remarks include descriptions of those relationships they felt were significant to their understanding of the over all text.

Participants noted that the police officers had a more congenial relationship with an unemployed homeless man on the street than the women employed as prostitutes did. The negative relationship between the two groups was identified as a major influence on the relationship between Lieutenant Van Buren and Detectives Briscoe and Curtis. This was noted when the Lieutenant pressured the two men to take the case more seriously. However, viewers interpreted this relationship in different ways. Some argued that it is the Lieutenant's gender that required her to exert this pressure, "if the detectives were women, the whole thing would be going a lot differently..."; while others felt that

Table 6.5: Relationships between the Characters in the Text

Sub-Categories	Sample Interview Responses
Cops/ prostitutes	• "Cops made fun of the prostitutes, but had sympathy for the homeless man. • "Police degraded, insulted, and demeaned prostitutes".
Detectives /Lieutenant	• "They don't seem to have a lot of respect for the Lieutenant...the way they talk to her..." • "Her rank allows dominance over the detectives, but she still has to fight for respect because she's a woman". "She must be a smart ass" (to get them to do something). "She has to use sarcasm and humor" • I don't think her being a woman has anything to do with it...it's her job..." (Telling them what to do) • "I'm sure they don't like the idea of having a female boss..."
Detective Briscoe / Detective Curtis	• "Curtis seems more idealistic. It's like Briscoe should be the mentor, but is instead indifferent..." • "Curtis reflects new way of thinking [about women], while Briscoe is old fashioned". • "Because Curtis is young and has been on the job less time he's less callous than the more experienced Briscoe.
Gwyn George /mother	• "Her step dad was the only one who cared..." • "She didn't seem to really care that she was dead because she's a prostitute"
Briscoe/ Kincaid	• When (Briscoe) pointed to her breasts and said "You mean those aren't real...? That was really unprofessional..." "That was unnecessary..." • "...she had some kind of authority over them...they had to get her permission for that, and it was kind of like them saying, 'Oh well, you're a woman...I'm just going to bring that up again so that you know that you don't really have authority over me."
McCoy/ Kincaid	• "McCoy is a like a father figure" • "McCoy talks down to Kincaid..."
Kincaid/ Female suspects	8. "Kincaid uses her femininity to get information from other prostitutes..." • "She (Julia Danforth) said "you should understand" to Clare 'cause she's a woman...why didn't she look at McCoy?" "She automatically assumed that since she's a woman she can relate to her..."
Dr. Danforth /Julia Danforth	• "She (Julia) says she has to keep on a smile all the time and fix him breakfast and do what ever he wants..." • "When he goes out and cheats..." • "Her marriage needed to seem perfect it wasn't by any means..."

it was her rank in the police department that prompted her behavior. The relationship was discussed within the context of how much respect the detectives had for the Lieutenant. "Melissa" felt that because the Lieutenant allowed the detectives to talk to her disrespectfully, she appeared as the weaker party in that relationship, "...her job is like a high kind of position. But then the way she let Briscoe talk to her kinda' makes me feel like she's kind of meek...I don't think she's very strong". Others disagreed, saying that they respected her because, as "Diana" stated, "[she] doesn't let them walk on her".

Participants also felt that the attitudes held by each detective define their relationship with each other. Briscoe's attitudes towards women were defined as "old fashioned", while Curtis' attitudes about women are interpreted as "nicer" and more progressive. The age and experience of each of the detectives, according to many of the women in the group, also explained why they felt the way they did. "[Curtis] kind of doesn't want to come out and say that the murder didn't matter because he's younger and he hasn't maybe seen as much as the older detective". Some of the women make clear, however, that despite the fact that Briscoe might appear more dominant than Curtis because of his chauvinist attitude, Curtis is still a strong man, arguing that his opinions about women didn't make him "seem like a wus either..."

The prior relationship between Gwyn George and her mother, Mrs. Washington, was important to participants as well. Because it was revealed that George's stepfather, Jaleel Washington, had posted bond for her on previous occasions, some of the participants felt that he was the only one who really cared for the woman. As a result, they speculated, Gwyn George turned to prostitution. Note that this interpretation was made despite the fact that he was never actually seen or heard from throughout the show.

Others argued that Mrs. Washington's lack of emotional response to the news of her daughter's death seemed to indicate a lack of love for her daughter because she was a prostitute. For others, such as "Camille" and "Leslie", Mrs. Washington's reaction was interpreted as one of relief because her daughter's life "wasn't going to get any better in the world". The fact that George's mother was caring for her son was also an indicator of her mother's love for her daughter. Viewers interpreted the conversation between detectives and Mrs. Washington about George as a forum that provided the dead woman with an identity in the story world. "It made her seem more like a person" because "when the detectives left, the case wasn't just about a prostitute any more".

Briscoe's relationship with Kincaid was defined by some as patriarchal because of the comments he made about Kincaid's physical appearance. To them, his words minimized her status in the workplace. Others interpreted his comments as "friendly", suggesting that the relationship between the two was one of joking and understanding, and not one that is defined by patriarchy. As "Kelly" stated: I think besides the silly comments she holds her own for the most part..." "Rachel" agreed, suggesting that Kincaid "blew it off in a way that seemed like she probably dealt with that all the time..."

As noted in Table 6.5, some viewers characterized McCoy's relationship with Kincaid as one of "father and daughter". According to this interpretation, their gender, age, and experience defines the relationship. For some, McCoy acting as a father figure indicated a position of power, as "Camille" pointed out, "I thought he was condescending at times, like 'You think you can do it? You do it. Find what you're worth little girl". "Kelly" noted that this power relationship can be seen visually during one scene, where Kincaid is sitting at the desk and he was "like on top of the desk, so he was above her...".

Some participants, while recognizing this inequality, also felt that this power relationship did not necessarily render Kincaid weak, arguing that "she still fights" with her male colleagues. A handful of participants did not find their relationship to be unequal, claiming that "they just had opposing viewpoints". The fact that Kincaid approached McCoy with doubts after her success convicting Dr. Danforth did not diminish this idea, as "Kelly" explained, "I think that's the kind of thing that she's just seeking advice, like any co-worker would...".

Viewers offered various interpretations of Kincaid's relationship with other women in the story world. Julie asserted that Kincaid used her gender to "connect" with the women she questioned, "I think she used her femininity, when she went to talk to the other hookers, and she was kinda like saying, 'C'mon, you can tell me, I'm another woman'". Others noted that because of her gender, Kincaid is able to identify Gwyn George's roommates, which enabled her to obtain information that the detectives failed to get earlier, as "Heather" points out, "It's kind of like women helping women...you know if there's a bunch of macho cops and the way they treat women, you see that a lot...". Ironically, while she supported Kincaid's efforts to relate to the prostitutes, "Heather" disliked Julia Danforth's assumption that Kincaid would relate to her because of their gender, "I didn't like when she was like 'you should understand' to Clare 'cause she's a woman...well why didn't she look at Mr. McCoy?"

Many participants interpreted Julia Danforth's need to be understood by Kincaid as a result of her husband's inability to understand her, because "...he didn't make her feel loved or anything in their marriage..." A few participants also had some reservations about Julia Danforth's marriage philosophies, and interpreted them as being

"needy" because "when he didn't bring her flowers or something it was awful...she sounds like one of those people that are so dependent". For "Lori", the marriage was ultimately not about Julia Danforth's fulfillment, but instead about pleasing Dr. Danforth, "her whole attitude about being happily married was probably just to make him happy..."

Category 6: Shifts in Assertions at the Conclusion of the Episode

The sixth category is comprised of those responses that reflect the viewer's shifting attitudes that result from viewing the conclusion of *Humiliation.* As Table 6.6 indicates, these shifts were most evident when participants viewed Julia Danforth's confession to the murder. The sympathy felt earlier for Julia Danforth (in relation to her marital problems) was tapered somewhat by the knowledge that she committed a murder, "I can see why she did it, but it's wrong...I can see what she might be thinking, but she shouldn't have followed through on that..." The fact that she presented herself as a victim angered some of the viewers, who felt her efforts to maintain her image as the "the perfect wife" was an attempt to make her seem more sympathetic to the viewer, "...people will be like, kinda like feel sorry for her in a way."

As seen in Table 6.6, sentiments expressed about Julia Danforth were accompanied by some expressions of sympathy for Gwyn George, not simply because she is a murder victim, but also because Julia Danforth targeted her and not her husband. Said "Alexis", "she should've left the girl out of it and done something to him...just something to get back at him for cheating...it's not her fault that he paid."

Table 6.6: Shifts in Attitudes at the Conclusion of the Episode

Sub-Categories	Sample Interview Responses
Feelings about Julia Danforth	• Sympathy for Julia Danforth vs. intolerance for killing another individual: "She needed to do something else..." • "She had everybody in her entire life fooled about who she was..."
Feelings about the murder of a prostitute	• "Gwyn George was just doing her job..." • "The prostitute, that's what she's doing for a living". • "It's not her fault he paid..."

Speculations arose as to why Julia Danforth killed George instead of confronting her husband. For "Rachel", her choice to kill rendered her weak, as she asked, "why didn't she leave him? [...]this is the way that she could maintain her place of being like a really feminine, assertive woman...". The fact that Julia Danforth chose to commit the crime evoked a strong sense of frustration from "Diana," "I'm kind of annoyed...that they'd have this poor, emotionally distraught woman who was just torn to pieces when her husband couldn't keep it in his pants". Yet, for "Janna," Julia Danforth's actions suggested that she was strong, "I think Julia is a strong person because she didn't come outright and confront him and take the easy way out and divorce him. She plotted and planned."

As the understanding of the crime and her reasons for committing it was further discussed, some viewers began to change some of the opinions they formulated earlier in the interview. For example, upon finding out that Julia Danforth committed the murder, "Bethany" claimed that she "felt sorrier for the wife than [she] did earlier in the show". However, after further discussion with other women in the group, she admitted to changing her mind.

> The more I think about...all the pre-meditation, like right initially I felt bad, but now that I think about it more, I don't know that I feel so bad when I think that she took all that money out, and she really did have it all set up so that she could frame him.

Other perceptions of Julia Danforth shifted dramatically after participants spent time discussing the televisual text as a whole. The remarks that identify this shift in attitude are discussed in the final category.

Category 7: Shift in Attitudes after Thinking about the Episode in its Entirety

There were many opinions formulated about Julia Danforth early in the focus group interview that were challenged once viewers had an opportunity to think about the whole text, and not just the segments that had been presented to them. For example, "Liz" was one of many viewers who argued that Julia Danforth was an intelligent woman, and not the "flighty bimbo" they took her to be when first engaging the text, because of the complexity of the crime

> I think she's pretty damn smart. "Cause she did everything. She screwed up at the end. But phone calls? She had everything planned. And no one suspected anything, except for that one lawyer.

"Melissa" agreed with this assessment, claiming that " the fact that she had it all plotted out makes her really like calculating and smart". However, she did not define this intelligence as a positive thing

> [W]hen I had an idea that I thought it might be her, then my sympathy kind of went away, and I kinda' looked at her negatively. I looked at her really because she was conniving...

To others, the conviction of Dr. Danforth was seen as accidental, and not a result of Julia Danforth's intelligent planning. "I don't think she ever expected anyone to believe it was her husband", said one participant, "...I think that once they camped and found his car

was there then she kind of tried to use it to her advantage, but she was kind of making the story up."

Table 6.7: Shifts in Attitude after Thinking about the Episode in its Entirety

Sub-Categories	Sample Interview Responses
Feelings about Julia Danforth	• "I don't know that I feel so bad when I think that she took all that money out, and she really did have it all set up so that she could frame him..." • "She had people fooled by her naivete, but was actually smart...she definitely was not a dumb blonde." • "She (Julia Danforth) was actually more dominant because she was framing him (Dr. Danforth)..."She was more powerful in that relationship for a while, until she was caught...." • I don't think she was ever out to put the husband in jail..."
Existence of Patriarchy in the text	• "I don't know if the dominance changed so much for me throughout the show, but I think I feel like in the end the men ended up on top, like the doctor, he's getting off, he's clear. And the other DA, he's getting a little piece of the pie"

At the conclusion of the episode, discussions also returned to the subject of male dominance in the text. For example, "Camille", "Tanya", and "Leslie" argued that McCoy was able to take over the case at the very end. " He ended up getting into the case, getting a little bit of glory for helping...when it all came down to when the show was all done the men kind of came in and they swept things over and they were there". As a result of this, some women who previously rejected male dominance as the dominant point of view reflected in the *Law & Order* narrative began to interpret the text from a patriarchal standpoint. Other women simply cited this as more evidence in the narrative that supported their patriarchal reading of the text. But despite the conclusions and subsequent discussions, a few women continued to assert that gender-based

patriarchy was not predominant in the text. "Kate" suggested, "I think there are far many more shows ...where men are the dominant ones, and the women are just like the butt of the joke. I don't think this show is as bad as many I've seen, so I don't think it's that big of an issue in this show".

The Rejection and Intersection of Patriarchy

While some participants completely asserted or rejected the notion that the *Law & Order* narrative was being told from a gender-based patriarchal point of view, others argued that it was a combination of factors, including gender, that guided their patriarchal reading of the text. As discussed in Chapter 2, many contemporary definitions of patriarchy incorporate issues of race and class as well as gender. By doing so, gender is recognized as only one of many forces that impact unequal power relationships in a political, social, and/or economic system. In this case, however, some viewers identified issues of gender, race, class, and *age* that defined the patriarchal structure that guided their sense making process when engaging the *Law & Order* text. While some of these definitions were offered when specifically asked about male dominance and patriarchy, most were offered as they made sense of the dynamic events in the story world

Table 6.8 identifies some of responses offered by participants that identify this broader definition of patriarchy. Each of the comments have been organized according to their references to race, class, and age, and subcategories have been created to indicate the context in which these statements were offered.

Table 6.8: Issues of Gender, Race, Class, and Age

RACE	• "Prostitutes are primarily minorities". • "An African American Lieutenant , especially a woman, is a rarity". • The "Lieutenant's attitude" is a result of both her race and gender. • The police's attitude towards the dead prostitute "is impacted more by the prostitute's gender than her race". • "It seems that the bigger problem is that "white upstanding males are being called into question than the fact that a prostitute got murdered."
CLASS	**Class, men, and prostitution** • "Men can screw around on wives because they have money..." • Getting a prostitute "seems socially acceptable..." • "It seems easier to get women with money". • Briscoe assumed that just because (Dr. Danforth) was very educated that he couldn't have killed a prostitute". **Class and prostitution** • "If it were an upper-class murder, there would be more concern..." • "I'm sure it made her feel worse with a prostitute". • "It seems that the bigger problem is that "white upstanding males are being called into question than the fact that a prostitute got murdered" • Prostitution as social issue: "People fall on hard times; are social implications...This is not a consideration here...these women are seen as a drag on society..." **Class and divorce** • (Julia) "didn't divorce Dr. Danforth because she liked her wealthy lifestyle" • "In her social rank, divorce may be unacceptable".
AGE	**DETECTIVES** • Curtis reflects new way of thinking [about women], Briscoe is old fashioned. • Curtis is young and on job less time, is less callous [about the death of prostitutes] than the more experienced Briscoe. **DISTRICT ATTORNEYS** • Kincaid is young, is at a disadvantage being an inexperienced young woman • McCoy is older, and more like a father figure to Kincaid • Kincaid, because her gender and age, needs to prove herself.

Discussions of race included the ethnic makeup of the cast as well as the criminal justice system, "Lot's of diversity on the show, but most of the positions of the police officers and the chief are Caucasians and the prostitutes are minorities, and the homicide [victim] was a minority..." "Kellie," one of the few African American women who participated in the study, was the first participant to openly discuss Van Buren's race, "[It's an issue] that she's a woman, she's black, and she's a prostitute...it's a combination of all of it."

For some viewers it was not merely the fact that Gwyn George was black, but that her solicitors (johns) were Caucasian, that also defined the patriarchal power structure being reflected in the text. Discussions of "whiteness" were combined with comments offered by participants that identified class levels as variables that impacted the way women were treated in the story world, which influenced the way the text was read. The fact that Gwyn George's clients and Julia Danforth were white prompted several participants to speculate about the impact of class on Julia Danforth's behavior. "Keng" wondered if Julia Danforth "would have killed the woman that her husband cheated on her with even if she was not prostitute..." "Lori" suggested that Julia Danforth's true motivation for killing Gwen George was a reaction to George's social status, " I'm sure it made her feel worse with a prostitute, with the lowest class person, because she worked so hard to be that trophy wife". Interestingly, "Gina" argued that class differences among Gwyn George and Julia Danforth made thinking about gender issues complicated for her, "it's hard to look at a woman's role on this show because you have a dead prostitute, and an upscale white woman, which are two extreme ends".

"Camille", who identified herself as an avid *Law & Order* viewer, noted that while she was against prostitution personally, she could identify some of the reasons why women choose to enter the profession, "I mean, you don't wake up one day and decide that you want to be a prostitute. There are certain factors in your life that causes you to become, like whether it's because you're on drugs, whether it's because you have six children and no high school". According to her, the episode did not delve into these issues. Instead, participants cued into the class differences in the story world by those characters that were higher on the social ladder. Said one participant about Dr. Danforth, "he's a doctor, prestigious, very well liked by all his peers...in a way I got this sense from him that he can get away with anything he wants".

Age was primarily brought up during discussions about Briscoe, as well as during discussions about the relationship between Kincaid and McCoy. Some viewers felt that Briscoe's disinterest in the investigation was a result of his chauvinist opinions about women, but argued that his patriarchal attitude was a result of his being "older, and from an older generation." Kincaid's age was also a factor. Because she was young, McCoy could establish a "father-daughter" relationship with her even though they are in a professional legal environment. For some viewers, her youth was a license for both Schiff and McCoy, as well as other members of the criminal justice system to "talk down to her". They also argued that her age put her in a position where she had to struggle to prove herself, both as a woman and as a young and inexperienced prosecutor in the criminal justice system.

Applying an Expanded Narrative Framework

Discussions of the model shown in Figure 3.3 were limited. Specific comments were made about how the characters were being defined within the context of the framework. For example, "Melissa" told the respondent that she "did not agree" with the researcher's characterization of Detective Curtis, "I maybe think there's like a mix. I don't think he...is as brash as Briscoe is..." Both "Melissa" and "Kate" also noted that Curtis at times agreed with the Lieutenant, and at times appeared to disagree. The majority of participants claimed that they find it difficult to apply their thoughts to a theoretical model, stating that it was "too difficult" to make their ideas "fit."

Summary

The results presented in this chapter indicate that the majority of the viewers of the *Law & Order* text asserted that the intended reading of the text was patriarchal because it reflected a male-dominant point of view. Participants cited examples in the text that evidenced this patriarchy, identifying attitudes and perspectives that they had about events and characters in the text that appeared to reinforce their patriarchal reading of the narrative. Viewers also identified when their early ideas about the events and characters in the text shifted as a result of viewing the conclusion of the episode, as well as discussing, with each other, the televisual text in its entirety.

The multiple and sometimes conflicted perspectives the participants offered while they engaged the text suggested a pattern of resisting a dominant patriarchal point of view. In the next chapter, these narratives of resistance are identified and discussed.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to develop a framework that extends narrative theory to include multiple points of view, particularly those that resist the dominant subject position. The results of this study indicate that this initial attempt at extending narrative theory does, in fact, recognize multiple points of view that exist in a televisual text. It also demonstrates that narrative spaces in a text can resist the dominant point of view it is reflecting. Participants of the focus group interviews were invited to interpret the *Law & Order* text and identify the points of view that guided their interpretation. In doing so, they provided the researcher with the opportunity to determine if they first adopted a patriarchal point of view as the dominant subject position when viewing the televisual text, and then how they made sense of the televisual text within an overarching patriarchal discourse.

The majority of the young women who viewed the show asserted a gender-based patriarchal reading, arguing that a "male point of view" was reflected in the *Law & Order* text. Each of the data categories discussed in Chapter 6 provided sample remarks that supported this assertion. However, participants also ideated subjective spaces that they felt resisted this patriarchy. These narrative spaces challenged this unequal power structure that was guiding their viewing experience.

Asserting a Resistive Subject Position

A reverse discourse is a discourse that challenges a narrative's dominant power structure, and challenges the meaning of that power (Weedon, 1997). By opposing the dominant power structure, the dominant discourse can gradually be taken over. Both the textual analysis and the focus group interviews conducted here evidence a dominant patriarchal point of view that is being reflected in *Law & Order* text.

However, narrative spaces have been identified in the text, which supports the assertion that a feminist point of view both co-exists and challenges the text's dominant, masculist subject position. This feminist narrative is embedded in the overarching patriarchal discourse of the narrative, and does not eliminate the patriarchal structure it is reflecting. However, in challenging the patriarchal point of view, this reverse discourse heightens a viewer's awareness about the patriarchally guided discourse they are engaging.

Viewers identified seven examples of feminist narrative spaces as they discussed various attitudes and opinions about *Law & Order: Humiliation.* These examples combine data from all the categories discussed in Chapter 6. Four of these narrative spaces were identified from the various moments in the narrative where Lt. Van Buren, Mrs. Washington, the prostitutes, Clare Kincaid, and Julia Danforth were characterized as being empowered in a patriarchal system. One feminist narrative space appears more subtly in the text because it reflects the actions and reactions of a male character, Detective Ray Curtis. A feminist narrative space of resistance is also identified by remarks made about production elements in the show.

Example 1: Lieutenant Van Buren has power in a patriarchal system.

The first indicator of a narrative space that resists the dominant patriarchal discourse is noted in the discussions about Lieutenant Van Buren's relationship with the detectives and her reaction to the crime. Many of the conversations Van Buren had with the detectives were cited as examples of patriarchy in the text, as recorded in Table 6.2. While participants recognized the patriarchal system Van Buren found herself in, ("...she gives orders, but the detectives just seem to be more dominant..."), she evidences, to some participants, an ability to counteract it. Her sometimes-contentious relationship with the detectives was also identified as examples of patriarchal structures in the text, as was recorded in Table 6.5. But it was during the times that she spoke to them, notes "Tanya," that "she has the last word in the scene." While some of the participants regard the Lieutenant's tone as "nagging" and "sarcastic," thus taking away from her authority, there were others that found her ability to exert leadership, regardless of her tone or manner, as a sign of empowerment.

Van Buren's interest in Gwyn George's murder was also perceived as a resistive space. While she is not necessarily able to convince the detectives that the death of Gwyn George is important, participants recognized that she was able to maneuver the investigation of the crime in order to seek justice for the dead woman. One participant argued that Van Buren "didn't really see a prostitute...she saw a woman that was killed", and that her attitude was not overpowered by the opposition offered by Lieutenant Briscoe. As a result, some viewers recognized Van Buren as being a strong, empowered woman, who successfully challenges the system she must work within.

Example 2: Mrs. Washington tells her story.

While Gwyn George's mother appeared briefly in the narrative, her presence impacted the way participants make sense of the narrative's discourse. According to some of the women, it was Gwyn George's mother, not the Lieutenant, who prompted the detectives (particularly Briscoe), to change their attitudes about the importance of solving the case. "Seems like once they left her mother's they were kind of like, paid more attention to the crime, you know trying to solve it...they realized she wasn't just a prostitute, she was like a real person". Despite the negative attitudes the detectives have about prostitution, participants interpreted Mrs. Washington's life history and the life history of her daughter as a strong narrative, strong enough to reverse the way the detectives looked at her daughter, and at the crime, in that moment.

Example 3: Detective Curtis vs. Detective Briscoe.

It is not only the female characters whose actions contribute to the narrative spaces of feminist resistance in the *Law & Order* text. Participants identified Detective Ray Curtis as a character whose opinions helped guide their resistive readings. When looking at the remarks participants offered when characterizing each of the detective's personalities (Table 6.7), and their attitudes about women (Table 6.5), it was evident that participants based their opinions of each detective on the attitudes they each possessed about women, marriage, and prostitution.

The age of each man was also important to the viewers. Many of the women attributed Briscoe's "traditional male" feelings about women to his age ("he's like my grandpa") and experience on the job ("he's been there longer"). As "Camille" noted, "...that older cop was like 'c'mon...every guy goes out and gets a hooker...and what the

wife doesn't know won't hurt her". However, the opinions offered by Curtis challenged those of his partner. Viewers felt that Curtis' philosophies about life were "more sympathetic" towards women. They acknowledged that he was willing to openly challenge Briscoe's attitudes about extramarital activities. Said one participant, "Curtis has values...he was like "you know, I've never thought about [cheating] on my wife..." Interpretations like these suggest that viewers ideated a narrative space that challenged Briscoe's comments in an effort to counter the patriarchal point of view his comments reflected.

Example 4: Viewing prostitutes as empowered women.

The personal opinions of each participant about the legality and morality of the profession, as they related to prostitution, were guiding interpretations of the narrative. Prostitution was viewed mostly negatively because it was an example of how women are seen as subordinate to men. As indicated in the remarks recorded in Table 6.2, prostitution is a patriarchal structure because "women are there to serve men," leaving them in a "less powerful position" in the relationship. However, most viewers argued that regardless of their profession and social status, women deserved to be treated fairly, and with respect. Aside from Lori, who admitted to not respecting any prostitute, most of the viewers were disturbed by the way the police in the story world devalued the prostitutes they came in contact with. Participants were unwilling to judge these women harshly regardless of their opinions about prostitution in general.

Perhaps because of this unwillingness to judge, viewers asserted that the *Law & Order* narrative evidenced moments where unfair "power relationships" in which prostitutes found themselves were being challenged. For example, during the initial

criminal investigation, some participants perceived Gwyn George to be a powerful player in her relationship with Dr. Danforth when the events in the narrative initially led them to believe that she had been blackmailing him. This is recorded in Table 6.3. Until this view was negated, viewers ideated a narrative space that empowered her.

Meanwhile, "Julie" argued that the producers of the show made the prostitutes appear self-empowered, stating that "...they make them look like they have authority over their own lives". While some participants rejected the notion that these women were empowered, to "Julie," the demeanor of the prostitutes when speaking to the detectives and Clare Kincaid supported her opinion. She suggested that the resistance of the prostitutes to the efforts made by members of the criminal justice system to extract information from them during their investigation evidenced a reversal in a power relationship. The criminal justice system, which the viewer's defined as patriarchal, usually controlled the prostitutes. Their reactions to the detectives and Kincaid appeared to challenge this control. Within this context, the prostitutes are seen as being empowered within a masculist defined space.

Example 5: Clare Kincaid's pursuit of justice.

The relationships between Kincaid and her colleagues were as equally interesting to the viewers as her ability to solve the crime. As noted in Table 6.5, most of the remarks made about Kincaid's relationships were geared towards the *kind* of relationship she had with both Briscoe and McCoy. Some viewers argued that Briscoe was a 'friend' who joked with Kincaid, which made his remarks about her breasts socially acceptable. Jack McCoy was seen as a father figure who was helping Kincaid 'learn the ropes' of a job where "she's the youngest" and most inexperienced. Because he appeared to be more

parental to these viewers, his attitude towards her was interpreted as justified and appropriate.

Other women interpreted the relationship between Kincaid and her male colleagues as examples of male-dominated patriarchal structures. These viewers argued that Briscoe and McCoy's behavior was "disrespectful" and 'demeaning." Interpreted this way, their characterizations of both men's relationship with Kincaid paralleled the unequal balance of power between prostitutes and their johns that viewers found problematic earlier in the interview.

When Kincaid goes to McCoy with doubts, his response is interpreted as "taking over the case" (Table 6.7), which minimized the impact of her efforts to resolve the case at the end of the episode. In the context of the over all narrative, this behavior upheld the her patriarchal reading of the text. However, viewers who resisted this reading of the narrative argued that Kincaid, regardless of the behavior of Briscoe and McCoy, was willing and able to stand up to her male counterparts. "She has the last word" suggested "Diana," indicating that within the male dominated prosecutor's office, she is able to exert some authority.

Viewers interpreted Kincaid's willingness to try the case against Dr. Danforth and, later, to pursue the investigation of Julia Danforth as both a sign of weakness and a sign of empowerment. For some, Kincaid's desire to pursue the case against Dr. Danforth was a result of "taking the case too personally." She clearly disliked Dr. Danforth's interest in soliciting prostitutes, which is why she took the case to trial even though "she knew that it wasn't as strong as it should be." As a result she wrongly

convicted the doctor, a mistake that reinforced her inexperience and need for McCoy's guidance.

Meanwhile, some viewers argued that Kincaid made the case personal on purpose. One viewer claimed that she attempted to manipulate witnesses by "playing the feminine card"—a term they used to acknowledge Kincaid's use of her femininity to obtain information. They also claimed that she was using her sex to create a sense of solidarity between herself and the Gwyn George's roommates, as well as with Mrs. Danforth, when she wanted something from them, "She was like 'C'mon, I'm on your side'." But some women opposed the idea that Kincaid was manipulative. They interpreted Kincaid's interest in pursuing the case to be the result her personal strength and sense of professionalism, as well as a strong sense of values. "Rachel" suggested that "when she's trying the case, she goes about everything in a really logical way and gets the job done, but her wanting to win the case doesn't overshadow her moral obligations..." Both interpretations highlight Kincaid's ability to successfully work her way through both the criminal and prosecutorial parts of the over all case. Her ability to do so suggested to viewers that, despite the difficulties she faced in solving the crime, she was both "a strong and independent woman" who was able to "follow her mind." From this perspective, Kincaid's attitudes and actions challenged the patriarchal criminal justice system. Thus, her efforts to pursue justice for Gwyn George are seen as actions that reflect a resistance to the patriarchal point of view being asserted in the narrative discourse.

Example 6: Julia Danforth as an empowered criminal.

The frustration Julia Danforth felt about her husband's extramarital affairs was both identified and understood by all the participants. But while they had sympathy for her, they were unwilling to justify Gwyn George's murder. As noted in Table 6.6, participants would not justify killing for any reason, but were struck by the fact that Julia Danforth killed the woman in order to avenge her husband's behavior. To the participants, her behavior was not only extreme, but irrational as well.

Julia Danforth's confession at the end of the episode was viewed as an attempt to excuse her criminal behavior. For some participants, her confession demeaned her. Viewers also argued that her over all behaviors "turned her into the bad person at the end." As a result of her extremist measures, viewers noted, the criminal and immoral behavior of Dr. Danforth was unfairly minimized at the conclusion of the episode. They pointed out that while Dr. Danforth had been engaging in criminal solicitation, his wife would always be seen as the "real criminal" due to this one extreme act. Because of this, they felt that her actions should be read as patriarchally motivated. They represent a weak feminine ideal that emphasizes "the stereotyped irrationality of women caught up in their emotions...who breaks out crying at the end."

Despite the strong opinions that exist about Julia Danforth, there is a pattern in the shifts in viewer's attitudes about her that indicated their ability to resist a patriarchal reading of her character in the text. For example, before the conclusion of the show, most viewers argued that Julia Danforth was both unintelligent and weak. Comments recorded in Table 6.2 indicate that her demeanor was an example of patriarchy in the text

("she's "weak, floaty, and stupid..."). But after viewing the conclusion, some viewers rejected this perspective.

Feelings about Julia Danforth, as noted in Table 6.7, also shifted while participants thought about the episode as a whole. They changed their opinions about the woman, characterizing her as both intelligent and strong because "she actually had the upper hand." In a criminal justice system that is recognized as supporting masculist viewpoints about prostitution and marital infidelity, Julia Danforth was seen by some participants as a woman who was able to manipulate the police, the district attorneys, and her husband. While viewers did not justify her activities, her actions were, in the eyes of viewers like "Janna," representative of someone who was empowered enough to fight the system.

Example 7: The show as representative of female empowerment.

Much of the viewer's responses to questions about production elements supported the patriarchal reading they were engaging in. However, gestural and iconic narratives often prompted viewers to rethink earlier opinions they had formed about events in the text. Evidence of a reverse discourse that challenged the dominant patriarchal point of view of the *Law & Order* text was supported, for some viewers, by the rank and/or professional position of the female characters in the text. While much is made of the patriarchal roles in the show, including women who play prostitutes and emotionally distraught housewives, there were some viewers that interpreted the casting of the show as "female empowered," suggesting a strong feminist presence in the overall narrative. This was noted specifically by one viewer who stated, "I do like where they put women, like the Lieutenant and the District Attorney. They're in high positions and not like the

secretary." Other viewers were less specific about their ideas, but suggested that the show had " a lot of strong women." Occasional camera angles, such as camera tilts that made Kincaid appear higher in the frame when talking to McCoy and the Danforths, also supported this argument.

Discussing the Framework

While some respondents felt that the model was useful for asserting that there was an alternative point of view in the text, many found it difficult to insert the different opinions they had about each of the characters into the outlined framework. The multiple viewpoints offered about some of the characters throughout the interviews suggest that viewers had some difficulty interpreting the thoughts and actions of many of the women in the text. Women such as Lieutenant Van Buren, Clare Kincaid, and Julia Danforth were seen as strong and empowered, as well as weak, and (in some cases) victimized. These varied interpretations appear to be a result of the ambiguous presentation of these women in the text as well as the varied experiences the viewers bring to the text-viewer relationship. Respondents also argued that the framework did not account for the multiple and somewhat ambiguous perspectives offered by Detective Curtis, whose responses to events in the text were interpreted by both reflecting and rejecting the overarching patriarchal discourse.

Furthermore, note that in Table 6.8, the various comments recorded throughout the interviews suggested that some viewers perceived race, class, and age as important as gender. For them, defining patriarchy as "an embodiment of masculist ideals" was too limiting. As a result, participants were unable to apply the framework in a way that that they felt adequately represented their interpretation of a patriarchal narrative. Their

responses indicate that in order to address the multiple narratives that co-exist in and challenge a patriarchal text, one needs to look at the power relationships that exist vis a vis class, race, gender, and age.

The existence of these power relationships among the viewers of *Law & Order* was evident by the way they offered their alternative interpretations of the patriarchal text. Often, a viewer would offer her resistive interpretation apologetically, beginning her statement with "I'm sorry, but I just see it differently." Phrases like this indicates that the viewer brings to the text her experiences and points of view, some that require her to apologize for resisting an overarching point of view. Others apologized for recognizing racial and class distinctions among the characters in the story world. In this case, it is possible that the ages of the viewers (18-24) influenced their responses, their youth impacting their ability to comfortably question what they perceive to be dominant point of view. Furthermore, the racial makeup of the participants may have also influenced their responses. Because of the small number of women of color who participated in the focus group interviews, it is possible that these women felt uncomfortable voicing points of view that identified a reverse discourse within what they defined as the patriarchal text, even if this reverse discourse reflected their experiences as they engaged it.

Despite these limitations, and perhaps because of them, the results of the focus group interviews support the idea that there is no single definition of 'feminism.' This, in turn, explains the various definitions of 'patriarchy' viewers offered when engaging the text. The results reflect the varied and sometimes opposing philosophies feminists bring to television criticism today. However, regardless of how patriarchy is defined, this study

suggests a television narrative can be interpreted as both patriarchal and resistive to this patriarchy.

Conclusion

According to E. Ann Kaplan (1992), feminism requires researchers to look at "women and the place they are assigned in society" (249). This exercise in television aesthetics contributes to feminist scholarship in that it looks at how and where women are assigned positions within the story world of a televisual text. However, this study goes further, as it looks at how a woman's placement in a televisual text can be resisted.

The results of this study demonstrate some of the ways women's stories are being narrated on television, and how they can both reinforce and resist the masculist defined, patriarchal structure of every day life. The results also suggest that while narrative theory is a useful tool in understanding how a point of view is reflected in a televisual text, it must be expanded to included multiple, ambiguous, and opposing points of view from which the narrative can be engaged. The definition of patriarchy and the narrative framework must be also be broadened when conducting a narrative analysis in order to include issues of class, race, and age, as well as gender. Feminist television critics must continue to pursue ways aesthetic theories can be used to address the diverse social contexts in which patriarchal systems are being reflected, maintained, and challenged on television. By doing so, one can attempt to better understand how viewers of a televisual text assume a patriarchal point of view when engaging the text. It will also be helpful in understanding how a viewer may ideate narrative spaces of resistance, reflecting a reverse discourse that challenges this patriarchy.

The ideation of a reverse discourse that resists the overarching patriarchal discourse of a televisual text is a feminist act of resistance. By engaging the text from both the intended and resistive points of view, the viewer is, in effect, challenging the patriarchal structures the television narrative is reflecting. By attempting to create a site of resistance, s/he provides the foundation for future transformations of television narratives. It is these feminist narrative spaces that, some day, may become the dominant point of view from which a televisual text can be understood.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alcock, Beverly & Robson, J. (1990). "Cagney and Lacey revisited". Feminist Review, 3, 42-54.

Allen, Robert C. (1992). Audience-oriented criticism and television. In R. Allen (Ed.). Channels of discourse reassembled. (pp. 101-137) Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.

Anderson, K, Armitage, S., Jack, D.,& Wittner, J. (1987). "Beginning where we are: feminist methodology in oral history. Oral history review,15, 103-107.

Ang, Ien. (1990). Melodramatic identifications: television fiction and women's fantasy. In Mary Ellen Brown (Ed.). Television and women's culture: the politics of the popular. (pp. 75-88) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Baca Zinn, M., Cannon, L.W., Higginbotham, E. & Thornton Dill, B. (1986). The costs of exclusionary practices in women's studies. Signs, 11, 290-303.

Baca Zinn, M. Honduagneu-Sotelo, P., & Messner, M. A. (1997). Through the prism of difference: readings on sex and gender. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Back Stage salutes Law & Order; behind the scenes with today's longest-running prime time TV show. (1997, December 19) Back Stage, 38, A1-A14.

Barbatsis, Gretchen. (1999). Seeing stories: representational communication in pictorial form. Unpublished manuscript, Michigan State University.

Barbatsis, G.. Fagen, M. & Hansen, K. (1999). The performance of cyberspace: an exploration into computer mediated reality. Journal of Computer Mediated Communication, 5, [www.ascuse.org/jcmc/vol5/issue1/barbatsis.html]

Barbatsis, Gretchen. (1996). 'Look, and I will show you something you will want to see': pictorial engagement in negative political campaign commercials. Argumentation and Advocacy, 33, 69-81.

Becker, Howard S. (1982). Art worlds. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Brown, M.E. (1994). Soap opera and women's talk: the pleasure of resistance. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Brundson, C., D'Acci, J. & Spigel, L. (Eds.). (1997). Feminist television criticism: a reader. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Butler, Jeremy. (1993). Redesigning discourse: feminism, the sitcom, and *Designing Women*. Journal of film and video 45, (1) 13-27.

Chatman, Seymour. (1978). Story and discourse: narrative structure in fiction and film. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Chisolm, Brad. (1991). Difficult viewing: the pleasures of complex screen narratives. Critical studies in mass communication, 8, 389-403.

Corcos, Christine A. (1998). Women lawyers. In R.M. Jarvis & P. R. Joseph (Eds.). Prime-Time Law. (pp. 219-248) Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.

DiStefano, Christine. (1990). Dilemmas of difference: feminism, modernity, and postmodernism. In L. Nicholson (Ed..) Feminism/postmodernism. New York: Routledge.

Dow, Bonnie. (1992). Femininity and feminism in Murphy Brown. Southern Communication Journal, 57, 143-155.

Dow, Bonnie. (1990). Hegemony, feminist criticism and The Mary Tyler Moore Show. Critical studies in mass communication ,7, 261-274.

Dresner, Zita. (1993) "Roseanne Barr: goddess or she-devil". Journal of American Culture,16, 37-44.

Ferguson, Marjorie. (1990). Images of power and the feminist fallacy. Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 7, 215-230.

Fingerson, Laura. (1999). Active viewing. Journal of Contemporary Ethnography , 28, 389-418.

Frye, Northrop. (1957). Anatomy of criticism: four essays. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Gross, Larry. (1974). Modes of communication and the acquisition of symbolic competence. In D. Olson (Ed.). Media & symbols: the forms of expression, communication, and education. Chicago, IL. University of Chicago Press.

Higbie, A. (1995, November 26). A new catalyst in the 'Law and Order' chemistry. The new york times. pp. 38, 40.

Holub, Robert C. (1984). Reception theory: a critical introduction. New York, NY: Methuen publishing.

hooks, bell. (1994, March). Dissident heat: assessing Naomi Wolf's Fire with Fire. Z magazine,7, 26-29.

Iser, Wolfgang. (1978). The act of reading. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Iser, Wolfgang. (1974). The implied reader. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Iser, Wolfgang. (1971). Indeterminacy and the reader's response in prose fiction. In J. H, Miller. (Ed.). Aspects of narrative. (pp. 1-45) New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Jenkins, Henry III. (1988). *Star Trek* rerun, reread, rewritten: fan writing as textual poaching. Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 5, 85-107.

Joyrich, Lynne. (1996). Re-viewing reception: television, gender, and postmodern culture. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Kaplan, E.A. (1992). Feminist criticism and television. In R. Allen (Ed.) Channels of discourse reassembled. (pp. 247-283) Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.

Kozloff, Sarah. (1992). Narrative theory and television. In R. Allen (Ed.). Channels of discourse, reassembled. (pp.67-100) Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Krueger, Richard A. (1994). Focus groups: a practical guide for applied research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lee, Janet. (1992). Subversive sitcoms: Roseanne as inspiration for feminist resistance. Women's studies,21, 87-101.

Livingstone, Sonia. (1994). Watching talk: gender and engagement in the viewing of audience discussion programmes. Media, Culture, & Society ,16, 429-447.

Lunt, P. & Livingstone, S. (1996). Rethinking the focus group in media and Communications research. Journal of Communication ,46, 79-98.

Maglin, N.. B. & Perry, D. (1996). Bad girls" /"good girls": women, sex, & power in the nineties. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Massey, Doreen. (1994). Space, place, and gender. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

McCall, M. & Wittner, J. (1990). The good news about life history. In M. McCall, & J. Wittner: Symbolic interaction and cultural studies. (pp.46-89) Chicago. Il: University of Chicago Press.

McGrath, C. (1995, October 22). The triumph of the prime-time novel. The new york times magazine. pp. 52-59, 68, 76, 86.

Meisler, A. (1994, September 25). A new face at 'Law and Order'. Any objections? The new york times, p.H33.

Miller, S. (1995, September). ''Order' takes to streets for local flavor. Variety ,31, 18-24.

Modleski, Tania. (1979). The search for tomorrow in today's soap operas: notes on feminine narrative form. Film Quarterly, 33, 112-21.

Morris, Jenny. (1995). Creating a space for absent voices: disabled women's experience Of receiving assistance with daily living activities. Feminist review, 51, pp. 68-93.

Oleson, Virginia. (1994). Feminisms and models of qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.). Handbook of qualitative research (pp. 158-174) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Nicholson, Linda J. (Ed.). (1990). Feminism/postmodernism. New York, NY: Routledge.

Press, Andrea. (1991). Women watching television: gender, class, and generation in the American television experience. Philadelphia: PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Press, Andrea & Strathman, T. (1993). Work, family, and social class in television images of women: prime time television and the construction of postfeminism. Women and language, 16, 7-16.

Reay, Diane. (1996). Insider perspectives or stealing the words out of women's mouths: interpetation in the research process. Feminist Review, 53, 57-73.

Reinharz, Shulamit. (1992). Feminist methods in social research. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Reissman, Catherine K. (1993). Narrative Analysis. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Reissman, Catherine K. (1987). When gender is not enough: women interviewing women. Gender & Society, 1, 172-207.

Rowe, K. (1990). Roseanne: unruly woman as domestic goddess. Screen ,31, 408-419.

Rudolph, I. (1998, March 28-April 3). Arresting women. TV Guide, 18-21.

Ruth, Sheila. (1995). The dynamics of patriarchy. S. Ruth (Ed.) Issues in feminism. (pp. 53-62) Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing.

Smith, Dorothy E. (1987). The everyday world as problematic. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.

Spain, Daphne. (1992). Gendered spaces. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Thomas, Lyn (1995). In love with *Inspector Morse*. Feminist Review, 51, 1-25.

Unger, A. (1996). It's in the writing, stupid! Television Quarterly, 28, 10-23.

van Zoonen, Liesbet. (1994). Feminist Media Studies. London: Sage Publications.

Vande Berg, Leah R. (1993). *China Beach*, prime time war in the postfeminist age: an example of patriarchy in a different voice. Western Journal of Communication, 3, 349-366.

Weber, B. (1992, March 1). Dick Wolf breaks and enters with 'Law and Order' on NBC. The new york times. pp. 31, 36.

Weedon, Chris. (1997). Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers.

Zettl, Herbert. (1990). Sight sound motion: applied media aesthetics. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

VIEWER PROFILES

49 Participants
100% female
Age: 18-24

Racial/ethnic makeup:

Caucasian	40
African American	06
Asian	02
Latina	01

Previous Viewing Experience:

a. Avid Viewer (watches more than once a week)	05
b. Habitual Viewer (watches once a week)	02
c. Occasional Viewer (watch once or twice a month)	02
d. A Rare Viewer (have only seen a few episodes in a lifetime)	16
e. Non-viewer	24

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONING ROUTE

Introduction:

The purpose of this discussion is to hear how the points of the view of the overall narrative of *Law & Order* are identified and understood by viewers as they share their opinions, attitudes, and perceptions of what they see in the televisual text.

Introductory Question: (to ea. Participant)

Have you seen *Law & Order* before? If so, how often do you watch it?

PART ONE: LAW

After first commercial break: Opening Questions (after credits):
Purpose: Begin easing participants into critically thinking about what they are viewing in order to let participants connect with the general topic.

1. During the opening of the show, what were some of the things that you noticed?

(Potential follow-ups ONLY if limited response) Was there anything that struck you about:

1-a. the events that took place in the opening scenes?
1-b. the characters? Gestures, facial expressions...
1-c. music, noises, sounds effects
1-d. production elements (lighting, camera angles, props, etc.)
(Sum Up)

After second commercial break: Transition Questions
Purpose: Begin discussion of actual events and ideas about those events in the text in order to begin broadening the overall topic while focusing on the criminal aspects of the case.

1. Any comments or observations about what you've just seen?
2. What opinions, if any, do you have about any of the characters and their discussions about the moral and criminal implications of soliciting a prostitute?

3. Now that you've been exposed to some of the characters a bit more, are there any more thoughts about them?

PROBE:

3-a. Do you feel that the attitudes of the detectives and their interaction with each other are somehow impacted by the fact that they are men? Does this impact the way they proceed to investigate the crime.

(SUM UP) *what do you think will happen next?

After third commercial break: Key Questions (cont.)

Purpose: To inspire discussion specific to the points of views introduced in the text.

1. Any comments or observations you have about what you've just seen?
2. If you were to the list the reasons behind Dr. Danforth's ultimate arrest, what would you include?

PROBE:

2-a. Some researchers would describe male behavior as macho centered, and/or wanting to be dominant and powerful. Do you think this applies to what you've seen so far? Does this have anything to do with the arrest?

3. Who appears to be more dominant, the men or the women? Can you share the reasons behind your opinion?

(SUM UP)

MODEL: Take a look at this model. It's trying to outline where different points of view come out in the story. Do you think this is useful in trying to describe where there is a shift in the points of view?

(break: 10 Minutes)

PART II: ORDER

After Fourth Commercial Break: Key Questions

Purpose: Initiate discussions regarding points of view, focusing on the legal aspects of the case.

1. Any comments about what has taken place so far?

2. How do you feel about Kincaid's willingness to prosecute Dr. Danforth?

PROBES:
2-a. How would you characterize McCoy's attitude towards Kincaid throughout her efforts in trying and resolving the case? What did you see or hear that led to that opinion?

2-b. Did her having doubts contribute to your characterization?

2-c. Do you have any specific thoughts about the relationship between the McCoy and Kincaid? Do you think gender plays a part in this specific relationship?

2-d. Are there any other elements (production, narrative, etc.) that contribute to your ideas about Schiff, McCoy and Kincaid, as well as any other characters you have been introduced to?

3. Discuss your feelings, if any, about the resolution of the case. What do you think is going to happen next?

After fifth (last) commercial break: Final Key Question

1. Now that we all know that Mrs. Danforth, and NOT Dr. Danforth committed the murder, what are your ideas about her reasons for murdering Gwyn George?

PROBES for this final question:

1-a. Do you think her reasons in some way justify her actions?
1-b. Can you describe your feelings about **Dr. Danforth** while Mrs. Danforth admitted to the killing?
1-c. Can you recall some of your thoughts about **Mrs. Danforth** before you knew that she killed Gwyn George? Did your opinion of her change at the end of the program? If so, how?

2. What do you feel about the way Kincaid and McCoy went about resolving the case?

2-a. The prosecutor's "plan" to elicit a confession from Mrs. Danforth.
2-b. Kincaid's final discussion with Dr. and Mrs. Danforth.
2-c. The final discussion between McCoy and Kincaid.

3.Are there any other elements (camera, background noise/music, facial gestures, etc.) you noticed throughout the last several scenes?

Conclusion:

1. Are there additional comments you would like to share about what you just saw?

2. Is there anything else that you think is important to add?

Thank you for participating in this discussion.