

A Rhetorical Analysis of the Feminist and Patriarchal Themes
within Shonda Rhimes' Television Shows *Grey's Anatomy*,
Scandal, and *How To Get Away With Murder*

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*To my parents, Chet and Karla, who encouraged me to always
pursue excellence.*

*To Sam Farnsworth who kept track of how many times I cried
throughout the writing of this thesis
but who never let me quit.*

To Dr. Carey Martin who told me I could watch T.V. for a thesis.

Introduction

Section I: Topic

Shondaland

A growing trend within television dramas is the focus on strong, intelligent, ethnically diverse, career-driven female protagonists. Leading the charge is creator, writer, producer and showrunner, Shonda Rhimes. Her three T.V. shows, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Scandal*, and *How To Get Away With Murder*, aired for three continuous hours on primetime Thursday night (8-11 p.m. Eastern Standard Time) as what is branded, T.G.I.T., "Thank God It's Thursday" in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 television seasons. For the remainder of this paper, the three shows will be collectively called "Shondaland" which is the also the name of Rhimes' production company.

Shondaland has done well in each of the shows premiere seasons. According to ABC Medianet, *Grey's Anatomy* ranked 9th with 22.22 million viewers for its season finale (March 27, 2005) (Medianet, 2005). *Scandal* ended with 7.33 million viewers (May 17, 2012), ranking 62nd among network television shows (T.V. by the Numbers, 2012). The season one finale of *Murder* (February 27, 2015) reached a total of 13.32 million viewers (Kondolojy, 2015). *Grey's Anatomy* and *Scandal* held impressive viewership ratings at the conclusion of their latest season in spring 2015; just over 8 million viewers for *Grey's Anatomy* (May 14, 2015) and almost 9 million viewers for *Scandal* (May 14, 2015) (T.V. by the Numbers, 2015). As of fall 2015, *Grey's Anatomy* entered into its twelfth season, *Scandal* started its fifth season, and *How To Get Away With Murder* premiered season two.

Grey's Anatomy

Grey's Anatomy is a surgical drama set in Seattle, Washington. The main protagonist, Meredith Grey, played by Ellen Pompeo, is the daughter of renowned surgeon Ellis Grey, but she struggles with stepping out from her mother's shadow. Her mother currently is battling Alzheimer's which makes Grey responsible to care for her mother who had never cared for her as a child. As she and her fellow interns are striving to earn their surgical residency, they have to juxtapose professional relationships with romantic relationships. Grey may be one of the most intelligent doctors in the room, however her flaws often center around her broken childhood with the divorce of her absent surgeon-mother and emotionally-unavailable father. As a result, Grey's own romantic relationships are strained, including a long emotional affair with Dr. Derek Shepherd, who remains married for the first two seasons (Covel, n.d.).

In a quick aside, after three successful seasons of *Grey's Anatomy*, Rhimes created the spin-off series *Private Practice* that aired simultaneously as *Grey's Anatomy* for six seasons (IMDB, n.d.). The show centered on *Grey's Anatomy* character Addison Montgomery, the ex-wife of Dr. Derek Shepherd, after she escapes the tumultuous love-triangle between her husband, Meredith Grey and herself by moving to Los Angeles to set up her own private practice. Addison Montgomery occasionally appeared in later *Grey's* seasons, but for the most part remained confined to her own show. Although *Private Practice* had a lengthy run, since the series had already ended by the writing of this study, it is not included in the current Shondaland line-up.

Scandal

Rhimes' second drama of focus within this study, is a political drama based loosely on the life of government fixer, Judy Smith (Tucker, 2012). *Scandal* premiered April 5, 2012 to 7.33 million viewers (T.V. by the Numbers, 2012), and has seen consistent growth throughout the remaining four seasons. The plotline follows Washington D.C. fixer Olivia Pope, played by African-American actress Kerry Washington, and her team of "gladiators in suits" as they make the problems of high-profile people go away. One such prolific figure is none other than the President of the United States for whom Pope used to be the campaign manager. It is soon revealed in season one that on the campaign trail, Pope also became the presidential candidate's secret mistress and the center of drama in seasons to come (IMDB, n.d.).

Olivia Pope has become a modern day symbol of feminism and female empowerment as she challenges the preconceived stereotypes of both African-Americans and women (Abdi, 2015). She runs an incredibly lucrative business, Pope and Associates, and she is not afraid to tell the truth or lie in order to win her client's case. She sometimes breaks the law in the name of justice, but only when the law will not favor what is right. Her job is her top priority. Protecting her clients no matter the cost is her mantra and she never apologizes for anything (IMDB, n.d.).

How To Get Away With Murder

The third and final show under discussion, is the law drama *How To Get Away With Murder*, created by Rhimes' fellow writer and executive co-producer of *Grey's Anatomy* and *Scandal*, Peter Nowalk. From September 2014 to February 2015, *Murder* was the third show in Rhimes' Thursday night line-up on ABC. Its premiere reached almost 7 million Live + 7 Day

DVR viewers (TV by the Numbers, 2014). However, unlike *Scandal* whose viewership number remained consistent throughout the first season, *How To Get Away With Murder*'s viewership has steadily declined to 4.31 million viewers by the final episode (TV by the Numbers, 2015).

The basic plot summary of *Murder* centers on a group of five aspiring law students and their lawyer professor, the twisted and mysterious Annalise Keating, played by Viola Davis, who won a SAG award for the role. This show exemplifies Rhimes' deliberate use of racial and sexual diversity to network television. Not only is Annalise Keating African-American, but two of the central students (one male, one female) are also African-American. One of the male student is also gay and uses his sexuality to get advantages in various situations (Deadline, 2014). The show's title is not only the unofficial name of the class Keating teaches, it is also the premise of the rest of the show. Through constant flash-forwards and flashbacks, the story reveals how the five students are involved in murdering Keating's husband (revealed in episode one) and how they, along with Keating, resolve to keep it a secret (Deadline, 2014). As far as Keating's romantic relationships go, she is married to the man she had an affair with before the show takes place, her husband has been known to frequently cheat on her with some of his students (he is a psychology professor at the same university as Keating), and Keating herself is seen having sex with a police detective whom she unflinchingly refers to as her boyfriend (Deadline, 2014).

Section II: Significance

Feminism is Growing in Hollywood

Shondaland is a place where women rule the T.V. screen. Ms. Magazine listed *Scandal* and *How To Get Away With Murder* as two out of six most feminist T.V. shows during the spring 2015 T.V. season (Czachor, 2015).

The reason why these three shows have been chosen for study is that they have been placed on a pedestal of female empowerment in the minds of the people mostly due to the fact that the dramas showcase women in high levels of power and control within their careers and their relationships. Huffington Post wrote an article in May 2015 about the rise of feminist T.V. shows in the last 15 years. *Scandal* and *How To Get Away With Murder* are both praised for being revolutionary for their raw, vulnerable, intelligent, sensual, and diverse lead characters, Olivia Pope and Annalise Keating (Blay, 2015). Not only that, but other “feminist” issues like homosexuality, abortion and combating rape are often presented and discussed. These shows are celebrated for promoting a strong feminist agenda toward equality, regardless of sex, race, or sexual orientation.

As we will discuss later in the history of feminism, however, our society still runs on patriarchal precedent. Both feminism and patriarchy have its “set of rules” by which its followers wish to abide. Most of these “rules” are masked by culture, as each side trying to promote their own agendas. Most of the time society is unaware they are being bombarded with subtle messages. In fact, Molly Haskell’s opening sentence from *From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies* embodies this belief. “The big lie perpetrated on Western

society is the idea of women's inferiority, a lie so deeply ingrained in our social behavior that merely to recognize it is to risk unraveling the entire fabric of civilization" (Haskell, 1987).

Shows like *Grey's Anatomy*, *Scandal*, and *How To Get Away With Murder* have very strong feminist ideologies that are cleverly written into the characters, their dialogue and the situations in which they find themselves. When Izzy Stephens in *Grey's Anatomy* defends her lingerie modeling career that paid for her med-school to a group of chauvinistic male doctors, instead of thinking, "Wow, Shonda Rhimes must really be a strong feminist because her female character just defended herself to the men who were trying to capitalize on her sexuality," audiences accept without question feminist themes. The unconscious acceptance of these characters and actions in television reflect the growing acceptance of feminism in society (Thornham, 1997). Haskell would be proud.

However, despite the strides of female-empowerment the women have made in Shondaland, these shows also contain a lot of anti-women, or patriarchal, themes that calls into question their feminist validity. Even *Grey's Anatomy* contains some anti-feminist content like men leaving their wives for younger women, women being the cause of a man's downfall, and overtly sexual scenes. After all, Rhimes said that she wanted her shows to reflect on real life, real life still being highly patriarchal. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is discuss both feminist and patriarchal themes within Shondaland.

Racial Diversity

Although the shows do not always make it on the top ten list of weekly Nielsen ratings, all three shows frequently dominate the top ten list of shows viewed by African-Americans (Nielsen, 2015). While the purpose of the study remains focused on the feminist and patriarchal content of these shows, one should note that *Scandal* and *How To Get Away With Murder* both star incredibly talented, intelligent, beautiful African-American women in highly successful and prominent careers. *Scandal's* Kerry Washington was the first African-American female to lead a network television drama since *Get Christie Love!* starring Teresa Graves in 1974 (Rose, 2014). Also, in the history of the Screen Actors Guild Awards (originating in 1994), only two African-American women have won best female actor in a television drama. Chandra Wilson for her character Miranda Bailey in *Grey's Anatomy* (2006) and Viola Davis for her portrayal of Professor Annalise Keating, J.D. in *How To Get Away With Murder* (2015) (SAG Awards). Viola Davis went on to win an Emmy for her character, saying in her acceptance speech, "...the only thing that separates women of color from anyone else is opportunity" (ABC Entertainment, 2015). To further emphasize Shondaland's character diversity, Sandra Oh, Korean by heritage though she was born and raised in Canada, won the same award in 2005 for her character Cristina Yang in *Grey's Anatomy* (SAG Awards, 2005).

Biography of Shonda Rhimes

Haskell was also an advocate for women's involvement in the behind the scenes aspects of Hollywood. At the time she released her book, Haskell wrote that few women had made it into high roles of leadership such as producing or directing (Haskell, 1987). One can only wonder

what she would say to Shonda Rhimes, one of Hollywood's leading showrunners. Therefore, in order to further establish the relevance of this study, it is important to understand the biography of Shonda Rhimes.

Chicago-born Shonda Rhimes is the youngest of six children. Rhimes graduated class of 1991 from Dartmouth with her bachelors in English Literature (She Made It, n.d.). In 2014, she returned to her alma mater to deliver the graduation commencement speech. In her own words, she is "...from a middle class family. My parents are academics. I was born after the civil rights movement. I was a toddler during the women's movement. And I live in the United States of America, all of which means I am allowed to own my freedom, my rights, and my uterus. And I went to Dartmouth and I earned an Ivy League degree" (Dartmouth, 2014). The point being that yes, life is hard, but "hard is relative" and Rhimes encourages people to gain a better perspective. She is often criticized for being "an angry black women" seeking to right any and all social injustices, however her life was not the travesty people often assume she lived.

Rhimes is a self-proclaimed challenge seeker (Dartmouth, 2014). After reading in the New York Times that getting into University of Southern California's School of Cinema-Television was harder than Harvard Law, Rhimes decided to take the challenge and proceeded to earn her MFA in screenwriting. Among her early career writing accomplishments, she wrote and sold the screenplay *Human Seeking Same* which was never sent to production. She wrote the screenplay *Crossroads* which starred Britney Spears and *The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement* which starred Anne Hathaway and Julie Andrews. Other resume builders include,

research director for Emmy and Academy nominated documentary *Hank Aaron: Chasing the Dream* and writer of HBO biographical teleplay *Introducing Dorothy Dandridge* starring Halle Berry (She Made It, n.d.).

In 2001, Rhimes decided that she did not want to wait to get married in order to have children so instead she adopted a baby girl, Harper, and raised her as a single-mother. Later, she adopted another daughter, Emerson, and had a gestational surrogate give her a third daughter, Beckett. It was when she up late at night with her first daughter that Rhimes began creating the show *Grey's Anatomy*. While *Grey's Anatomy* is now highly regarded for the diversity of all its characters, Rhimes claims she did not intentionally write diversity into her characters. When writing the script for *Grey's Anatomy*, she did not include any character descriptions, believing it was simply better to cast the right person for the role, regardless of race (She Made It, n.d.). As a result, her characters completely break stereotypes.

In an interview with Paley Center for Media, Stephen McPherson, ABC Entertainment chief said of Rhimes, “Her characterizations are definitely her strong suit and characters are what drive great television” (She Made It, n.d.). According to the rest of the article, “[I]n regard to race, *Grey's* quite often turns viewer expectations upside down: three of the original leading doctors (Preston Burke, Richard Webber, and Miranda Bailey) are black, the character who had the toughest childhood (Meredith Grey) is white, and the Latina orthopedist (Dr. Callie Torres, played by Sara Ramirez) is from a well-to-do family” (She Made It, n.d.).

Numerical Impact

Some viewership numbers about the premiere and latest seasons of each of the Shondaland shows have already been mentioned briefly in the preceding pages. Below are charts based on the entire series as they portray the cultural impact through the number of viewers and standard Nielsen or T.V. by the Numbers ratings.

Grey's Anatomy Ratings and Viewership Numerical Chart

American Television Season	Season of Series	Timeslot (EST)	Number of Episodes	Premiere		Finale		Overall Rank	Overall Viewership (millions)	Citation	
				Date	Viewers (millions)	Date	Viewers (millions)				
2004-2005	1	Sunday 10:00 p.m.	9	27-Mar-05	16.25	25-May-05	22.22	9th	18.46	Nielsen, 2005.	
2005-2006	2		27	25-Sep-05	18.95	15-May-06	22.5	5th	19.44	Nielsen, 2005; Nielsen, 2006.	
2006-2007	3	Thursday 9:00 p.m.	25	21-Sep-06	25.41	17-May-07	22.57	8th	19.17	Nielsen, 2006; Nielsen, 2007.	
2007-2008	4		17	27-Sep-07	20.93	22-May-08	18.09	10th	15.92	Nielsen, 2007; Nielsen, 2008.	
2008-2009	5		24	25-Sep-08	18.29	14-May-09	17.12	12th	14.52	TV by the Numbers, 2008; TV by the Numbers, 2009; TV by the Numbers, 2009.	
2009-2010	6		24	24-Sep-09	17.03	20-May-10	16.13	17th	13.26	TV by the Numbers, 2009; TV by the Numbers, 2010.	
2010-2011	7		22	23-Sep-10	14.32	19-May-11	9.89	31st	11.41	TV by the Numbers, 2010; TV by the Numbers, 2011.	
2011-2012	8		24	22-Sep-11	10.38	17-May-12	11.44	34th	10.92	TV by the Numbers, 2011; TV by the Numbers, 2012.	
2012-2013	9		24	27-Sep-12	11.73	16-May-13	8.99	26th	11.07	TV by the Numbers, 2012; TV by the Numbers, 2013.	
2013-2014	10		24	26-Sep-13	9.27	15-May-14	8.92	15th	12.12	TV by the Numbers, 2013; TV by the Numbers, 2014.	
2014-2015	11		Thursday 8:00 p.m.	24	25-Sep-14	9.81	15-May-15	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA

Scandal Ratings and Viewership Numerical Chart

American Television Season	Season of Series	Timeslot (EST)	# of Episodes	Premiere		Finale		Overall Rank	Overall Viewership	Citation
				Date	Viewers (millions)	Date	Viewers (millions)			
2011-2012	1	Thursday 10 p.m.	7	5-Apr-12	7.33	7-May-12	7.33	62nd	8.21	TV by the Numbers, 2012.
2012-2013	2		22	27-Sep-12	6.74	16-May-13	9.12	84th	8.46	TV by the Numbers, 2012; TV by the Numbers, 2013.
2013-2014	3		24	3-Oct-13	10.52	17-Apr-14	10.57	16th	9.11	TV by the Numbers, 2013; TV by the Numbers, 2014.
2014-2015	4	Thursday 9 p.m.	22	25-Sep-14	11.96	14-May-15	TBA	TBA	TBA	TV by the Numbers, 2014;

How To Get Away With Murder Ratings and Viewership Numerical Chart

Live Air Date	Timeslot (EST)	Episode #	Episode Title	Viewership Rank	Live + SD Viewers (millions)	Live + 7 Viewers (millions)	Citation
25-Sep-14	Thursday 10 p.m.	1	"Pilot"	7	14.12	21.018	TV by the Numbers, 2014.
2-Oct-14		2	"It's All Her Fault"	13	11.94	17.7	TV by the Numbers, 2014.
9-Oct-14		3	"Smile, or Go to Jail"	14	10.81	16.31	TV by the Numbers, 2014.
16-Oct-14		4	"Let's Get to Scooping"	20	9.79	15.2	TV by the Numbers, 2014.
23-Oct-14		5	"We're Not Friends"	21	9.97	14.25	TV by the Numbers, 2014.
30-Oct-14		6	"Freakin' Whack-a-Mole"	N/A	8.68	13.86	TV by the Numbers, 2014.
6-Nov-14		7	"He Deserved to Die"	22	9.18	14.57	TV by the Numbers, 2014.
13-Nov-14		8	"He Has a Wife"	25	9.25	14.57	TV by the Numbers, 2014.
20-Nov-14		9	"Kill Me, Kill Me, Kill Me"	22	9.82	14.76	TV by the Numbers, 2015.
29-Jan-15		10	"Hello Raskolnikov"	18	9.18	13.74	TV by the Numbers, 2015.
5-Feb-15		11	"Best Christmas Ever"	24	8.34	12.73	TV by the Numbers, 2015.
12-Feb-15		12	"She's a Murderer"	25	8.44	12.78	TV by the Numbers, 2015.
19-Feb-15		13	"Mama's Here Now"	20	8.86	13.73	TV by the Numbers, 2015.
26-Feb-15		14	"The Night Lila Died"	20	8.99	13.32	TV by the Numbers, 2015.
26-Feb-15		15	"It's All My Fault"	20	8.99	13.32	TV by the Numbers, 2015.

Section III: Theory

Molly Haskell: *From Reverence to Rape*

In order to determine whether Shondaland is more feminist or patriarchal, the shows will be examined through the themes of feminist film expert, Molly Haskell. Her book, *From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies*, is a widely used scholarly book in the study of feminist film criticism. Though written with furious passion, her book is a scholar's "asset" because she clearly "defines what she abhors and talks about what she admires" in film (Wilson, 1974). The book gives a detailed account of the history of women's roles in Hollywood, both behind the scenes and in front of the camera. With a very strong feminist voice, Haskell desires to empower women in Hollywood, both the fictional characters and the women who portray them. She admonishes patriarchal themes within films while pointing out the ways in which a film is or should be more supportive of women. She critically analyzes the characters and the stars of films from the 1920s to the 1960s in order to chart the rise and fall of feminism in Hollywood. Though her work might seem outdated because it was published in the 1970s and 1980s, Haskell is still an appropriate tool in studying feminist film today because her work is so foundational. Therefore, in that same way that Haskell analyzed films like *June Bride*, *The Moon's Our Home*, *Alice Adams*, *Take a Letter, Darling*, *They All Kissed the Bride*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, *Woman of the Year*, *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, and countless others, this study will look at Shondaland through Molly Haskell's lens of feminist film theory.

Shonda Rhimes promotes many positive messages of feminism within her current running T.V. shows, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Scandal*, and *How To Get Away With Murder*. Haskell would be proud that Annalise Keating is a slightly older woman (characteristic of her view of feminism) and that the female characters express moral intricacies rather being only one-dimensional (Haskell, 1987). However, in reading *From Reverence to Rape*, Haskell also points out several patriarchal themes like women bringing about the downfall of men and how fictional women can achieve career success only if they also win the love of a man (Haskell, 1987). Knowing the intricate romantic relationships of Meredith Grey and Dr. Derick Shepherd, and Olivia Pope and President Fitzgerald Grant, one might wonder just how feminist Shondaland is. This is the foundation to the study's research questions.

RQ1: Are the television shows of Shondaland more characteristic of feminist or patriarchal themes according to Molly Haskell?

RQ2: Based on the answer to R1, how much does Shondaland lean toward the victor?

Upon entering this study with only a vague understanding of Haskell and simply a love for Shonda Rhimes' television dramas, there were four hypotheses.

H1: *Grey's Anatomy* will contain many more feminist themes than patriarchal.

H2: *Scandal* will contain only slightly more feminist themes than patriarchal.

H3: *How to Get Away With Murder* will contain more patriarchal themes than feminist.

H4: Collectively, Shondaland will remain to be seen as strong feminist television shows because the collective number of feminist themes will be more than patriarchal.

The study will look at the first seasons of each of the television dramas: nine episodes in the first season of *Grey's Anatomy*, seven episodes of *Scandal's* first season, and fifteen episodes of *How To Get Away With Murder*.

Section IV: Appropriateness

There are several ways researchers have analyzed feminist content in television. One study analyzes the relationship between women-oriented television shows and the everyday lives of the women who watch them (Modleski, 1979/1997). Another study of feminism focuses on the female comedy of the 1950s and the “vexing conundrum” that uses humor to replace feminist feelings of anger at the patriarchal status quo (Mellencamp, 1986/1997). Rowe identifies the way comedy also “encourages critical perspectives on women’s roles in society and the family in particular” (1990; Brunson et. all, 1997). Still others look at the feminist and narrative themes of television dramas (Mayne, 1988/1997) or the sexist, racial, gender-related, class related agendas of women talk shows (Squire, 1994/1997). Despite the numerous studies done on feminism in television and film, there is not a universal feminist theory that details exactly what are feminist themes and what are patriarchal themes. The study of feminism in film is subjective to the researcher who carries a personal opinion on feminism. Most studies done on feminism and film/television drastically vary based on the researcher’s bias.

For example, one feminist study points out feminist contradictions in primetime television by analyzing *L.A. Law* which raises feminist questions, “due in large part to how those questions are given narrative shape and definition with the particular format of the multi- and overlapping-narrative and ensemble cast structure” (Mayne, 1988/1997). However, exactly what the feminist and patriarchal themes the researcher is looking for are never defined until suddenly

a feminist theme emerges from the story. There is no evidence to support the claim that the instance supported feminism except for the researcher's claim that it did.

Personal Reflection

Most feminist studies use qualitative research that is based on their own definitions. Though this allows for creative discussion, I wanted to use a theory that would minimize my own bias. I wanted to use a feminist film theory that was no different from a researcher applying McLuhan's "the medium is the message" theory, or Benoit's image repair theory, or Burke's pentad. This study therefore applies Molly Haskell's feminist film critique to Shondaland. Haskell is a renowned feminist scholar and is evaluated alongside the work of Woolf, Steinem, de Beauvoir, and Rosen (Thornham, 1997).

Although Rosen's book *Popcorn Venus* would have also made for a solid feminist study, I chose Haskell for the depth in which she analyzes films from the 1920s to the 1960s. In those fifty years, the treatment of women has gone from reverence to rape, as the title of her book suggests. Because of this rise and fall of women in film, Haskell's book critiques the films through an objective, analytical lens, noting the various nuances by which characters and actresses are either revered or disrespected. Haskell digs in so deep that she dissects the characters and situations that do not even penetrate the consciousness of the creators or the viewers (Thornham, 1997). She explains that the world is so wrought with patriarchal objectification that filmmakers are unaware of its presence within their movies and viewers do not notice its subliminal messages (Haskell, 1987). "As such, they [Hollywood] are also subject to unacknowledged contradictions and repressions. This suggestive but only partially theorized psychoanalytic approach is accompanied by a view of the film's meaning as the product not only

of the conscious and unconscious obsessions of its direct (the *auteur*) but also of other competing and subversive voices” (Thornham, 1997).

Another reason why Haskell is a better choice than Rosen as a feminist film theorist, is her objective perspective approach of analyzing films. While Rosen analyzes films with outrage and contempt, hoping to expose every nuance of patriarchy as a sociological evidence to the horrible treatment of women in society, Haskell’s approach looks at the artistic creation of the films (Thornham, 1997). In Haskell’s research, the director, the actors and actresses, and the screenwriters (through the characters) all have a voice and a say in determining whether the content is more feminist or patriarchal. Haskell analyzes the evolution of various actresses over the decades of research to determine how in-control of their lives they are, if the roles they play were their choice, or if the actresses were merely ventriloquist puppets of the Hollywood patriarchy and unaware that their voices were being stifled.

By systematizing Haskell’s work into a simple chart where one column lists all the feminist themes and the other column lists the patriarchal themes, I have been able to conduct a quantitative study of Shonda Rhimes’ T.V. shows. Though the study uses numbers in order to provide more concrete evidence to support or deny Shondaland’s feminism nature, there is still plenty of room for discussion and debate over whether the feminist and patriarchal themes were present or not. Though I cannot holistically remove my opinion from the study, Haskell gave me a clear, objective roadmap to use in my travel of Shondaland. And it is a roadmap that can be repeated for other areas of research.

Known Limitations

At the onset of this study, there were known limitations of only looking at the first season of a television dramas in that character and story development are just beginning. Unlike Haskell

who studied films in which the stories had a clear, concise beginning, middle, and end with all the necessary character development in a short amount of time, analyzing characters and plots of television shows are trickier because of their longevity. Therefore, only a congruent sampling of each of the shows were chosen. Studying the first season of each of the shows made the most sense because *How To Get Away With Murder* had only aired its first season at the time of this study. Other options for study would have been to analyze the most recent seasons in order for congruency of time and place. However, character and plot development of *Grey's Anatomy* had been occurring for eleven seasons, *Scandal* for four, and *How To Get Away With Murder* for one. Therefore, analyzing the first two shows would require greater backstory and context for the actions of the later seasons. Another possibility was to give each show the same number of episodes to analyze, regardless of their place in the season. Because *Murder* had the longest first season of the three shows with fifteen episodes, I could have studied the first fifteen episodes of *Grey's Anatomy* and *Scandal*, ending the study in the middle of season two. Though this would have given each show equal opportunity to establish patriarchal and feminist content, I believed it to be unnecessary. A show's true colors are usually revealed by third episode, therefore analyzing the entire first seasons of each of the shows was more than enough to understand the nature of the shows.

Literature Review

Feminism

As previously discussed, the purpose of this paper is to apply the feminist film perspective of Molly Haskell to Shondaland. Before discussing the details of Haskell, first one should garner an understanding of feminism.

Herein lies the problem with any study of feminism. The term feminism does not have one universal definition. It holds different connotations to different scholars, critics and everyday people. Depending on who you talk to, you will hear a different definition. In general though, a person's definition of feminism falls in one of two categories. One must first understand the history of the two opposing forces of feminism, before one can apply feminist film theory to Shondaland.

Books upon books have been written on feminism, trying to cover all aspects and contributors to the movement since the late 1800s. Feminism is a vast and complicated topic. I will use the Sommers perspective to outline the history of feminism as recorded in her book *Who Stole Feminism?* First-wave and second-wave feminism are two ideologies broad enough to understand the major differences in feminism but narrow enough to accurately date, as well as document, important female activists. These two waves are the most crucial as they have enacted the most change. Haskell's book was also written in the 1980s before third-wave feminism took off in the 90s.

Feminist scholars (i.e. Sommers, Thornham, Haskell, and Kaplan) generally date the split as pre-1970s women activists and post-1970s activists. The division of ideologies can be illustrated in the two movements leading matriarchs. Among the first-wave feminists, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Harriet Taylor lived during the late 1800s and early 1900s and saw feminism as a fight for political, educational and economic equity for men and women. According to Sommers, "A First Wave, 'mainstream,' or 'equity' feminist wants for women

what she wants for everyone: fair treatment without discrimination.... The equity agenda may not yet be fully achieved, but by any reasonable measure, equity feminism has turned out to be a great American success story” (1994, 22). The aforementioned leading women were game changers in the political equality of the genders by winning women the right to vote in 1920. As history continued, a change underwent in the educational system when women were welcomed to attend higher education for the first time. During the world wars, women took up the jobs left by men that created a new, integrated workforce on the post-war home front. The co-ed work environment created a new fight for feminism: the fight for equal pay for equal work. The first-wave movement ended in the mid-sixties. It is possible that the equal pay act of 1963 was the final achievement of first-wave feminism because it was the last obstacle in first-wave feminists’ fight for equality. Second-wave feminism, also called “new feminism,” then began with events like the Miss America protests in 1968 (Rampton, 2015).

The second-wave feminists, including Virginia Woolf, Gloria Steinem, Betty Friedan, Germaine Greer and Carolyn Heilbrun, root their feminist ideologies on similar philosophies of Marxism. It is a belief of oppression and victimization (Sommers, 1995). The second-wave doctrine holds to the belief “that women, even modern American women, are in thrall to a ‘system of male dominance variously referred to as ‘heteropatriarchy’ or the sex/gender system” (Sommers, 1994, 22). That “sex/gender system” is the idea that humans are not born male or female, but that gender is created by the social institution which is “patriarchal.” In second-wave feminism, debates such as abortion laws and homosexuality rights are prominent. Simone de

Beauvoir wrote about this victimizing social institution as early as 1949 when she wrote *The Second Sex*. According to her, the two “genders” are Self and Other. Being that we live in a so-called “man’s world,” man as given himself the title of Self and demoted women to Other simply because she lacks a phallus. (Thornham, 3-4). Therefore, in order to break out of the patriarchal mold, women have to fight for economic and social equality with men in order to rise to their full feminine potential. De Beauvoir’s work is seen as foundational to other second wave feminists in the 1970s and beyond.

Another way to differentiate between the two feminist movements is by “equity feminists,” those who do not seek self-segregation for women or the promotion of gynocentric societal reform, and “gender feminists,” those who believe old-feminism victories are not enough and women are still suffering under the dominance of male forces in society (Sommers, 1994, 22-24).

Feminist Film Theory

Theorists often look to the arts for evidence for or against various social injustices because art reflects the times. As such, art, whether paintings, sculptures, plays, books or movies, can be used to connect with people. The study of film and television is just one of the many media platforms feminists can use to build their cases. Feminists often analyzed various literary works of men and women to build cases for their causes. Millet’s book, *Sexual Politics*, analyzes the works of D.H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, Norman Mailer, Sigmund Freud and others. Simone de Beauvoir’s book, *The Second Sex*, also analyzes Freud as well as Alfred Adler, Friedrich

Engels, William Shakespeare, Edgar Allen Poe, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and more. De

Beauvoir also looked at film, specifically *Citizen Kane*, stating that the film embodies

“...imperial and false generosity” of men who view women as prizes to be won and to “glorify his own power” (De Beauvoir, 1952). According to *Passionate Detachments: An Introduction to Feminist Film Theory* by Sue Thornham:

“...feminist film theory has engaged both with theoretical currents from outside its own political borders – from structuralism and psychoanalysis in the 1970s to post-colonial theory, queer theory and postmodernism in the 1990s – and with its own internally generated conflicts. Because a vital part of feminism’s project has been to ‘transform women from an object of knowledge into a subject capable of appropriating knowledge’ (Delmar 1986: 25), and because *seeing* is so crucial to knowledge in Western culture, these debates have been central within feminist theory” (1997, ix).

As with feminism, critics also differ in defining feminist film theory. There are three types of feminists that engage in cinema, the film-critic, the film-maker and the audience member. Thornham charts the history of feminist cinema in culture and breaks it down into a:

“...triangular relationship between three central figures. First, there is the figure of ‘Woman’ as image or cinematic representation. Second, there is the figure of real-life woman who is always in fact *women* – a whole array of female subjects positioned differently within history and culture. Finally, there is the figure of the feminist theorist who – in however complex or theoretical way – *speaks* as a woman” (1997, ix-x).

The relationship between these three figureheads is the foundation for studying feminism in film and television. Each of the figures comes with her own set of ideas and societal norms that dictate the course of debate. They contribute different aspects to feminist film criticism that, when looked at all together, paint a well-rounded picture of feminism in Hollywood.

Feminist-film critics look for female oppression in society. While feminism in the 21st century is often equated with female-empowerment, it is important to remember that female-empowerment is rooted on the seething feelings of oppression that gender feminist since the 1970s have felt and lashed out against. Convinced that it is a “man’s world” and men have taught society that women are lesser beings just because they are not men, gender feminists see patriarchal control in all aspects of life, including film and television. Early activists in the feminist film world published a short-lived magazine journal in 1972, *Women and Film*, to shed light on women’s oppression in the film industry. According the journal editors women were being oppressed in three ways: they were oppressed within the film industry whereby they only worked trivial, secretarial, receptionist jobs or random “odd jobs” not worth a man’s time; they were oppressed by being stereotyped into one-dimensional characters such as “the damsel in distress” or the “sex object;” and women were oppressed in film theory because critics only praised male cinematic revolutionaries like Alfred Hitchcock and Douglas Sirk (as cited in Thornham, 1997, x).

In the 1970s, feminist film-making was *avant garde* and therefore only premiered in women’s film festivals. The films were not only created by women, but the subject matter was

overtly feminine as well such as the 1971 documentary *Growing Up Female* and Laura Mulvey's *Penthesilea, Queen of the Amazons* (1974) and *Riddle of the Sphinx* (1977). Feminist cinema eventually moved into "mainstream" media in the 1980s and can be summed up by Thornham as she quotes late 20th century feminist filmmaker Michelle Citron.

"The films which were made in the 1970s were, she feels, 'theoretically interesting and politically sound, but flat. They offer intellectual pleasure but rarely emotional pleasure.' The move into the mainstream, she writes, has its dangers: through it, one trades control for power. But power means 'the opportunity to reach a larger audience, the potential of using mainstream culture to critique or subvert it, the freedom to define and test one's own personal boundaries as film-maker'" (1997, xii).

Despite the strides feminism has taken since the early 1900s, society still operates under patriarchal order. Because Hollywood itself is a patriarchal business, feminist film and television have undergone great change over the years. This new push for feminists to get their message into the public eye via film had good and bad consequences. The content of the films for the most part held fast to feminist values like, women's histories (*Growing Up Female*), costs and rewards of desire (*Now, Voyager; The Reckless Moment*), female relationships like that between two lesbians (*The Killing of Sister George*), or mothers and daughters (*Stella Dallas*). However, in order to survive mainstream media feminist films also required to merge with popular film conventions and the "institutionalization" of Hollywood, which again is viewed as patriarchal.

Judging audience perception is a tricky undertaking when it comes to feminist-film criticism. As different generations engage with film and television, they bring with them knowledge of their current society as a whole with its social norms and ideals, as well as their own perception of reality based on individual lifestyle and point of view. The oppression that women faced in the 1910s or the 1970s, is different than the struggles of 21st century women. In the same way, the desires of women changed over the years. In the 1930s through the 1950s, society had still not fully accepted the liberated woman. Therefore, the films of that time reflected that kind of traditional ideology. This is not to say that the women's movement was only whispered in secret meetings. The men of Hollywood were very much aware of the rising women's movement and their films were often an attempt to put women "in their place" by telling stories of victimized or villainous women. Women were often victims of men who need to be saved by men, and should a female character possess a strong independent spirit, she usually suffered the fate of poverty or death (Kaplan, 1988, 6). If a female character was sexually liberated, she was the cause of a man's downfall and thus the villain of the story. This character archetype is known as the *femme fatal*, and appeared frequently in films in the 1940s and 1950s. Kaplan uses the example of *Lady of Shanghai* to point out the more "direct confronting of the threat that women pose" (1988, 6). The film villainizes women's sexuality as something that men both desire and fear, and when man comes into contact with her sexuality, it destroys his life. The film then claims that "...the sexual woman's duplicity and betrayal mark her as evil,

granting man the moral right to destroy her, even if such destruction means depriving himself of a much needed pleasure” (Kaplan, 1988, 6).

Another turning point in women’s sexuality was the peak of the women’s movement in the 1960s when society no longer accepted the patriarchal norms.

“The mechanisms that worked in earlier decades (i.e. victimizing, fetishizing, self-righteous murdering) to obscure patriarchal fears no longer worked in the post 1960s era: the sexual woman could no longer be designated as ‘evil,’ since women had won the right to be ‘good’ *and* sexual, and the need to use the phallus as the prime weapon for dominating women, no matter who they are or whether or not they had done anything wrong, could no longer be hidden (Kaplan, 1988, 7).

This caused backlash however in the way men now viewed women and the shift was carefully archived in books like *Popcorn Venus* by Marjorie Rosen and *From Reverence to Rape* by Molly Haskell. Haskell points out that from the 1960s and on into the later 20th century, men twisted women’s sexual liberation into the belief that women are asking for sex all the time.

“The provocative, sex-obsessed bitch is one of the great male-chauvinist (and apparently, territorialist) fantasies...” (1987, 362). Though women gave several memorable performances in the 1960s, Haskell sums up the common character types into, “Whores, quasi-whores, jilted mistresses, emotional cripples, drunks. Daffy ingénues, Lalitas, kooks, sex-starved spinsters, psychotics. Icebergs, zombies, and ballbreakers. That’s what little girls of the sixties and seventies were made of” (1988, 327-328).

To sum up these brief findings, before the 1960s women's movement, the aspects that characterized male-dominance and female-oppression in film included, male economic and social superiority, demand for respect of male authority over women, men's desires are placed above a woman's, the need for women to be protected by men against men, repression of motherhood, the *femme fatale's* ability to destroy men's lives through her sexuality, and the consequences of independent females straying from male control are poverty or death (Kaplan, 1988, 5-7). Post-1960s patriarchal aspects include women's overt sexuality as the justification for rape, love stories rooted in suspicion and antagonism, women as malevolent destroyers, women, usually blondes, lack brains and substance to achieve anything without a man's help, and the promotion of female-female relationships (Haskell, 1987). More of Haskell will be discussed in the Methodology.

Further information will now be given about each of the shows in this study in order for those who have never watched the any of the series. It is important to familiarize oneself with the shows in order to better understand the ways in which feminism relates to the plotlines and characters.

Plot Synopsis

To begin with, *Grey's Anatomy* and *Scandal* have each achieved multiple seasons, but *How To Get Away With Murder* finished its first season in the spring of 2015. Once again, the collection of these three shows will be referred to as Shondaland. The focus of this study will be placed on the first season of each show in order to evenly evaluate all three. While the show is

episodic with ensemble characters that only appear for an episode or two and are quickly forgotten, the focus of the study will be in evaluating the actions of the main characters.

Interactions between the story lead characters and the secondary plot characters will be evaluated, but only from the viewpoint of the leads.

Grey's Anatomy

The medical drama *Grey's Anatomy* begins on the first 48 hour shift of the surgical resident internship program at Seattle Grace Hospital. The opening scene is the morning after a seemingly unimportant one-night-stand of surgical intern, Meredith Grey and the attractive but forgettable, Derek. Excited and nervous for her first day at work, Grey kicks out her "bar guy" and prepares for the life ahead of her.

Once at the hospital, Grey and several other hopeful surgeons join the teams of lead doctors of the hospital to help the doctors' cases, perform surgeries, and complete other patient care. There are five main resident interns. Meredith Grey is the daughter of Ellis Grey who is now in a nursing home being treated for Alzheimer's. Cristina Yang is the over-achieving and ruthless intern whose dry sense of humor and "suck it up buttercup" attitude counters Grey's more emotional personality. The two enter into an unlikely friendship that is a driving subplot in seasons to come. George O'Malley is the pudgy intern who probably always got picked last for dodgeball. He comes off as awkward, unable to introduce himself without stammering, but overall optimistic. He immediately has a romantic crush on Grey without the courage to admit it. Instead, he becomes the "guy friend" to Grey and the other women as they go through the ups

and downs of their internship. Izzie Stevens is the beautiful blonde intern who is immediately stereotyped as a “dumb blonde” by her fellow interns. The fact that she worked as a lingerie model to pay for medical school also does not help her gain the respect of her peers. The last intern is Alex Karev, the cocky, overly-sure of his doctoral skills intern who is the bad-boy with an attitude no one can stand.

In *Grey's* first season, there are also three main attendee doctors and one chief of surgery, the man in charge of the entire hospital. The chief of surgery is Dr. Richard Webber a compassionate, but stern man who does not care which interns fail as long as the best rise to the top. It is later revealed that he had a long time affair with Grey's mother when they were both doctors together in their early careers. Dr. Miranda Bailey is referred to as “the Nazi.” Her no nonsense attitude is similar to Webber's and she takes pleasure in scaring the interns into submission. Dr. Preston Burke comes across as the believer among the attendees, the one who believes in the interns' capabilities and offers O'Malley the first chance to scrub in on a surgery. His act of kindness has other motives though as he tells Bailey that by being cruel to one the rest of the interns will fall in line. Later on in the seasons to come, he and Yang have a romantic relationship that almost ends in marriage. The fourth and final attendee is Dr. Derek Shepherd, the same Derek from Grey's morning after episode. However, unknowingly sleeping with one of his interns proved to be the unlikely start of a torrid relationship between himself and Grey. The ups and downs of their relationship include the fact the he is married, they are co-workers in a

place where romantic relationships would be highly inappropriate, and Grey suffers greatly from a childhood of emotional abuse from an absent mother and an insecure father.

While the show is mostly about the relationships among the doctors, there is also a constant line of medical mystery cases needing to be solved, people's lives to be saved on the operating tables, emergency traumas and routine check-ups. The characters bond with each other over the pain and agony of losing a patient and through the joys of saving someone's life. The story is about their relationships, both romantic and platonic.

Scandal

The second show in Shondaland is *Scandal*, perhaps different in its setting compared to *Grey's Anatomy* is no less dramatic when it comes to relationships and situational mystery. *Scandal* is a political drama that centers on "government-fixer" Olivia Pope, a tough, assertive, force to be reckoned with and with "a face to launch a thousand ships," that is her beauty commands the loyalty of very influential men. One such man is none other than the President of the United States. Though their affair occurred while he was only a candidate for the presidency, it is quickly revealed that it is not over between Olivia Pope and President Fitzgerald Grant.

Grant himself is a former military pilot, Republican, husband to Mellie and father to two (soon to be three) children. One could say he always tries to do the right thing, but he takes counsel from a group of people who care more about getting him re-elected than dishing out justice.

When the need for a believable cover-up beats out the desire for justice, influential and affluent people call Pope & Associates to clean-up whatever body is in their living room, to tell whatever lie is necessary to the media to hide the truth, or to find the truth in web of lies spread by other people. Pope's associates include a potpourri of two "former" con-men, a computer geek with torturing skills to put Hannibal to shame, and two women who are as loyal to Pope as if she was the pope. Together they are called the fast-talking "gladiators in suits" who wear the "white hat of justice" even if justice has nothing to do with the law. "We are lawyers, but this is not a law firm. We solve problems, manage crises, save reputations" (Season 1: Episode 1, 2012).

The first two associates we meet are Harrison Wright and Quinn Perkins. After going on a blind-date turned job interview, Wright recruits Perkins to come work for "the Olivia Pope." Perkins is wide-eyed at the prospect and nervously babbles as she tries to get her footing in the fast-paced world of Pope & Associates. Through Harrison's introduction of the rest of the crew to Perkins, the audience also meets the other associates. Stephen Finch is the playboy, British-accented "litigator" and was just seen pulling off a ransom delivery with the Russian mafia alongside Olivia Pope. His appearance on the show only lasts through the first season when his character decides to get married and get out of the dirty business of Pope & Associates. Abby Whelan is the "investigator" and Pope's oldest friend. Her fierce loyalty to Pope goes beyond friendship though as it was Pope who saved her from an abusive marriage and helped get her back on her feet. Huck is "the tech guy" whose former CIA accolades are "never to be

mentioned” because they were not as much CIA as much as illegal acts of espionage and murder for the mysterious government sanction B6-13, which we find out later is secretly run by Pope’s father.

In the same way that *Grey’s Anatomy* focuses on the lives and relationships of the main characters but also includes individual medical cases throughout each episode, there are also a series of single episode B-plots in *Scandal*. These plotlines are the cases of Pope & Associates. Though less important in the overall scope of the show, the cases bring out the emotions, the witty banter and the intertwining relationships of the characters. The most important relationship is of course between Olivia Pope and Fitzgerald Grant.

The two met on the campaign trail, when Pope was hired to be his campaign manager. Firmly believing in his ability to be a great president, Pope worked with Mellie and the future White House Chief of Staff, Cyrus Bean, to rig the election votes unbeknownst to Grant. The affair between Pope and Grant ended when Grant assumed the presidency, and despite his begging her to work for him in the White House, she refused. For all of her attempts to do the right thing, “trusting her gut because her gut is never wrong” and stay away from the married President of the United States, Pope remains at his beck and call whenever a crisis is in need of rectification like the need to cover up an affair of the president and a White House intern. Thus begins the main storyline of season one.

How To Get Away With Murder

The third show in this study is the freshman drama, *How To Get Away With Murder*. Though not originally created by Shonda Rhimes (it was created by a protégé of hers, Peter Norwalk), *Murder* carries on in true Rhimes fashion this time in the form of law drama: twisted plotlines, torrid affairs, crazy characters, fast-paced dialogue and a leading woman at the center of it all.

The most unusual aspect to this show that makes it different from *Grey's* and *Scandal*, is the parallel relationship between two distinct plotlines. One plotline focuses on the murder, mystery, and cover up of the murder of Keating's husband Sam Keating. The other plotline takes place three months before the first plotline and focuses on introducing the characters, going through single episode plots involving different clients of Keating's law firm, and answering the questions that are asked in the first plotline. Though confusing to follow at first, the interlacing of flash-forwards and flashbacks weave a fascinating mystery tale through threads of shock and awe. For every question the second plot answers, the first plot asks two more questions in the same episode.

Professor Annalise Keating teaches at Middleton University and is a practicing defense attorney. On the first day of class, before the students have time to settle down, she begins the show's most famous monologue. "Good morning. I don't know what terrible things you've done in your life up to this point, but clearly your karma is out of balance to get assigned to my class. I'm Professor Annalise Keating. This is Criminal Law 100. Or as I like to call it, how to get away with murder" (Season 1: Episode 1; 2014). Though she presents herself as a woman of

power in her career, after all “Keating” is synonymous with winning, her private life is a mess.

Keating is trying to salvage her emotionally abusive marriage to the man she herself had an affair with before the series began and who has been known to sleep with his students; she has a not-so-secret secret boyfriend; she and her law firm associates often use underhanded and lawless tactics to win the cases.

The first group of cast members are the students in Professor Annalise Keating’s class. In the auditorium of students, five are a part of the driving ensemble. Wes Gibbins, nicknamed “Waitlist,” on account that he was not immediately accepted into the law school and had not done the reading assigned for the first day of class. He is immediately written off by his classmates. The first person to shut him down is over-achieving, straight-A, obsessed with appearances and desperate to prove herself, Michaela Pratt. Connor Walsh is more playboy than serious lawyer, and unashamedly uses his sexuality to get information to help solve clients’ cases. Though this character is stereotypically a womanizer, Walsh upsets our expectations by being gay. Another character, Laurel Castillo, has as much desire to prove herself as Pratt but without the same level of confidence. She frequently second-guesses herself when put under pressure and tries to be calm and emotionless even when her world is falling apart. Finally, Asher Millstone provides comic relief to the show. Rich, fraternity boy, son of a judge, and stuck in his father’s shadow, Millstone is another one of Annalise’s students who is written off by the others. Of the five students, he is the only one not directly involved in the actions surrounding the main murder-mystery plot line.

The other important characters include Keating's husband, Sam Keating who is psychology professor at the same school as Keating. Nate Layhey is Keating's boyfriend and police detective. Rebecca Sutter is Gibbins' next-door neighbor and primary suspect in the murder of Lila Stangard. Lastly, Frank Delfino and Bonnie Winterbottom are Keating's employees in her private law firm. They are fiercely loyal to Keating even when Keating pushes them to do things not necessarily in accordance to the law they're supposedly upholding.

Because all of the characters have both virtues and flaws, there is a multi-faceted depth to the characters that allows you to both love and hate them. The same students whom you are rooting for to get away with murder are the same ones you want to win the cases that will put the murderers in jail.

The show's plot has two starting points. The first beginning takes place in the present, when Keating's students are frantically trying to figure out what to do with Sam Keating's dead body. The second starting point occurs three months, on the students' first day at Middleton Law School. The second starting point eventually catches up with starting point one by episode ten and all of the questions as to the *who*, *why*, and *how* of Sam's murder are answered. Episodes eleven through fifteen deal with the aftermath of the cover up as all of the characters try to resume normal lives. Throughout each of the episodes, the students are attending Keating's class and learning how to get away with murder which is exactly the knowledge they use to hide their own murder. The students also gain valuable experience working for Keating's law firm and helping clients win their court cases by any means necessary. For all the revelations revealed by

the end of season one, an equal number of questions were left wide opened. The show was renewed for a second season beginning in fall 2015.

Methodology

From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies chronicles the history of film from the 1920s through the 1960s, specifically looking at female characters and the actresses who portrayed them. Throughout the book, Haskell writes of the changes, the ups and downs, female characters have undergone as a result of the culture of the times. The 20s and 30s saw the strongest surge of feminist films, where women were treated with reverence. They were whole people of their own right without dependency on men. Romance was at the top of its game, as both the man and woman respected each other's differences and found an ability to compliment rather than divide. As a result of the war, the 40s and 50s saw a rise of women in the workplace, women rejecting domestic, traditional roles of wife and mother, and as a result the male-dominated film industry sought to suppress the female voice. When women could not be stopped, the patriarchal society consented to allowing women's sexuality to be equal to men's, but at a cost. The 60s brought about a change in society's views of romance and of women. No longer was romance rooted in love, but now it was founded on distrust, suspicion and antagonism. The rise of misogyny led men to view women as sex objects who actually desired rape because their sexual urges were thought to be equal to men's. Men who were not misogynists often turned toward each other for love and acceptance, thus the prevalence of homosexual relationships was the result of man's need to remove women completely from his life.

In her book, Haskell identifies various feminist and patriarchal themes that will be used a roadmap for navigating Shondaland. The term feminist is used to name the themes that support,

empower and appeal to women. Though Haskell rarely used the term patriarchy or patriarchal, the term has been used by other feminist writers like Thornham and Kaplan to describe the opposite of feminism. Patriarchal themes include themes that demote, suppress, victimize or limit women, and themes that do not allow men and women to stray beyond gender stereotypes.

I have identified 61 feminist themes and 64 patriarchal themes that frequently occurred in her study of films. These themes come directly from the second edition of her book. It should be noted that these are American themes that characterize American film. One chapter is devoted to European film and theater, however the treatment of women overseas greatly differs from that of the States. Therefore only the universal feminist and patriarchal themes were pulled out of chapter seven so that the two styles do not contradict one another. This study analyzes each episode in chronological order (starting with *Grey's Anatomy*, then *Scandal* and finishing with *How To Get Away With Murder*), notes the themes present in each one, and tallies the numbers to determine whether each of the shows lean more towards feminism or more toward patriarchy. The grading is a simple scale. One point for every theme discovered. The total number of themes in both categories, feminism and patriarchy, will be added up to determine the exact ratio. The ratio will then determine whether each show was feminist or patriarchal.

In order to answer the research questions, I will look for each of these themes within the first seasons of *Grey's Anatomy*, *Scandal*, and *How To Get Away With Murder*. If you recall from the literature review, the feminist and patriarchal themes will be applied to recurring characters only. B-Plot characters, characters who only appear in 1-2 sequential episodes, will not be accounted for unless their actions have a feminist or patriarchal action or reaction from the main characters. In Shondaland, subplot characters include the patients and families in *Grey's*, the clients in need of Olivia Pope's help in *Scandal*, and the defendants of Annalise Keating in

Murder. Eliminating them from the test will keep the focus on the main characters as the leads carry the weight of the show.

Sex scenes were the most difficult to determine whether they were feministic or patriarchal because the explicitness of the scene is subjective to the viewer's opinion. While eliminating B-plot characters was a straightforward decision, further complications were presented by the sex scenes within Rhimes' series.

In chapters six, seven, and eight, Haskell two keywords uses to determine whether or not the sex scene is feministic or patriarchal are *implied* and *explicit*. Implied sex is feministic because it is the *idea* of sex that appeals to women. Explicit sex appeals to men who are more turned on by visual stimulation making it patriarchal. Because television has production codes and FCC regulations which determine how much and what kind of sex can be shown on primetime television, no display of genitalia or nudity was shown in any of these shows. However, there are ways around the rule, such as camera and prop placement within the scene. Such placement allows the showing of almost all of the body except the specifically prohibited areas and keeps the shows within the parameters of their T.V. ratings. Therefore, in order to determine if a sex scene was feminist or patriarchal the following factors were observed. Feminist sex scenes, scenes where the sex is implied, were characterized by not showing the actual action of intercourse. Instead the camera either cuts away before the majority of their clothes were removed, is placed in a different room from where the intercourse is occurring, or the scene resumes after intercourse has taken place. If the two characters lie down or talk in bed after sex, it is still a feminist theme since the action was not shown. Shots revealing the woman's chest or bare back, or either gender's thighs, shots of either partner kissing the other in places other than the face, any sexual movement (thrusting, scratching, grasping, rolling, gasping, etc.)

even if the two characters are covered by a sheet, and the complete removal of either party's pants, skirt, or dress are all examples of sexual explicitly and are patriarchal in nature.

The roadmap below also has a series of codes. Each theme has a corresponding letter and number. However, not all feminist codes are given to feminist circumstances within the show, and not all patriarchal themes describe patriarchal instances. The codes are a citation to point readers back to what Haskell wrote on the matter.

For example, in *Grey's Anatomy* S1:E1, the results say, "Contrary to the interns' conception of who "The Nazi" is, picturing in their minds a man or a legit Nazi, "The Nazi" is a petite African-American woman in her late 30s named Dr. Miranda Bailey. Her character is the embodiment of feminism: working woman, over 30 to almost 40, and maintains professional relationship with her male peers without being treated as inferior (F1, P2, F8). Bailey gives three points to feminism (Haskell, 1987, p. 4)."

P2 is a patriarchal theme which states, "Women's pursuit of professional relationship with men is "unfeminine," if she resists men's advances." Bailey contradicts this patriarchal theme therefore giving a point to feminism.

Another important feature to note is that more themes codes are recorded than are actually counted.

For example, in *Grey's Anatomy* S1:E2, the results state, "Grey rejects Shepherd's advances as a line that is "way too dangerous to cross." She removes herself from any compromising positions, while toying with Shepherd ever so slightly (P1, F59) (Haskell, 1987, p. 4, 385)."

P1 states, "Women can achieve power and career success only if the climax resulted in 'finding sacred love.'" And F59 states, "A woman take her sexuality into her own hands in an I-

do-what-I-want way.” While the show supports both of these themes in a feminist way, only one point is given to the situation because the themes are blended together and are two parts of one whole.

Below is the list of all 125 themes that were looked for within Shondaland.

Feminist Film Roadmap According to Molly Haskell (<i>From Reverence to Rape</i> 2 nd ed.)			
Feminism		Patriarchal	
(F1)	Woman 40+ years old pursuing her own sexualization (14)	Women can achieve power and career success only if the climax resulted in “finding sacred love” (4)	(P1)
(F2)	Woman who exposes the unlovable side of her love thus being multi-faceted in her total personality (6, 60)	Women’s pursuit of professional relationship with men is “unfeminine,” if she resists men’s advances (4)	(P2)
(F3)	Women who work behind-the-scenes in Hollywood, a dominantly male-run world (8)	Women are their full potential when they have the love of men or children (4)	(P3)
(F4)	Scenes of “taking moral positions against the prevailing moral wind” (20)	Love and ambition can coexist for a man but not for a woman (6)	(P4)
(F5)	Men’s pursuit of courage in interpersonal relationships, revealing sensitivity without ridicule (24)	Men assumed roles of the sex object and glamour queen, roles usually left for women, because of WWII when men were scarce (12)	(P5)
(F6)	Romantic relationships grow stronger with resistance (25)	Men leaving their wives for younger women, which the wife usually deserves since she is a terrible person of some sort (14)	(P6)
(F7)	Equal relationships that allow men to act on their feminine side and women to act on their masculine side (26, 229)	Woman is an idol, object of art, icon or visual entity (15)	(P7)
(F8)	The “working woman” (30)	Women have to be “kept in their place” (15)	(P8)
(F9)	Women “victories” that emulate the characters of the 20s/30s –	“Sex goddess” character as a gimmick (19)	(P9)

	intelligence, personal style and forcefulness (31)		
(F10)	Women taking roles behind the scenes as directors and writers, creating stories from the female perspective (33 & 396)	Male friendships and male camaraderie in womanless melodrama where men understand and support one another, speak the same language and risk their lives for each other's respect, in turn this is seen as adolescent love of one's <i>semblable</i> /mirror image (24)	(P10)
(F11)	Tall women symbolically representing their changing self-image from "weaker sex" to dominance (50)	Women are supposed to fulfill men's fantasy (25)	(P11)
(F12)	Virgin-heroine "rooted in the romantic spirit of mutual reverence" (50)	Women should give up everything for love; men are emasculated if they do (28)	(P12)
(F13)	Women are at the center of the story, remaining distinct from the male characters but "are integrated into the fiber of men's lives." Women are portrayed naturally and then not rebuked for behaving like a woman (55)	Virgin women no longer seen as the ideal, but rather "depicted in venom" because of "sexual uncertainty in a world of fluctuating values" (50)	(P13)
(F14)	Female comedians, slap-stick athletes and even clownish pranksters are an infiltration into the male-dominated world of comedy (62-63, 65)	Women comedians are unladylike (62)	(P14)
(F15)	Married women having sex appeal (76)	Women become a figure of contempt when she pursues extreme prerogatives of beauty while men are heroic if they pursue ambition to the point of criminality (29)	(P15)
(F16)	Man and woman mutually choose marriage, "heterosexual love" over inertia (85)	Women are to be idealized as "feminine principle incarnate" (40)	(P16)
(F17)	A woman "grows, exerts a moral force, and is capable of changing the	Matricide (40)	(P17)

	direction of her own and other people's lives" (85)		
(F18)	"The right woman" is worth fighting for (86)	Worshipped as "mother" and therefore "too good" for ambition which is the downfall of women; mothers also denied any sexuality in order to maintain "purity" (40, 119, 204-205)	(P18)
(F19)	Women "initiate sexual encounters, to pursue men, even to embody certain 'male' characteristics without being stigmatized as 'unfeminine' or 'predatory'" (91)	Women are treated as "earth-goddesses," unpredictable who will just as quickly "betray as love" (40)	(P19)
(F20)	Women of "sense and sensuality," "brains and cleavage" (94 & 96)	Women are heroines AND victims; the housewife life is a prison (40)	(P20)
(F21)	Love triangle between a woman interested in two men, needing their different loves of fulfill her complex needs (98)	Men who "escape" from the world of women or fight against them (61)	(P21)
(F22)	"The man she [or he] loves is of less importance than love itself" (108)	Ugly or ungainly women cannot be the object of desire, but if the ugly man is comedic enough, he can transcend into a romantic figure (62)	(P22)
(F23)	Sex goddess parody - a woman knowingly plays the balance between becoming too masculine and making a mockery of women (105-106)	Any "expression of hostility" toward women or outright misogyny (91)	(P23)
(F24)	Lovers meet and remain on an equal playing field, whether economically, socially, professionally, or intellectually thereby not giving either sex the upper hand (131)	Two opposite women (wife vs. party girl or sweetheart vs. whore) fighting for the same man; both are only half of themselves while man in complete (114)	(P24)
(F25)	The "talking woman;" women help themselves stand on their own feet the more dialogue they're given to showcase their intelligence and independence (139)	Marriage is a woman's only protection in life based on men's initial desire and women's denial that it will fulfill her (124)	(P25)

(F26)	Female gold-diggers who enter a man's world on their own terms, often uniting together (145)	Women's work is "provisional" not a "lifelong commitment;" or is what defines her (142)	(P26)
(F27)	All-women casts (148)	The term "women's film" or chick T.V. because it imply lesser quality or intelligence (153)	(P27)
(F28)	Equality of affairs; if the husband has an affair, the wife has one too as the only way to be reconciled (149)	Women must "'sacrifice' herself for her children... her children for their welfare... marriage for her lover... her lover for marriage or for his own welfare... or her career for love." (163)	(P28)
(F29)	"Stories about women are "negatively and collectively defined by their mutual limitations rather than their individual talents or aspirations;" whose stories are political rather than personal (160)	The woman suffers a secret affliction which she dies from "unblemished" or is "cured," usually by her "lover-turned-doctor" (163)	(P29)
(F30)	"The 'ordinary woman becomes extraordinary'" (161)	Working women "were given pseudo-toughness, a facade of steel wool that at a man's touch would turn into cotton candy" (175)	(P30)
(F31)	The woman is pursued by "at least two suitors who wait, with undivided attention" for her decision and their happiness dependent on her choice (163)	"...a bunch of women together are at best incomplete, if not downright silly" (180)	(P31)
(F32)	The women competes for love a man with another woman, often the wife, only to discover their affection more for each other than for the man, not necessarily romantic affection (163-164)	The "treacherous woman" is of "dubious ethics or unconventional femininity who were as likely to be found on the wrong side of the law as not" and "'whose very presence seemed to invite evil" (191)	(P32)
(F33)	The ideal man is one of culture and refinement, who slightly antagonizes women or acts indifferently toward women, accept one. The heroine sees deeper into him to the wound he covers up and can therefore be cured of his cynicism, but only by her (165-166)	Star chemistry is "less romantic and less innocent, [and] sexier and more perverse" (195)	(P33)

(F34)	A woman's refusal to feel sorry for herself because of her choices and makes no apology to anyone else for them (184)	Romantic relationships are "rooted in fear and suspicion, impotence, and inadequacy" because of the women's roles becoming darker and more destructive (195-196)	(P34)
(F35)	When men have been hurt by women and seek to avoid them, a woman, through her own masculine qualities like physical courage or competence, gains his respect and affection which allows him to tap into his "feminine" side and perhaps seek a relationship or matrimony (212)	Women lack self-confidence and therefore willing to accept a man's (husband's) indifference; she both fears and desires her husband (196)	(P35)
(F36)	When actresses take on superfemale roles whereby taking her own life into her hands in her own way, she becomes a superwoman (220)	Attraction is a lie that hides the truth of antagonism toward a significant other (197)	(P36)
(F37)	Marriage is a balance between men and women, who on their own are incomplete, but together are whole (230)	Acts of love are no longer civilized verbal exchanges, but are "masculine, violent and phallic" (198)	(P37)
(F38)	Actress characters that reverently embody the mystique of the actress and the myth of the movie star (242)	Women are the "aggressor by male design and by male terms" who is denied her own point of view (198)	(P38)
(F39)	Men give women support through admiration of her skills not her sex (241)	Women deny their desire for love and matrimony as a defense mechanism for feeling unwanted or unpopular in the male's eyes (202)	(P39)
(F40)	Older women fall in love with a younger man and they grow older together without blame or judgement; older men also fall in love with younger women without judgement (246)	<i>Femme fatale</i> ; her love is responsible for the "hero's tragic end" either because she loved him too much or too little (204, 374)	(P40)
(F41)	Women are aroused more at the "idea" of seduction not from "graphic presentation of the genitals" (250, 313, 324)	Beneath a mother's exterior purity and love is her "demon of possessiveness and whose loveless marriage has driven her into a barely disguised erotic relationship with her son;" she fights against his other	(P41)

		women for sole possession of his love (205)	
(F42)	Women have to sort out ambition and love, defying the odds against her, to find out where she belongs and what she can do (267)	Stories focus on a man's journey for redemption or salvation from some sort of jeopardy because women are not important enough to the devil to be the place of battle (207)	(P42)
(F43)	Boyish femininity that allows women to escape, or at least postpone, their entrapment into normal female conventions like wife and mother (266)	The first kind of "superfemale" character is the woman who is too intelligent and ambitious for the docile world but who enjoys the pleasures of the world too much to leave it and instead turns evil toward the people around her (214)	(P43)
(F44)	Women fear losing themselves in marriage and motherhood (269)	The second kind of "superfemale" character is the woman who is also intelligent and imaginative, but who adapts male characteristics in order to survive and thrive in the male world rather than relying on her femininity (214)	(P44)
(F45)	Women rationally make decisions and take responsibility for their choices that they believe will bring about happiness (275)	Wives are supposed to remain "fixed identities" and should not reveal an "unexpected personality traits" (grow and change); if that happens, it is okay to leave your wife because she is no longer the person you married (238-239)	(P45)
(F46)	Older women are not ridiculed or "revered as 'maturing' experience for and by a young man who would never dream of marrying her" (275)	Actress characters that try to "make it" are silly, starry-eyes, problematic, and untalented, even if they are successful in accomplishing their dreams (240)	(P46)
(F47)	Women are capable of loving more than one man in different ways (284)	Women can only be "professional" in two areas, prostitution and acting both of which are unworthy of men's attention and therefore sneered at; acting is also feminine because "acting is role-playing, role-playing is lying, and lying is a woman's game." (243)	(P47)

(F48)	Women break “the sexual and romantic categories” that have been created by men, and in so doing “refuse to become idealized or patronized” (297)	Movies are not about actors in Hollywood unless “die dramatically or drink spectacularly” because it goes against the “straightforward image man has of himself” (244)	(P48)
(F49)	Spinster women are permitted to be “beautiful and vital” (339)	Forty is a traumatic age for a woman, women should not be seen on screen after age 40 (respectively), especially not as romantic leads (244-245)	(P49)
(F50)	A man and woman reconcile their relationship/marriage because of a new found understanding and love for one another (348)	Explicit sex, blatant nudity like nudie magazines and pin-ups geared toward men’s fantasies (250)	(P50)
(F51)	The threatening, rape or murder of a women due to a man’s smugness or madness (354)	Real men (not actors or effeminate men) are incapable of backbiting jealousy, cattiness and triviality (248)	(P51)
(F52)	Lesbianism when it is not directed toward fulfilling men’s fantasies, but rather as a threat to the male ego and to heterosexual hegemony (355)	Women have no sexual needs but are only there “to cater to, or enhance, a man’s needs” (255)	(P52)
(F53)	The lack of homosexual stereotypes like “butch” and “femme,” but rather characters and people that flow from one type to another, expressing diversity (357)	A woman’s ambition goes against her social instincts and is stemmed from a lack of love, whereas men’s ambition is fostered by love (259)	(P53)
(F54)	Men who are cultured, sensitive, soft, and tender, without being gay (358)	Women who “act up” are erratic and must be tamed, usually through marriage (270)	(P54)
(F55)	The “virgin” and the “whore” are in each woman (363)	Women are the “sacrificial scapegoat” to protect men’s innocent and purity (302)	(P55)
(F56)	Wife/Mother-women accepting professional women and vice versa (371)	Violence and sexuality can be substituted for romance making strong, intelligent women unnecessary (323-324)	(P56)
(F57)	When a “crazy” woman acts out of her own desire rather than the need of men (374)	Sexual “strutting” (332)	(P57)

(F58)	A woman who eludes the efforts of the man to understand/save her (384)	Women are “weigh-stations” where road heroes can stop and “relieve themselves” before resuming their journey (336)	(P58)
(F59)	A woman take her sexuality into her own hands in a I-do-what-I-want way (385)	Women’s liberation in the 60s - “exposed and made to be sexually responsive to the males in the vicinity” was in order to comply with male fantasies (341)	(P59)
(F60)	Woman chooses career over domesticity/suburbia because she finds just as much fulfillment in her career as other women find in being a housewife (391)	Women should not be too sexual or sexually active, but they should be ready to have sex when the man is ready (341)	(P60)
(F61)	Stories that feature older women who aren’t “spinsters” or ridiculed, but rather fulfilled and captivating (399-400)	Marriage is a “refuge from decision and desire and emotional risk” (348)	(P61)
		Stereotype 1: Blondes: virgin; Brunettes: whores or Stereotype 2: Blondes: icy and bad; Brunettes good. (349)	(P62)
		Prevalence of male-to-male relationship, not necessarily romantic but can be, contributing to the need to exclude women (362-363)	(P63)
		Men entrench into deeper and deeper violence while women retreat into numbness (365)	(P64)

Results

Grey’s Anatomy

S1:E1 In the opening scene, it is clear that the two characters, Meredith Grey and her one-night stand, have just had sex, but that is only implied and explicitly shown. Feminism supports the *idea* of sex appeals to women more than the explicit display of the act (F41). Then when Grey kicks out her one-night stand so that she is not late to her first day at work. This act

of feminism shows a woman choosing her career over the pursuit of a man (F4, P12). Therefore, two points are given to feminism (Haskell, 1987, p. 30, 250, 313, 324).

Of the new interns, Meredith Grey points out that eight out of twenty are women. Rather than coming together to support one another, Cristina Yang says she's heard a rumor that one of the women is a model. She quips, "And you seriously think that's going to help with the respect thing?" That is a patriarchal theme because modeling can be a type of "sex goddess," but Yang mocks it as if women cannot be both intelligent and beautiful (P9) (Haskell, 1987, p. 19).

The introduction of George O'Malley is a point for feminism, because even though he remembers Grey's dress and "strappy shoes," and he appears soft and sensitive, he is in fact straight and not gay (F54). "Macho man" centered patriarchy would dismiss such behavior in their heroes (Haskell, 1987, p. 358).

Contrary to the interns' conception of who "The Nazi" is, picturing in their minds a man or a legit Nazi, "The Nazi" is a petite African-American woman in her late 30s named Dr. Miranda Bailey. Her character is the embodiment of feminism: working woman, over 30 to almost 40, and maintains professional relationship with her male peers without being treated as inferior (F1, P4, F8). Bailey gives three points to feminism (Haskell, 1987, p. 4).

Grey's first attempts to maintain a professional relationship with Derek Shepherd, the man from her one night stand the night before and unbeknownst to her, her attending (her boss) at the hospital, is feministic (P2) (Haskell, 1987, p. 4).

The friendship between Yang and Grey is a proud feminist relationship because it isn't always centered on their relationships with men, but also is the result of their professional relationship. They are both working women (F8) (Haskell, 1987, p. 30).

Total: Feminism: 7 Patriarchy: 2

S1:E2 Grey again attempts to draw a line between herself and Shepherd since he is her boss. However, unable to resist the sexual tension between them, Grey loses control and forces Shepherd against the elevator wall in a passionate, forbidden kiss. Haskell would see this action as a patriarchal theme because it implies that women want sex all the time and cannot control themselves. Therefore Grey encourages such male fantasies and gives a point to patriarchy (P59) (Haskell, 1987, p. 341).

Another recurring theme is what Haskell called scenes of “taking moral positions against the prevailing moral wind” (Haskell, 1987, 20). When a woman takes a stand against a male chauvinistic attitude against the female sex and her sexuality (F4). For example, Alex Karev makes a snide comment about Yang being “ovarian sisters” with a patient’s wife. In turn, she questions when possessing ovaries became an insult. In this case, Yang’s feminist stance counteracted Karev’s patriarchal comment resulting in a point for feminism.

In the second episode, the main patient is a rape victim who had managed to bite of the end of her rapist’s phallus. When the rapist stumbled into the hospital in need of emergency medical attention, the female doctors and interns are not shy about lack of empathy for the man. When Yang remarks that the man will not be able to have sex again, Grey sarcastically says, “Oh too bad.” And Bailey mutters, “Let’s all take a moment to grieve.” The condemnation of the rapist’s action through extreme consequences and whose life is put in the hands of female doctors, is an act of feminism (F4) (Haskell, 1987, p. 20).

Later in the episode, Shepherd rebukes the racist saying, “The good news is Dr. Bailey stopped the bleeding. The bad news is we’re giving your penis to the cops. Have a nice life.” Another chivalrous moment for feminism (F4) (Haskell, 1987, p. 20).

Bailey calls Dr. Preston Burke out for being arrogant, cocky, and having a god-complex. She speaks respectfully as he is her boss. She waits for him to give her permission to speak, but she does so unapologetically. I find this a win for feminism because it has equalized the professional relationship between Burke and Bailey, while it supports female empowerment in that a woman chastises a man's ego (F8, F25) (Haskell, 1987, p. 30, 139).

Yang's casual honesty about what she wants to do to relax, "...a drink, a man, or a massage. Or a drunken massage by a man" is feministic because of her "take-control" attitude toward her sexuality (F59) (Haskell, 1987, p. 385).

Grey rejects Shepherd's advances as a line that is "way too dangerous to cross." She removes herself from any compromising positions, while toying with Shepherd ever so slightly (P1, F59) (Haskell, 1987, p. 4, 385).

Total: Feminism: 6 Patriarchy: 1

S1:E3 Grey chastises Karev for always twisting things into some kind of sexual innuendo. Grey here is taking a stand against the "prevailing moral wind," thus a point is given to feminism (F4) (Haskell, 1987, p. 20).

Grey keeps on sticking up for herself against smooth-talking patients and against Shepherd's advances. This time she accuses Shepherd of just pursuing her because of the thrill of "the chase." He knows he's her boss and that it would be unprofessional, and yet he keeps chasing. Shepherd in turn does not deny it. Grey is acting as a feminist while Shepherd is attempting to assert his patriarchal male-dominance (P1, F25) (Haskell, 1987, p. 4, 139)

Poor, Soft, sensitive, friendly O'Malley. His colleagues think that makes him gay, but that makes his character a feminist theme because it rejects homosexual stereotypes (F53) (Haskell, 1987, p. 357).

For the third time this episode, Grey stands against “the man” and his constant need for sexual gratification. After Karev boasts of his masculinity and takes a dominating stance with his arms around Grey, she shoves Karev against the lockers, and accuses him of being a “frat boy bitch” and taking credit for other people’s saves. She warns him to stay out of her way that he does not smell “awesome” as he had said earlier, but in fact smelled like crap (P1, F4, F25). Point feminism (Haskell, 1987, p. 4, 20, 139).

Shepherd tells Grey that it isn’t the chase that draws him to her but rather who she is as a person. The Grey/Shepherd fairytale is turning toward feminism in that it embodies the “true love” romance that was most popular in the 20s and 30s. Grey claims she still won’t go out with him, but blushes when he leaves. The emotional kind of love appeals to women (F18). (Haskell, 1987, p. 86).

Total: Feminism: 5 Patriarchy: 0

S1:E4 Lizzy Stevens take control of her sexuality by walking around the house in her underwear, even with O’Malley as roommate. She says it doesn’t bother her if he wants to look. This kind of a female taking charge of her body is an act of feminism (F59) (Haskell, 1987, p. 385).

While Lizzy has no problem flaunting her body to George, when her sexuality is taken out of her control, she lashes out. Karev and other doctors litter the locker room with pictures of Stevens modelling lingerie. Fighting the humiliation, Stevens angrily begins to strip down to her underwear, taunting Karev and the other onlookers to use her body as an anatomy lesson. In what I believe to be the greatest act of taking a moral stance to defend her sexuality in the entire first season of *Grey’s*, Stevens tells Karev that while he is buried in medical school debt, her modeling is what put her through school and she’s now debt free. She owns that her sexuality is

nothing to be ashamed of while shaming the other people in the room for trying to make her into a farce (F4, F20, F25, F59). That's another point for feminism. (Haskell, 1987, p. 20, 139, 385).

Icy, emotionless Yang gets attached to a dying nurse and upon her death, Yang viciously tries to resuscitate, despite the patient's DNR status. When Burke encounters a visibly distraught Yang in the stairwell, he does not criticize her emotions as being "womanly" and therefore making her unfit to be a doctor. Instead he comforts her, forces her to actually let her emotions be real (F13). Often times, patriarchal themes equate women's nature to "stupid female impulse" but not this time (Haskell, 1987, 55).

Total: Feminism 5 Patriarchy 0

S1:E5 Stevens is a feminine idealist, believing that she can have both career and family. Though perhaps unrealistic, she embodies what Haskell has termed "the ideal woman." Unlike patriarchal standards in which men can have love and career, she fights for her own ability to have both (P3, P4, P59) (Haskell, 1987, p. 4, 6, 385).

Grey makes out with Shepherd in the backseat of his car after drinking more than her share of tequila. Patriarchy glorifies this action, while feminism shakes her head at it (P60). In order for a woman to fully embrace her sexuality, she must remain in control while she does it. She must intentionally and irrevocably pursue her desire. That's a point for the patriarchy. (Haskell, 1987, p. 341).

Contrary to Grey, Yang does intentionally seek sexual intercourse with Burke after previous encounters of his kindness and charm. Yang approaches Burke on her own accord, thus remaining in control and thus embracing feminism (F19). Nothing is too revealing though which is also feminist (F41) (Haskell, 1987, p. 91, 250, 313, 324).

Total: Feminism 3 Patriarchy 1

S1:E6 As Grey's and Shepherd's romantic relationship grows, we are forced to ask ourselves whether the relationship falls more on the side of feminism due to the romantic gestures and unwavering pursuit from Shepherd, or patriarchal because of the professional relationship between the two of them. According to Haskell, a man's pursuit of "the right woman" is feministic. As of this episode, I believe the relationship falls more toward feminism and that their medical relationship is simply Hollywoodized drama. Therefore, Shepherd's intentionality supports feminism themes (F18) (Haskell, 1987, p. 86).

In different, but equal thematic feminism, the relationship between Burke and Yang defy stereotypes. Feminism allows men to embrace femininity, in Burke's case emotional attachment, desire for deeper relationship, and meaning behind sex; it also allows for women to be more masculine, in Yang's case emotionally unattached, no desire for any relationship a part from sex, and sex simply for sex's sake. Instead of Yang receiving a point for her sexuality, the point goes toward the complimentary nature of their relationship that transcends the bound of stereotypical femininity and masculinity (F54, F59). There is also a subtlety in their hook-up where the sex is implied, but the camera cuts away before anything is shown. This is also a feminist theme because it allows the imagination explain what is happening (F41) (Haskell, 1987, p. 250, 313, 324, 358, 385).

Total: Feminism 3 Patriarchy 0

S1:E7 Grey and Shepherd mutually, actively pursue one another. One point for feminism goes for the fact that Grey's initial resistance of Shepherd strengthened their relationship (F6) (Haskell, 1987, p. 25).

Grey's own demeanor is feministic in that she possesses beauty and brains (F20). Though she is pursued by men, whether flippantly through casual flirting with a male patient,

chauvinistically by Karev, endearingly by O'Malley, or passionately by Shepherd, Grey is a woman to be desired. However her looks do not compromise her intelligence as she consistently proves her own ability to be a great doctor (Haskell, 1987, p. 94, 96, 163).

The third point for feminism comes out of conversation between Grey and Stevens as Stevens accuses Grey of only sleeping with Shepherd to get ahead in her career, and of throwing everyone's respect for her out the window just for sex. However, when Stevens looks at Grey's face, she points out that Grey is actually falling for Shepherd and in turns takes pity on her. All sense of indignity and unprofessionalism is forgiven for the sake of true love (F18) (Haskell, 1987, p. 86).

Total: Feminism 3 Patriarchy 0

S1:E8 Yang becomes impregnated by Burke through their occasional hook-ups, and she seeks to terminate the pregnancy until she gets a different perspective from a pregnant patient. Yang encounters an older female patient who has cancer and is pregnant, whose only cure for the cancer is to terminate the pregnancy. Two pregnant women, one who wants to terminate her pregnancy to save her career, the other who wants to terminate her own life to save her child. The patient gives Yang something to think about when it comes to her priorities. The question then becomes, whether or not Yang chooses career, baby, or an attempt at both. I think it's the dilemma that is feministic (P28). Patriarchal television would never even portray such a situation. However, for women, the choice is all too prevalent and therefore women empathize with Yang's indecision. One of Haskell's "women's films themes" is sacrifice. What will Yang sacrifice: career or child? (Haskell, 1987, p. 163, 296).

While we know that O'Malley likes Grey, a woman he cannot have, instead of remaining steadfast for her, he adheres to the advice of his colleagues to hook-up with a nurse. To

determine whether a hook-up between two characters is feminist nor patriarchal, one has to look at who initiates the hooking-up and the reasons why. In the case of O'Malley and the nurse, Haskell asserts that because it is not the woman who takes control of the pursuit, the act is patriarchal because it is characteristic of a male seeking sexual domination in order to heal his ego (P52). In this case, O'Malley's feelings of inadequacy are due to Grey choosing Shepherd and therefore he must prove his manhood through a different conquest (Haskell, 1987, p. 255, 336).

Total: Feminism 1 Patriarchy 1

S1:E9 The name of George's nurse is Olivia and this episode reveals that she has been sleeping around with several people on staff and has contracted syphilis which she gave to George. Patriarchy idolizes the virgin, treats a woman's promiscuity as her greatest vice, and accuses promiscuous women of being man's downfall. Shonda Rhimes does little to support Olivia as she is criticized for not being a virgin and suffers greatly because of it. She also becomes the patriarchal *femme fatale* by giving O'Malley syphilis (P13, P40) (Haskell, 1987, p. 91, 204, 374).

At the end of the first season, Shepherd's secret is revealed. While pursuing Grey, he has in fact been married. Addison Montgomery-Shepherd walks into the hospital and completely disrupts Grey's romantic fairytale. The revelation of this secret has myriad of feministic and patriarchal implications. Whether or not their relationship will be feministic or patriarchal, is based on the outcome. Since the outcome is not revealed till later seasons, we will look at the relationship in its current state when season one ends. At this point their relationship consists of two major patriarchal themes. First, the scenario itself is patriarchal: two women, fighting for one man (P24). Both women are "incomplete" without him, and with both by his side he is

complete. Although Shepherd's feelings for his wife have dissipated, his need for social acceptance means that he has a desire to stay with his wife since it is the "right" thing to do. The second patriarchal theme is that of a man leaving his wife for a younger woman (P6). While we sympathize with Grey because she did not know about his marriage and was therefore not a willing mistress, the situation still gives two points toward the patriarchy (Haskell, 1987, p. 14, 114).

In order for their love story to be rectified in support of feminism, the end result must be "true love." If Grey and Shepherd end up together, happily ever after, than all the mistakes and all the lies will be worth it because in the end, the two people who should be together are together. As viewers who are more invested in the life of Grey than in Montgomery-Shepherd, this is the outcome we hope for. Continuing in the spirit of feminism, we also attest that Montgomery-Shepherd should be a heartless, terrible wife and therefore undeserving of Shepherd's love anyway. Another feminist possibility would be the uniting of Grey and Montgomery-Shepherd against Shepherd because he is both a liar and a cheater to them. The situation could also be feministic even if both doctor Shepherds reconcile their marriage based on a new, deeper, mutual understanding and love for the other. Where that would leave Grey, one could only guess. She could have a fling of her own to get back at Shepherd and even the score that is what feminism would support. Or should become a lesbian to bruise the male ego because she no longer needs men or even still, she could become a "beautiful and vital" spinster, perfectly fulfilled by her work and not regretting anything. There themes remain uncalculated as the study looks at just the first season.

Total: Feminism 0 Patriarchy 3

The feminism and patriarchy totals have been tallied and the result is: Feminism 33, Patriarchy 8. *Grey's Anatomy* is more feministic, and therefore hypothesis one is correct.

Scandal

S1:E1 Olivia Pope embodies several feminism and patriarchal themes which will have to be tackled one-by-one as they are revealed. The first is a feministic theme, the fact that she is a “talking woman” (F25) Haskell said that the more opportunity female characters are given to speak, the more intelligent and independent the women become. Pope is nothing if not a loquacious hurricane. As she talks two kidnappers into accepting a ransom three million dollars short of their asking price, she exudes intelligence, wit and sophistication. Partnered with her very style, perfect curls and stylish white peacoat, exemplifies the feminine class of the 20s and 30s, which Haskell has determined were the pinnacle years of feminism in film (F9). This first interaction with Olivia Pope is two points for feminism (Haskell, 1987, p. 31, 85, 139).

Stephen Finch, Pope's British playboy assistant contemplates marrying an unsuspecting woman who embodies the innocent virgin motif, but is torn because that means giving up his sexual exchanges with other women. His indecision is patriarchal because the patriarchy would claim that a man's needs are more than one woman could handle. Giving up sexual flings for monogamy would be emasculating (P12) (Haskell, 1987, p. 28).

When Perkins is crying in the bathroom, Huck tells her to stop crying because “Olivia doesn't believe in crying.” Emotional vulnerability, like crying, is characterized as a natural womanly trait. Here Pope's character is revealed to be more patriarchal because it ridicules Perkins for behaving “like a woman” (F13) (Haskell, 1987, p. 55).

Pope is clothed in patriarchal “pseudo-toughness;” the kind that is “a facade of steel wool that at a man's touch would turn into cotton candy.” When Pope confronts President Fitzgerald

Grant about his affair with White House aide, Amanda Tanner, she is angrier at the man she herself has had an affair with than she is at the president for disrespecting the highest office in the land. But at Grant's touch and from the passion which he kisses her, all of Pope's strength and rage dissipates (P30) (Haskell, 1987, p. 175).

One of Pope's clients has been accused of the murder of his girlfriend, but his alibi is airtight if only he admits that at the night of his murder he was with the man he loves. However, he would rather go to jail for his girlfriend's murder than to admit to the public that he is gay. When Pope tries to persuade him to change his mind, she gives him a pep talk that has truth in it for herself. She says that who you love shouldn't be a secret, it shouldn't matter. This is a theme of feminism because it claims that the act of love is more important than the person you love (F22). Said another way, it doesn't matter who you love, whether that person is available for you to love or not, what matters is that you let yourself love him or her (Haskell, 1987, p. 108).

Total: Feminism 3 Patriarchy 3

S1:E2 Abbey Whelan takes a stand against Finch's immorality and sexual promiscuity when his name appears on the client list of "D.C.'s finest Madame." She accuses Finch of being a man-whore, and criticizes all men who pay for sex from prostitutes. Whelan represents the idea of true love and matrimony, of old romantic ideals (F25). Therefore for her actions support feminism. However, she is also slightly in love with Finch, but because he did not choose her and chose prostitutes instead, Whelan exaggerates her ridicule of Finch to further humiliate him and protect herself. This action is patriarchal because the patriarchy suggests that all women want men and are too proud to admit when he does not choose her in return (P39). Though Whelan's actions are both feminist (standing against Finch's actions) and patriarchal (secretly desiring him), the fact that she displays both characteristics is in fact feminist because Haskell

constantly pleads for complex, multifaceted female characters who embody feminine and masculine characteristics (F2). The total is then two points for feminism and one for patriarchy (Haskell, 1987, p. 6, 20, 60, 139, 202, 341).

One of Pope's clients is a husband and wife team who is under scrutiny because he is believed to have slept with prostitutes. However, the "call lady" he slept with turned out to be his wife who lied to him about her night job. Naturally their relationship is in turmoil over the lie, but when Grant and Pope talk about the situation, he takes a feminist approach to marriage. He believes that the two of them will be able to work it out because they both genuinely love each other. He may have been directly talking about the husband and wife, but he is also implying his relationship with Pope. Once again, the actions and characters are a juxtaposition of both feminine and patriarchal themes. First, belief that two people can resolve their difference and restore their relationship because of their mutual love and respect for each other is feminist (F50). However, the fact that he is also referring to his relationship with Pope who is not his wife, is patriarchal because he wants to leave his wife for someone else (P6). Therefore, one point each for patriarchy and feminism is given (Haskell, 1987, p. 14, 348).

Olivia Pope is the *femme fatale* to President Grant (P40). Her very presence is destructive to Grant's power, position, and authority at the president. Her love, whether it is too much or too little, will bring about his downfall. Unfortunately, this kind of character is patriarchal in nature (Haskell, 1987, p. 91).

Total: Feminism 3 Patriarchy 3

S1:E3 Perkins attempts to use her womanly wiles to attain information from a reporter she suspects like her. However, two men are quick to point out her farce. Huck "helps her" by telling her to let her hair down, take her jacket off, and sets her up to only receive virgin drinks

as she must be incapable of attracting a man's attention without a man's help. Even with Huck's help however, her date also sees through her façade. This action makes a gimmick out of Perkin's attempt to reach "sex goddess" status and is therefore patriarchal (P9) (Haskell, 1987, p. 19).

Pope competes very successfully in the "man's world" of politics. She does so without using such feminine qualities of softness, reservation, or sympathy. Rather, she demonstrates strength, aggressiveness, and verbosity which is masculine characteristics. Though her looks and personal style are feminine, her personality and demeanor are patriarchal. Judging her in the context of this episode when she is opposing the White House by helping the aide, Olivia is actually patriarchal (P44). She is Haskell's second kind of "superfemale," the kind who embodies male characteristics in order to compete in the man's world. In order to become a feminism "superwoman," the actress who plays Olivia Pope, Kerry Washington, would have to take on roles in which she is sometimes the demure sweetheart and other times the aggressive bitch. However, that was Haskell's ramification for film criticism. In the context of T.V. shows, since there is greater longevity in the characters, it is the character who must fluctuate between the two personality-types. This is also a case of feminism because it shows the female complexity. Because this study only researches the first season, each of Pope's shows of strength or femininity will be looked at individually (Haskell, 1987, p. 26, 31, 214, 229).

Total: Feminism 0 Patriarchal 2

S1:E4 The internal struggle of Pope's conflicting emotions in the Amanda Tanner case paints an interesting picture, one I believe points toward feminism. It's the complexity of Pope that screams feminism because a patriarchal female character would only be two-dimensional. Pope is struggling to defend her client, to stick up for women who have been used and neglected

by men, and to get her revenge on the man who betrayed her love and trust, all the while she still loves the man who impregnated her client, is stricken with anger and jealousy, and while still wanting revenge she does not want to hurt the president she worked so hard to put into office, especially when he claims to be in love with Pope and she desperately wants to believe him.

Complexity equals feminism (F2) (Haskell, 1987, p. 6, 60).

Whalen comes to the rescue of women once again, only as we learn more about her, we find out that she hates men just as much as she craves their attention. Whalen seeks to right every wrong ever done to a woman by a man whether that is rape, abuse, indecency, or even recanting their love. She advocates for women which is another important feminist theme in the political sense. Haskell says that feminist movies often stray from individual issues, by tackling issues collectively, grouping all women together to unite them against a common enemy, in this case men (F29) (Haskell, 1987, p. 20, 160).

Mellie Grant (referred to in the future as Mellie so as not to be confused with the male Grant) reveals a not-so-pretty side of her personality. However, as our sympathies do not lie with her, her show of aggressiveness toward her husband is not a sign of strength but a sign of villainy, undeserving of the husband's love. Patriarchy would suggest that a man leaving his wife for another woman is okay if his wife is a treacherous woman (P32) (Haskell, 1987, p. 191).

Total: Feminism 2 Patriarchy 1

S1:E5 The United States Vice President is introduced as Sally Langston, a woman in the second highest office of the plane who seeks the presidency. She is therefore a feministic entity because she earns respect while being a commanding presence in a man's world (P1, F8)

(Haskell, 1987, p. 4, 30).

When Amanda Tanner's body turns up dead, Olivia Pope is not okay. She admits she's not okay to David Rosen who does not criticize her "womanly" emotions. Perkins also displayed her grief and was not mocked for it by Huck. This is again feministic because it allows women to be their natural selves (F13) (Haskell, 1987, p. 55).

Total: Feminism 2 Patriarchy 0

S1:E6 This episode goes back and forth between present day and Grant's presidential campaign when he meets Olivia Pope for the first time and their romance begins to bud. The purpose of these flashbacks is to gain audiences sympathies toward the Grant/Pope love story, and to cast Mellie Grant as the overly ambitious, monstrous, demanding and manipulative housewife who is slowly suffocating Grant. Audiences believe in affairs only if it is for the sake of true love so now that story has to prove why that is the case here (F18). Mellie's unfortunate role of the crazy wife however is a patriarchal theme (P32). One point for each is thus awarded (Haskell, 1987, P. 86, 196).

Here is where Mellie redeems herself as a feminist character. In an argument with Grant, she stands up for her desire and ambition. She may have given up a career to marry Grant, have his kids, and help him achieve his goals, she does not want to be villainized for fighting to make that happen at any cost necessary. She demands to be respected as his wife and mother of his children, and will not be treated as a lesser "other" for her role as a woman (F34). Point Mellie for feminism (Haskell, 1987, p. 30, 85, 94, 96, 184).

Perkins and reporter/boyfriend, Gideon are seen making out in bed, their nudity covered by strategically placed sheets. Although a relatively short montage, it is a patriarchal theme nonetheless because the sex is shown and not just implied (P50). Had the scene skipped the montage and just cut to them discussing "grilled cheese" in bed, implying that they had just had

sex but not explicitly shown anything, it would have been more feministic (Haskell, 1987, p. 250, 313, 324).

Haskell's feminism seeks to equalize the playing field between male and female characters. When the story goes back in time to the president's campaign, the main issue plaguing his fight to the top is his marriage. I think this represents feminism because normally criticizing a candidate's marriage and family relationship is usually reserved for female candidates. The fact that Fitzgerald Grant is the candidate under scrutiny and not his female GOP competitor challenges stereotypes (P54) (Haskell, 1987, p. 358).

The erotic, passionate, but aggressive display of affection between Grant and Pope while on the campaign trail is patriarchal. Pope is a woman in submission to Grant who does what Grant says to do like, "take off your clothes" and who remains on the bottom during their intercourse. This show of male dominance and violent sex is a patriarchal theme (P50). And while no genitals are actually shown, because the camera follows the characters through the act, patriarchy gains another point (Haskell, 1987, p. 250, 313, 324).

The tender embrace of Grant and Pope in present day, the sweetness and tenderness, the burden of forbidden love, all play toward women's emotions and are characteristic of the feminist desire for genuine romance like that of the 20s and 30s (F25) (Haskell, 1987, p. 25, 131).

Total: Feminism 4 Patriarchal 4

S1:E7 Pope is a character that would "just as soon be on the wrong side of the law as not." She fights for justice but her moral code is her internal gut. Most of the time her gut coincides with the law, but other times it's a blatant disregard for law in the name of protecting her client whom she feels is innocent. However, a woman going back and forth between the right

and wrong side of the law is a patriarchal theme that suggests she brings about destruction whenever she is around (P32) (Haskell, 1987, p. 191).

Strangely enough, the one person who speaks the truth and gets through to Pope about her affair with Grant, is Finch, a known cheater himself. He tells her that cheating is “on her,” it is her fault, and that she “can’t have him” (the president). This is a feminist action because he is now the one taking a stand for morality (F4). He seeks to protect her reputation and the president’s because Finch knows it is not going to end well (Haskell, 1987, p. 20).

The competition of Mellie verses Pope for Grant’s love is a patriarchal theme. The man is made complete by the two women who are incomplete without him. Mellie even said that both she and Pope had their “jobs” to do when it came to Grant. She is fully aware that her husband is in love with Pope, but her goal is not so much the president’s love, but presidency itself. However, she needs Grant’s faithfulness to help her protect her family’s reputation (P24) (Haskell, 1987, p. 114).

Total: Feminism 1 Patriarchy 2

The final total for feminism themes in *Scandal* is 15; the final total for patriarchy themes is 15. Hypothesis Two stated that the feminist themes of *Scandal* would be slightly more than the patriarchal themes. However, the equal number of points between them proves the second hypothesis inconclusive.

How To Get Away With Murder

S1:E1 Annalise Keating is a rare television character because she is a strong, powerful, intelligent, working woman roughly the age of 40 (F1, F30). Her students find her intimidating. Michaela Pratt even says at the end of the episode that she wants to be Keating. She is also a very sexually powerful woman. She wields her own sexuality, even at her age (F1). Wes

Gibbons, one of her students, sees Keating passionately kissing a man with whom she having an affair. Both are married. There is also the idea of sex without actually showing the act that makes the scene more appealing to women (F41). Her occupation, her age, her sexuality, and the idea of sex gives four points for feminism (Haskell, 1987, 14, 30, 76, 250, 313, 324, 357).

The prominent female characters of Keating, Bonnie Winterbottom, Pratt, and Laurel Castillo is a point for feminism because they are all intelligent strong, “working women” (F8). Just because Pratt and Castillo are law students does not mean they are not working women as law school is an ambitious profession (Haskell, 1987, 30).

Connor Walsh is a gay college student who embraces his sexuality and uses it to get information out of an unsuspecting man, Oliver Hampton, he meets at a bar. The two of them have intercourse and unlike the scene with Keating, their actions are shown as silhouettes, not explicit but also not simply implied. Haskell brandishes male homosexual relationships because she sees it as men’s attempt to render women useless, to prove they get on without them (P63). Regardless of whether or not it is a heterosexual or homosexual relationship being shown, the more graphic display of sex is more of a patriarchal theme (P50). Two points are thus given to the patriarchy. However, the personality of Walsh and Hampton defies the stereotypes of the feminine homosexual which is a point for feminism (F53) (Haskell, 1987, 250, 313, 324, 362-363).

The nature of Keating’s job as a lawyer means that she is very good at “talking.” She is quick to spin what people say against them, she has wit but not the kind you laugh at. Especially when Gibbons confronts her about giving him preferential treatment since he knows about her affair, Keating turns his accusation into a lack of confidence. Her ability to speak showcases her intelligence and independence and is a point for feminism (F25) (Haskell, 1987, 139).

Laurel Castillo calls Frank Delfino a misogynistic ass after he ridicules her for being a woman and accuses her of being unable to succeed as a lawyer since she will one day become pregnant and quit her job “for the kid.” This is a point for feminism because Castillo is standing up for herself (F25) (Haskell, 1987, 139).

Keating is a *femme fatale* character because her relationship with Nate Lahey costs him his job, his marriage, and his reputation. Her “love,” if it can be called that, destroys his life. This kind of a character is a point for patriarchal themes (P40) (Haskell, 1987, 204, 374).

Another point is given to the patriarchy for the violent nature of the show (P56). It is a thriller drama/ murder mystery. However, the darkness of show embodies the patriarchal theme of replacing romance with violence. As the show continues, it gets progressively darker, more violent, and more sexual. This overarching theme will be given one point for the entire show. Individual acts will continue to be analyzed as the season progresses (Haskell, 1987, 323-324).

Total: Feminism 8 Patriarchy 4

S1:E2 Keating and her husband Sam Keating (referred to as Sam for the remainder of this paper) seem to have a very distrustful relationship with each other. Through suspicious glances, awkward touches and snooping through his cell phone and e-mail, it is clear there is antagonism between the two, but it is not yet revealed what the cause is (P34). However, Haskell said that starting in the 1940s, such relationships became more and more common in patriarchal film. Thus a point for patriarchy is given for their suspicious marriage (Haskell, 1987, p. 195-196).

Later on in the episode, it is revealed that Keating suspects Sam was sleeping with one of his students. He denies it, but he is lying. She also reveals that she is aware that he has had affairs with students in the past. Therefore one point is given to the patriarchy because Sam cheats on his wife with younger women (P6). However, his affair justifies Keating’s own affair

with Lahey according to feminist themes (F28). Feminism claims that there should be an equality in adultery. If the husband cheats, the wife is allowed her own affair (Haskell, 1987, p. 14, 149).

Walsh and Hampton hook up again. However this time the camera cuts away from the act after their shirts come off but before any horizontal movement. Therefore sex is implied but not shown and a point is given to feminism (F41) (Haskell, 1987, 250, 313, 324, 362-363).

Keating initiates sex with her husband even after her suspicions about Sam's relationship with a student are confirmed. The sexuality of a married woman is a point for feminism (F1). However, their explicit display of sex leaves little to the imagination which is a point for patriarchy (P50). Also her feigned attraction to her husband in this moment is patriarchal because her secret loathing him continues to foster their antagonistic relationship (P34) (Haskell, 1987, p. 91, 195-196, 250, 313, 324).

Total: Feminism 3 Patriarchy 3

S1:E3 Episode three opens with Pratt having sex with her fiancé. The act is once again more explicit than implied therefore giving a point to patriarchy (P50) (Haskell, 1987, p. 250, 313, 324).

Pratt finds out that her fiancé had sexual relations with Walsh when they were both 16 years old. While, Pratt and her fiancé commit to staying together, it is clear that their relationship has taken a turn toward mistrust and antagonism which is a point for patriarchy (P34) (Haskell, 1987, p. 195-196).

Sutter was set up by the other murder suspect Griffin O'Reilly. This is a patriarchal theme because Sutter is now literally the "sacrificial scapegoat" to protect a man's innocence (P55) (Haskell, 1987, p. 302).

Gibbons tries to talk to Rebecca Sutter in prison in order to help her after she is accused of murdering Lila Stangard. But Sutter rejects his offer and turns him into the police for illegally pretending to be a lawyer. This is an act of feminism because the woman eludes the effort of a man to save her (F58) (Haskell, 1987, p. 384).

Total: Feminism 1 Patriarchy 3

S1:E4 Walsh is seen having sex with another young man. This is Walsh's second heterosexual relationship and is therefore another point for patriarchy (P64). Their sex is again explicit, even more so than previous scenes of intercourse. While genitals are covered through strategic camera and prop placement, there is still enough motion and implied nudity to make this a patriarchal theme since the display of sex is more appealing to men (P1) (Haskell, 1987, 250, 313, 324, 362-363).

Pratt is clearly the most emotionally unstable one out of the group. Her reactions during her and her classmates covering up of Sam's murder as well as when she stresses about not having time to study for exams. Delfino and Bonnie Winterbottom call her a "shooting star," implying that she'll be the one to fizzle out under the pressure. She is laughed at by her colleagues for behaving so emotionally. Therefore, a point is given to the patriarchy because she is rebuked for behaving "like a woman" (F13) (Haskell, 1987, p. 55).

Walsh has his own breakdown after he helps burn Sam's body so as to destroy the DNA evidence against him and his classmates. Usually this behavior is stereotypical of women, but the fact he breaks the stereotype is a point for feminism (F53) (Haskell, 1987, p. 357).

As Keating removes her jewelry, her weave, her false eyelashes, and her make-up, she reveals her "ugly or unlovable" side, the not-so-beautiful side of herself. This is a symbolic gesture of Keating's personality change. She believed him before when he told her he was not

sleeping with Stangard, but then she discovered a picture of his phallus on Stangard's phone. No longer is going to be the passive wife of a cheating husband, but rather she is about to become his biggest enemy. Therefore a point for feminism is given for Keating revealing her unlovable side (F2) (Haskell, 1987, p. 6, 60).

Total: Feminism 2 Patriarchy 3

S1:E5 Castillo's classmates accuse Castillo of cheating on her boyfriend with Delfino, but she makes no apology for it. She admits she's a cheater and a liar and now a murderer, but they need to stop judging her for it and just help her get rid of the body. Castillo is unapologetic and is therefore feminist (F34) (Haskell, 1987, p. 184).

Castillo also sticks up for herself against Keating's accusation of showing off. Taking a stance like this in feministic because she shows strength, intelligence and independence (F17, F25) (Haskell, 1987, p. 85, 139).

Keating gets into a screaming fight with Sam over the discovery of his naked picture on Stangard's phone. She refuses to let him talk his way out of it, or to put his hands her to try and console her. While he claims it was just sex and that it did not mean anything, she won't be swayed and kicks him out of the house. This is a point for feminism because now Keating is the one standing up for herself (F4, F17) (Haskell, 1987, p. 20, 85).

Winterbottom is in love with Sam. The theme of one man being desired by two women is a patriarchal theme (P24). Although it could be said that Keating no longer desires Sam, she is still his wife so the point stands (Haskell, 1987, p. 114).

Castillo is ridiculed for caring about their defendant's innocence because she is too emotionally involved. However, Delfino stands by her side and does not rebuke her natural woman tendency which is feministic (F13) (Haskell, 1987, p. 55).

Asher Millstone is caught shedding a tear when their innocent client goes free. Pratt mocks him and he lies to protect his manhood, claiming it was allergies. This is a patriarchal theme because the expression of emotion is womanly and therefore unworthy to be expressed by a man (F54) (Haskell, 1987, p. 358).

Feminism claims that relationships grow stronger out of resistance. Well, that is exactly what is happening between Castillo and Delfino (F6). Each take their turns verbally knocking the other down and just after they both claim they would never want to “screw” the other, they end up in a passionate kiss (Haskell, 1987, p. 25).

Feeling guilty over her kiss with Delfino, Castillo initiates sex with her boyfriend. While the power move is feminism, the fact that the scene shows her taking off his pants, hiking up her skirt, and straddling him is a point for patriarchy because it is once again more explicit than implied intercourse (P50) (Haskell, 1987, p. 91, 250, 313, 324).

Total: Feminism 6 Patriarchy 3

S1:E6 Millstone is the comedic relief of the show, and as such he gives two points for patriarchal themes. The first is “sexual strutting” (P57) His frat boy attitude treats women like objects, even though he may not always be successful in his conquests. In the opening scene his is scene flexing his muscles, talking to his reflection like it’s a girl, throwing money around his apartment, drinking beer, and enthusiastically dancing and thrusting his hips. This is a display of male ego. However, we laugh at him because of comedic relief. The second is the fact that even as the comedian, he still wins the girl, and in this case it’s Winterbottom (P22). He may not be “ugly” comedian, but he is still the least desirable because of his immaturity (Haskell, 1987, p. 62, 332).

Gibbons is known as the sensitive one and is nicknamed “Puppy.” This is a point for the patriarchy because it does not allow Gibbons to defy masculine stereotypes and be a more effeminate man (F54) (Haskell, 1987, p. 358).

Keating is a defense attorney, so she “exerts a moral force, and is capable of changing the direction of her own and other people’s lives” on a regular basis (F17). In this episode, she defends a man death row who has been given his first appeal in the 20-year-old murder of his girlfriend. In the trial, Keating accuses a land developer of being the one responsible for the girl’s death, for sending an innocent man to jail, and for displacing low-income families. The judges hear her and consent to set Keating’s client free. Though not every case she defends in the show is worth mentioning, this one shows Keating actively reversing the direction of another person’s life. Her ability to do so is a point for feminism (Haskell, 1987, p. 20, 85).

Keating displays a moment of weakness when she protects her husband from being a suspect in the Stangard murder. He asks her why she did it and she admits that it is because she “needs him.” This lack of self-confidence and display of both fearing and desiring her husband is a point for the patriarchal side (P35). At his touch, she further softens giving a second point to the patriarchy for her pseudotoughness (P30) (Haskell, 1987, p. 175, 196).

Total: Feminism 1 Patriarchy 5

S1:E7 The relationship between Sutter and Gibbons is growing, but it was first met with resistance. Sutter wouldn’t give Gibbons the time of day, but we know they eventually enter into a relationship. This is a point for feminism because of the initial resistance that would strengthen the relationship (F6) (Haskell, 1987, p. 25).

However, Gibbons keeps trying to “fix” Sutter, to change her from being a drug dealing, juvenile delinquent/bartender into someone who could “go places” in life. This is a patriarchal

theme because it suggests that she even needs changing and is not good enough the way she is. She needs a man's love to protect her (F58) (Haskell, 1987, p. 384).

Pratt's fiancé's parents ask her to sign a prenuptial agreement before marrying their son. This is another case of distrust in the relationship which is classic patriarchal theme (P34) (Haskell, 1987, p. 195-196).

Walsh has another homosexual encounter. This time the hookup occurred in a bathroom stall. Although the least explicit and the shortest time given of all of his sexual interactions, it was still explicit enough to warrant a two patriarchal points. One for the male homosexuality (P64) and one for explicit sex (P50) (Haskell, 1987, 250, 313, 324, 362-363).

Gibbons, Walsh, and Millstone are sent to the bar to flirt with the legal aides and temps in order to get information in favor of their case. This is patriarchal themes because it suggests that women can be treated as "weigh-stations" to be used by men (P58). Especially when Millstone pursues a "nerd who is probably still hot under her clothes." This is blatant discrimination and therefore patriarchal (Haskell, 1987, p. 336).

Gibbons and Sutter have intercourse and very little is left to the imagination as they remove each other clothes and kiss each other's bodies (P50). While Sutter's breasts remain in her bra, she is still exposed therefore giving the point to patriarchy (Haskell, 1987, p. 250, 313, 324).

Castillo encourages Delfino's pursuit of her and they kiss passionately on the porch. The darkness clouds the visual extent of their intercourse. The sound of her skirt rustling, his belt coming undone, and her heaving breathing implies sexual intercourse. But this is a point for feminism because it is only an implication and not an explicit sexual display (F41). It is also a point for feminism, because Delfino is a known player, accused of being a misogynist. However,

he softens toward Castillo suggesting that she, and only she, has the ability to change him (F35). This is another point for feminism (Haskell, 1987, p. 212, 250, 313, 324).

Total: Feminism 4 Patriarchy 6

S1:E8 Sutter is known to act out irrationally, and even though it is for her own sake as a murder suspect, Keating says she needs to be controlled and kept in line. Because of Gibbons' close relationship with Sutter, he is the one to keep an eye on her. The "taming" of Sutter is a point for patriarchy (P54) (Haskell, 1987, p. 15, 270).

Delfino and Castillo have intercourse in the backseat of his car after Delfino beckons her to come. She tries to rush their sexual interaction and he tells her to slow down. This supports the patriarchal theme that a woman should be ready to have sex when the man wants it, but should not be too sexually hungry herself (P60) (Haskell, 1987, p. 341).

The antagonism between Pratt and her future mother-in-law is another patriarchal theme, this time the fight for possession of the son's love. Though not always erotic as some patriarchal themes suggest, the relationship between mother and son is still sacred. Mothers seek to protect their sons from other women out of which the conniving, distrustful "monster-in-law" stereotype is born (P18) (Haskell, 1987, p. 205).

Winterbottom confronts Sam about his prior knowledge of Stangard's pregnancy, but when he speaks softly to her, strokes her face and kisses her, she melts or "turn[s] into cotton candy" as Haskell says (P30). That is a point toward the patriarchy (Haskell, 1987, p. 175).

Total: Feminism 0 Patriarchy 4

S1:E9 The season is reaching its climax as the past and present are colliding. In the beginning of the episode, Keating and Sam have a dramatic screaming match that is so suspenseful that you start to believe that this is where he is about to die. Throughout the

altercation, both parties are shouting accusation and calling each other foul names. Keating is antagonizing Sam to try and get him to kill. She tells him about her affair with Nate, describing the different things they had done with each other and to each other in the house. This of course infuriates Sam because of her hypocrisy toward his affair. He attempts to strangle her, but instead verbally assaults her. He calls her a slut and a “just a piece of ass.” He claims he only got on with her by thinking about Lila Stangard. Their hatred for each other becomes present now more than ever which results in several patriarchal themes. The first is the outright animosity toward women that Sam displays when he talks about his initial thought of Keating was that she would be easy have sex with (P23). The second is their marriage was a lie based on the man’s initial desire for sex and the woman’s belief that it will fulfill and complete her (P35). The third is their romantic relationship is “rooted in fear and suspicion, impotence, and inadequacy” due to the dark and sinister nature of Keating (P34). Fourth, their marriage is also based on Sam’s desire to “tame” his erratic mistress (P54). The fifth is when Sam calls Keating a slut for her pursuit of sexual pleasure, thus condemning her sexuality while he remains innocent of his own sexual encounters (P36). The sixth and final patriarchal theme of this scene is the reactions of both Keating and Sam. Sam resorts to violence and Keating becomes indifferent or “numb (P56). Both are characteristics of patriarchal tendencies. Keating does attempt to command her own sexuality though through her relationship with Sam and also with Nate. Sam criticizes her sexuality, but it is there nonetheless which gives a point to feminism (F28). The total for this scene alone is six points for the patriarchy and one point for feminism (Haskell, 1987, p. 14, 91, 149, 195-196, 197, 270, 385).

Keating and Lahey end up having sex which is once again violent and explicit, this time in them pressing each other against the wall (P50). This is a patriarchal theme (Haskell, 1987, p. 250, 313, 324).

Winterbottom invites herself over to Millstone's apartment and initiates sex with him. She even says that despite being drunk, she is a grown woman who knows what she wants. This is two points for feminism, the first for taking control of the situation (F19) and the second for her not apologizing for it (F34). The camera also cuts away before the act is followed through which implies the idea of sex and is also a point for feminism (F41) (Haskell, 1987, p. 91, 250, 313, 324).

Keating has constantly allowed the people around her to break the law for the sake of justice without condemning them. However, she herself has not done anything directly illegal. However, at the end of the episode she is seen to be in on the cover up of her husband's murder. This is a point for the patriarchy because she is just as "likely to be found on the wrong side of the law as not" (P32) She makes herself in to a "treacherous woman" of "dubious ethics" (Haskell, 1987, p. 191).

Total: Feminism 4 Patriarchy 8

S1:E10 Lahey proves himself to be a man who is willing to fight for the woman he loves (F18). However, he still distrusts her and her motives for pursuing him (P34). Therefore, one point is given to feminism and one point is giving to the patriarchy (Haskell, 1987, p. 86, 195-196).

Sometimes Keating acts "crazy" in relation to men. However, in this episode she calls her crazy "winning." This is a point for feminism because she is acting crazy of her own accord, for

her own protection, and also for justice to be held against her husband (F57) (Haskell, 1987, p. 374).

Total: Feminism 2 Patriarchy 1

S1:E11 Delfino and Millstone develop a budding friendship talking about the women in their life, and giving each other advice on picking up women at the bar. This scene consists of three patriarchal themes. One, the show of male friendship devoid of women, sympathizing with one another, supporting and understanding each other (P10). Two, Millstone's "male strutting" as he believes in his ability hook up with a girl like a conquest (P57). Three, Delfino's implication that the women Millstone is eyeing will most likely result in some kind of STD which antagonizes a kind of misogyny (P23) (Haskell, 1987, p. 225, 323-324, 332, 336).

Millstone admits that his hookup with Winterbottom meant more to him than it meant to her and that her discourteous treatment of him afterwards "hurt [his] feelings." She respects his acknowledgement and does not ridicule him for revealing a sensitive side (F54). That is a point for feminism (Haskell, 1987, p. 358).

Walsh is trying to put aside his playboy antics and get back together with Oliver Hampton. However, the pursuit of a homosexual relationship is still a patriarchal theme despite the "romantic" package in which the show tries to wrap their relationship (P64) (Haskell, 1987, p. 362-363).

Total: Feminism 1 Patriarchy 4

S1:E12 As the police begin investigating Sam's murder, the students who killed him find ways to mask or express their guilt. Some of their reactions go against gender stereotypes. While Walsh is the most nervous, irrational and anxious out of the group, it is Castillo who remains

strong, calm and logical. The shuffling of emotions allows diversity among the characters which feministic (F7) (Haskell, 1987, p. 26, 229)

Underneath Castillo's calm exterior, she's still a human who could get charged with murder. She goes to Delfino for advice, but when he tries to comfort her, she resists his advances because she doesn't "need him" (F58). This is a point for feminism as she resists a man's attempt to "save or understand her" (Haskell, 1987, p. 384).

Keating is once again Lahey's *femme fatale*, this time because she has framed him for Sam's murder (P40). This is a point for patriarchy (Haskell, 1987, p. 204, 374).

Total: Feminism 2 Patriarchy 1

S1:E13 Keating has an emotional breakdown after Lahey is arrested. However, her heart is breaking for both Lahey and Sam. The point for patriarchy goes to her reaction when her mother throws out Sam's suits. She reacts like a broken-hearted widow which shows that she both fears and loves her late husband (P35). This gives power to the man to control the woman, even if he is dead, which is a patriarchal point (Haskell, 1987, p. 196).

Keating's mother tells her the truth behind the fire that burned their house down when Keating was a child. Her mother was aware that Keating's uncle was raping her so she took the kids out of the house one night and set on fire to kill the uncle who was drunk and passed out inside. This is a point for feminism because the mother's moral force changing the direction of other people's lives (F17). However, her actions were criminal thus showing that she is just as capable of being on the wrong side of the law as on the right (P32). That is a patriarchal theme (Haskell, 1987, p. 85, 191).

Total: Feminism 1 Patriarchal 2

S1:E14 Once again the relationship between Gibbons and Sutter takes a turn toward suspicion. Gibbons think he's found evidence that Sutter was the one who killed Stangard, but is playing dumb. He lies to her about his whereabouts. She does not seem to be telling him the whole truth about Stangard's death. However, they end up having explicit intercourse despite their distrust of the other (P34, P50). This results in two points for patriarchy (Haskell, 1987, p. 195-196, 250, 313, 324).

In a flashback scene, Sutter seduces O'Reilly into having sex with her. She initiates it, a point for feminism (F19). However, their intercourse is still explicit, a point for the patriarchy (P50). Sutter also sets O'Reilly up to be discovered in the act by his girlfriend, Stangard. She is then playing the *femme fatale* character which is a patriarchal theme (P40) (Haskell, 1987, p. 91, 250, 313, 324).

Keating orchestrates a plan to have Lahey beat up in jail in the hopes that he will be given bail in order to protect him. However, the plan backfires, he is still denied bail and is put in solitary confinement instead. In this incident, the theme is patriarchal because it further corrupts her character (P32) (Haskell, 1987, p. 191).

Total: Feminism 1 Patriarchy 5

S1:E15 Millstone and Winterbottom have sex again only this time the sex is only implied and not explicitly shown which is a point for feminism (F41) (Haskell, 1987, p. 250, 313, 324).

In another flashback, Sam tells Stangard that he no longer loves his wife, Keating, and that he wants to be with her. Leaving his wife for a younger woman is a patriarchal theme (P6) (Haskell, 1987, p. 14).

Total: Feminism 1 Patriarchy 1

The grand total for *How To Get Away With Murder* is feminism, 37, and patriarchy, 53. Hypothesis Three stated that the patriarchal themes of *How To Get Away With Murder* would outweigh the feminist themes. Therefore, Hypothesis Three is correct.

Discussion

Results

This study tallied the number of feminist and patriarchal themes in the first seasons of *Grey's Anatomy*, *Scandal* and *How To Get Away with Murder*. In *Grey's Anatomy*, the final total favored feminism in a ratio of 33:8. Therefore, almost 80% of the show's content favored women, female empowerment, and gender equality. Hypothesis one was correct. The difference between the numbers is surprising. As Shonda Rhimes' first T.V. show, it would have been understandable if she had stayed closer to patriarchal themes since Hollywood remains to be a male-dominated workplace. Then, as her notoriety and credibility rose, so would her ability to take risks. Because the show has continued for twelve seasons, viewers are hungry for the change. Rhimes herself suspects that viewers did not think anything was unusual in the T.V. show because the diversity reflected their daily lives (Rhimes, 2015).

Unlike hypothesis one, the second hypothesis was proved to be invalid because of the tied ratio of 15:15 in *Scandal*. These results are inconclusive as this show is 50% feminist and 50% patriarchal.

How To Get Away with Murder revealed the most surprising results. In a ratio of 36:54, *Murder* is 60% more patriarchal than feminist. However, it is interesting to me that a majority of the patriarchal themes are not story or content related, but occurred through the production aspect. The most frequent patriarchal theme was the number of explicit sex scenes. Unlike *Grey's Anatomy*, *Murder* often had multiple sex scenes within each episode and had much fewer

restraints on what was shown versus what was implied. There are two probable causes for the graphicness of these scenes. The first is the timeslot in which *Murder* aired. As the final show in the T.G.I.T. line up, it aired at 10 p.m., (EST) which is past primetime hours and thus network expectations for family-friendly content are decreased. The second cause could be that the show was in fact created by a man, Peter Nowalk, not by Shonda Rhimes herself. Therefore, he controlled much of the content and was probably more comfortable with displaying sex.

Another reason why the patriarchal themes outnumbered the feminist themes, was the gay playboy character, Connor Walsh. Each time he hooked-up with another guy that was a point for the patriarchy because according to Haskell, men turned to other men in order to further remove their need for women (Haskell, 1987).

The fourth hypothesis which believed Shondaland would prove to be more feminist than patriarchal was proved correct, but not by much. Overall, Shondaland was approximately 52% more feminist than patriarchal. The exact ratio was 84:77.

Limitations and Future Research

There are several limitations that could change the result had the study been conducted in other ways. I only looked at the first season of each of the shows because I felt this was the most direct comparison. However, the number of episodes per show varied greatly. Because *Murder*, had the most episodes (15), if the first fifteen episodes of *Grey's* and *Scandal* were also analyzed, the numbers might change as the characters evolve and the plot develops. It would be very interesting to extend the research of *Grey's Anatomy* and *Scandal* to each of their first fifteen episodes in order to determine exactly how the numbers would change.

Another limitation of applying Haskell's themes to Shondaland is that Haskell's work originally focused on film. While there are similarities between television and film, there are also

important differences. The biggest difference is the time it takes for character and plot development to occur. In film, plots rise and fall in roughly a 2-hour time period. In that time, the entire character is presented and audiences get the whole picture. With television, characters grow, evolve, change, fall, and reemerge season after season. Only after the series finale, will the show's creators have done everything they can do with a character. For shows like *Grey's Anatomy* that have been on air for twelve seasons, character development has been a constant rollercoaster. Trying to determine the specific characteristics of a T.V. show or of T.V. characters based solely on the first season limits the results. It is like analyzing a movie based on the first fifteen minutes of the film. In future research, applying Haskell's themes over an entire series would reveal more accurate results as to whether a show is feminist or patriarchal. It would also reveal how a series changes over time. Such a study could prove valuable if audience members' attitudes toward a show change from season to season. If a feminist show turns patriarchal, perhaps that was the cause for decreased viewership.

Another limitation was the fallibility of my own opinion. In reading, *From Reverence to Rape*, I tried my best to pick out every feminist and patriarchal theme I could find. Because this study was conducted through the eyes of one researcher, it is very possible that I missed a theme in the book or applied a theme that might not be there in the opinion of another researcher. I would encourage future researchers to look for their own themes within Haskell to coincide with my list thus making Haskell's roadmap even more complete.

The final limitation to this study, is the age of Haskell's work. Published for the first time in 1974, feminism in Haskell's world looks different than it does in the 21st century. Should Haskell ever write about films in the 1990s and early 2000s, new feminist and patriarchal themes are sure to emerge and need to be taken into consideration. However, Haskell is still a leader in

feminist film studies and many of her themes are timeless. The themes that were applied to Shondaland are relevant, but could be considered inconclusive as feminism has changed in the past thirty years.

So what?

The success of this study has a wide range of uses for future research. One of the most frustrating aspects of studying film through a feminist perspective is the subjectivity and bias of the researchers. Feminism has different connotations to different people which makes feminist film studies very opinionated. By systematizing Haskell, I have, as far as possible, removed my own bias in order to objectively analyze T.V. and film. The implications of this kind of research are vast as it creates a universal measuring stick that can be used by any feminist film scholar. My study is simply the foundation. Instead of comparing one researcher's opinion to another, we can use Haskell to standardize our attempts to promote or disprove feminist media. We do not necessarily have to agree with every theme Haskell deemed feminist or patriarchal, but this systemization has reduced the possibility of misinterpreting what she wrote. My hope for this study is that people will be able to use this approach to critically analyze T.V. shows and films before slapping a "feminist" label on them. The key though is objectivity. Future research can now study film and television through the lens of *Haskell's* feminist film theory thanks to this systematized roadmap of Haskell's themes.

This leads me to my final idea for future research. From *Grey's* to *Scandal* to *Murder*, Shondaland has progressively become more patriarchal. In March 2016, Rhimes' newest T.V. show, *The Catch*, is scheduled to air. Because her shows have become more patriarchal over time, there is the possibility that this show will continue the trend. However, it is being created by a woman, Jennifer Schuur, so perhaps a female touch will change the trajectory of

Shondaland. Despite whether or not the show is as successful as its predecessors, it will definitely be a worthy study in order to continue evaluating how feministic Shondaland really is.

Conclusion

One of the reasons why I chose to study these three T.V. shows in Shondaland is simply because I enjoy watching them. I've been a *Grey's Anatomy* fan since it became available on Netflix and I binge watched the first ten seasons. I fell in love with *Scandal* after a friend recommended it to me halfway through the first season and I wondered how I could have been so late to the game. I literally wanted to *be* Olivia Pope. By the time *How To Get Away With Murder* premiered in 2014, I had a season pass to Shondaland. Feminist or not, I think these T.V. shows are *good* T.V. I love the dynamic characters, the fast wittiness of the dialogue, and all the plot twists. While I support female empowerment and do believe that women are cable of extraordinary things, I can still appreciate patriarchal art.

However, there are things about the shows that I do not care for that I feel are important to note in this conclusion. I come from a Judeo-Christian background, live a fairly conservative Christian life, and attend a Christian university. One of the reasons why analyzing these T.V. shows through Haskell was so important to me is because I am aware of the bias my Christian worldview has on feminism.

I have continued to watch all three T.V. shows through the most recent seasons. At the time of this study, season five of *Scandal* aired its midseason finale and caught the attention of a vast number of evangelicals. As an evangelical Christian myself, I believe acknowledging this situation is pertinent to the conclusion of this research.

In season five, Olivia Pope and President Grant have publically acknowledged their love affair and Pope has moved into the White House assuming the First Lady duties. However, Pope

is unhappy with arrangement as she feels trapped, unable to pursue her career, and forced to live in the shadow of the president. Unwilling to be tied to the President for the rest of her life, Pope has an abortion which is casually depicted on T.V. There is no dialogue as Pope has the operation, returns to the white house to pack her things, and goes home alone. She is last seen sitting on her couch, drinking wine, and smiling as she takes back control of her life. In the background of this montage, *Silent Night* plays softly.

Haskell did not mention anything specifically about abortion being feminist or patriarchal as such a procedure was not as common or as accepted in the 1970s. However, a woman's right to her own body has been a rallying cry for many 21st century feminists. At the same time, it has been vehemently opposed by many pro-life evangelical Christians. Not only did this show seem to support the use of an abortion as a justifiable means of escape from an unwanted pregnancy, but the choice of *Silent Night* sung by a "church choir" as the background music is really just a middle finger to Christianity and any other religion that supports the sanctity of life. While neither feminist nor patriarchal, the song choice was in poor taste.

However, as it was the midseason finale, we do not yet know the aftermath of Pope's abortion or the consequences that might ensue. While pro-life advocates are in an uproar at the time this thesis was completed, the tides could change when the show returns in February 2016. Though I think it is unlikely, Rhimes may dive deeper into the emotional ramifications of having an abortion. Perhaps Pope will feel guilty about her choice and regret the decision. Perhaps the president will find out and accuse Pope of murder. How Rhimes treats this live-changing event in the episodes to come will further establish Shondaland as feminist or patriarchal.

Good entertainment challenges our thinking. Even if you do not agree with every bit of content in a T.V. show, does not mean the T.V. shows should be completely ignored. Because of

my biblical beliefs, there are plenty of elements in the shows that I do not care for like the frequency of sex outside of marriage, the graphic sex scenes, the prevalence of divorce, the support of homosexual relationships and abortion.

However, I still consider myself a fan of the shows. I appreciate the stories that are so intricate and mysterious that I have gasped out loud when plot twists are revealed. And I love watching the women in a variety powerful positions as it inspires my own desire to work hard and be successful. This study was important to me because it challenged my beliefs about feminism. I admit that I had been a strong advocate for these shows because I believed that these shows did empower woman and support feminism. But when questioned about that belief, I could not give an adequate answer because I did not understand the intricacies of feminism. Through my study of Haskell, Thornham, and Kaplan, I have learned what it means to be a feminist. But I have a biblical worldview. Therefore, the pairing of my new understanding of feminism with my knowledge of the Bible, I now know why I am a feminist. I'm a feminist because I believe God created women uniquely, giving us our own strengths and weaknesses, designed with a specific purpose in mind. I am also a feminist because I believe God created men in the same vein, with strengths and weakness and a specific purpose. I do not believe we were created to compete with one another but rather to complement one another and work as a team.

This study helped me justify my position when I say that *Grey's Anatomy* supports feminism because characters like Cristina Yang and Miranda Bailey are female powerhouses. Both are successful surgeons, but they are also very different. Bailey is a wife and mother. Yang has no desire to marry or have children. Both are choices are empower women because feminism supports the individuality of women and their choices. I also know the ways *How To Get Away With Murder* does not always support feminism. The onslaught of graphic sex scenes and the

dark side of Annalise Keating that always seems to put people in danger are rampant patriarchal themes.

Whether you are of a Judeo-Christian background, another religious background, or of no religious affiliation at all, studying feminism in media is a worthwhile pursuit because half of the world's population is female. Haskell is one lens we can use to remove all of our biasness and let the research simply speak for itself.

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