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**A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYTICAL STUDY
OF THE MOVIES “FAR FROM HEAVEN”
AND “SUMMER OF SAM”**

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Introduction

This dissertation aims to apply Critical Discourse Analysis, henceforth CDA, a linguistic and multidisciplinary approach to the study of the strategies enacted in discourse that represent the relationships between discourse and power, social inequalities and dominance. The object of the study is the discourse in the transcripts of the movies *Far From Heaven* (2002), written and directed by Todd Hynes, and *Summer of Sam* (1999), written by Spike Lee, Victor Colicchio and Michael Imperioli, and directed by Spike Lee. In the analysis, the relationships between language and gender and language and ethnicity will be the focus of investigation. In this respect, the application of CDA to movie scripts is useful not only to analyze the relationship between language and gender, but also to see and highlight the differences in the use of language by individuals from different social groups, mainly to demonstrate how issues of dominance and identity are linguistically enacted in society.

Chapter 1 will provide a definition and an explanation of what CDA is, and will go through the developments of this set of linguistic approaches by presenting the Critical Theory as the theoretical basis of CDA's aims and principles. Chapter 2 will describe the general perspective of the language and gender approach, with the description of the differences in the use of language between men and women. A second topic of the chapter deals with the ways in which social class and ethnicity are indexed in the English language. In Chapter 3, through the synopsis and the analysis of the scripts of the two movies, which are a verisimilar representation of social taboos such as homosexuality and racism, I will discuss the relationship between language, gender and ethnicity. Particular attention will be devoted to the social roles of women and other non-dominant figures considered as representatives of social minorities vis-à-vis members of mainstream American society, i.e. white, male, heterosexual. The results of this analysis are interpreted in the context of the American communities represented in the movies under investigation, but may have possible implications for American society at large, at least with respect to the times in which both stories are set.

Chapter 1

Critical Discourse Analysis: An Overview

1.1 *Abstract*

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of CDA. I will first define CDA in general, and then I will describe its theoretical background, providing a summary of the major contributions of the most important scholars, and explaining the critical theory through a brief explanation of the concepts of ‘critical’, ‘ideology’, ‘dominance’ and ‘power’. I will lastly clarify the aim which CDA pursues: uncover hidden agendas expressed through the linguistic structures of discourse.

1.2 *Definition*

For a definition of CDA, we must start from the assumption that discourse is the main element of social practices: it creates and is shaped by other elements of social practices (Fairclough and Chouliaraki 1999). Discourse can be defined in many different but related ways: symbolic communication between people; spoken or written interaction; whole communicative act, and more precisely production and comprehension; it can also be defined as communication in specific institutional contexts (e.g. scientific discourse, legal discourse, and so on, which were also the first fields of application of CDA).

CDA is a multidisciplinary methodology of study, or ‘approach’, with the goal to identify all the (structural, semantic, metaphorical, semiotic) aspects of the conveyed messages of the discourse which could imply a hidden purpose in communication. What CDA does, in more simple words, is analyzing and interpret these messages in terms of the effects meant to have on the recipient/s.

1.3 CDA's Background

The urge to find a type of analysis that could explain how language was related to the application of power and dominance in society began in the 1970s: since then, the only linguistic science concerned with this particular feature of language was sociolinguistics, even though to a very limited extent: it aimed mainly to explain language variation and the structures of communicative interaction (Labov, 1972; Hymes, 1972, cited in Wodak and Meyer 2001). The attention at that time was mostly focused on the 'basic units' of language: speakers' pragmatic/sociolinguistic competence, sentences and constituents of sentences. When the focus shifted on texts, their production, interpretation and their relation to societal structures, sociolinguistics started to be called critical linguistics (henceforth CL). (Wodak and Meyer, 2001)

In 1989, Ruth Wodak listed and explained the most important characteristics of CL research, and at this point, simultaneously with other scholars such as Teun A. Van Dijk and Norman Fairclough, she started publishing her research studies about how language, power, and society are related to each other and involved in discourse in institutional contexts. In 1991, through the support of the University of Amsterdam, Teun van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo van Leeuwen and Ruth Wodak had the opportunity to spend two days together to discuss theories and methods of CDA. The meeting, apart from making CDA an institutional subject, made it possible to discuss the very distinct and different approaches, defining CDA's principle. For example, all approaches are problem-oriented, and thus necessarily interdisciplinary. Moreover, the common characteristic of CDA is the common will of de-mystifying ideologies and power through the investigation of semiotic data (written, spoken or visual).

From now on, scholars who have engaged in linguistic, semiotic and discourse analysis, indeed, share the perspective in which the concepts of power, ideology and history are the central elements in this type of research. For example, by the end of the 1990s, **Theo Van Leeuwen**, dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Technology in Sydney (AU), worked on the interaction between the verbal and visual in texts and discourse, as well as on the meaning of images. In 1996, he theorized his 'actor's analysis' (Van Leeuwen, 1996) which is a systematic way of analyzing the protagonists and their semantic roles in discourses of various genres. His work at the beginning concentrated mostly on the intonation of disc jockeys and

newsreaders, the language of television interviews and newspapers' reports, and more recently, his focus has been on the semiotics of visual communication and music. Lastly, it is important to mention that according to his opinion CDA should be concerned with discourse as the instrument of power and control as well as with discourse as the instrument of the social construction of reality (Van Leeuwen 1993).

Another major contributor to the variety of approaches in CDA is **Ruth Wodak**, Emeritus Distinguished Professor and Chair in Discourse Studies at Lancaster University. She studied discourse from a socio-political point of view, analyzing its discriminatory elements (nationalism and xenophobia, particularly from right-wing populist movements). Her approach to discourse is called 'the discourse historical approach', which explores the changes in discourse practices over time, always from a socio-political perspective. One of the most salient features of the discourse historical approach is its effort to work with different approaches, multi-methodically and on the basis of a variety of empirical elements as well as background information. Her discourse historical approach studies the historical dimension of discursive actions by exploring the ways in which particular genres of discourse are subject to diachronic change (Wodak et al., 1990; Wodak et al., 1994).

Norman Fairclough, emeritus Professor of Linguistics at Lancaster University, had his main concern in the roles of social institutions in shaping the practices of discourse. He argues that our language changes on the basis of our material and social conditions, and divides three dimensions of the concept of discourse: text (object of linguistic analysis), discourse practice (production, distribution and consumption of texts), and social practices (power relations, ideologies and hegemonic struggles which are restructured, challenged, or reproduced by discourse). These three dimensions must be taken into account altogether, and therefore discourse is at the same time textual, material and social, and is constructed on the basis of ideological frameworks as well as social power relations. (Fairclough 1992, 2003)

Gunther Kress is Professor of Semiotics and Education at the UCL Institute of Education, University of London. His research is in communication and meaning-making in contemporary environments and it concentrates on the representational media, on how various societies value and use different modes of representation, and on how these representations influence the formation of the individual human being as a social individual, especially during the learning process.

Roger Fowler was Professor of English and Linguistics at the University of East Anglia. He showed how tools provided by standard linguistic theories can be applied to uncover linguistic structures of power in texts. He worked on news discourses and literary criticism showing that some choices in grammatical structures in discourse can have a great influence in establishing, manipulating and naturalizing social hierarchies.

Teun A. van Dijk was Professor of Discourse Studies at the University of Amsterdam from 1968 until 2004, and since 1999 he has taught at the Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona. Van Dijk, in a work in collaboration with Kintsch (1983) considered the relevance of discourse in the study of language processing. In this work they develop a cognitive model of discourse understanding in individuals, which has been gradually modified in order to be used to explain the construction of meaning on a societal level. Van Dijk's interest is in developing a theoretical model that will explain cognitive discourse processing mechanisms (Wodak and van Dijk, 2000). Most recently, van Dijk has focused on issues of racism and ideology (van Dijk, 1998). (Wodak and Meyer 2001).

1.4 *Basic concepts in CDA*

In order to have a deeper understanding of what CDA is, it is necessary to define its main inherent basic concepts: the meanings of 'critical', 'ideology', 'dominance' and 'power', as these concepts are framed in Critical Theory's fundamentals.

The notion of 'critical', first of all, is the key concept of the **Critical Theory** elaborated by the scholars of the Frankfurt school from the 1930s onward. Although this theory found its application in various fields (politics, economics, and so forth), it builds the theoretical background on which CDA developed, giving a clearer view of the reasons for its interdisciplinarity, and, above all, for the understanding of its main purposes.

If traditionally the term 'critical' meant a mere observation of society, in order to solely understand and explain its dynamics, after the theorization of the Frankfurt scholars and especially with **Max Horkheimer**'s contribute, 'critical' is an attribute of a theory oriented to human '*emancipation from slavery*', when its application works '*to create a world which satisfies the needs and powers*' of human beings (Horkheimer

1937). In this perspective, ideology is to be intended as the first obstacle to the liberation of society as a whole.

Anyway, the utilization of the critical theory we are interested in is the linguistic one, elaborated between the 1970s and 1980s, by **Jürgen Habermas**. He redefined critical social theory as a theory of communication, including in his study communicative competence and communicative rationality, as well as distorted communication. The basic questions with which Habermas started his theorization were:

In which ways does language coordinate action in a consensual or cooperative manner as opposed to a forced or manipulated way? How can language lead to agreement?

First of all, the truth or falsity of a statement and the correctness of social, ethical, and/or basically any type of norms is determined by the ways in which the conveyed ideal is supported. The creation of consensus is not univocal: it can be done coercively or manipulatively. In this last case, discourse is systematically distorted. Ideology plays the main role in such structures, especially when it is not possible to support the conveyed ideal in a rational way. Habermas relates this problem to the ‘public sphere’, a place that represents (or should represent) the public interest and where the so called public opinion takes form.

Habermas stresses the fact that one of the crucial media through which social life unfolds is language, and through discourse, as part of production of human life, the social practice is realized.

Harvey, in 1996, proposed a dialectical view of the social processes in which discourse is involved. Language, power, social relations, material practices, institutions/rituals, and beliefs/values/desires coexist in a simultaneous relationship of determination with discourse, despite their heterogeneity.

Another aspect of the notion of ‘critical’, important for a proper understanding of CDA, is the objectiveness of the analysis of the data, embedding them in the social dimension. The results of the analysis must be applicable, thus the relation between theory and practice is essential. The analysis should be dynamic as well: Horkheimer

believed that no single method of research could produce final and reliable results about any given object of inquiry, and taking only one approach to a given question could lead to a distorted picture. (Wodak and Meyer 2001)

After this brief overview of the critical theory, we can delineate its basic principles as follows:

Critical theory should be oriented to the totality of society in light of its historical development, and it should improve the understanding of society with the theoretical help of all the major social sciences, such as economics, sociology, history, political science, anthropology, and psychology (Wodak and Meyer, 2008).

This statement clarifies the reason for the main aspect of CDA: the presence of the variety of approaches involved in its multidisciplinary.

Moreover, in order to follow the logical thread of this paragraph, another concept inherent in CDA's context is that of 'ideology'. Principally, ideology can be defined as a way of constructing reality, otherwise called 'social constructionism': a social construction is a concept or practice produced by a particular group in society. This definition is strictly connected with the notion of 'dominance' explained below in this study.

Ideology is also important in its meaning related to mass communication. Thompson (1990) frames the different notions of ideology through the centuries, since the eighteenth century, when the term 'ideology'¹ first appeared in France, and he defines the study of ideology as a study of 'the ways in which meaning is constructed and conveyed by symbolic forms'. This kind of study implies the investigation of the social context in which these forms are enacted. We have to determine whether such forms establish relations of domination. (Thompson 1990)

In reference to the concept of 'ideology' reported above, another focus of CDA is the study of social inequalities (in a critical way) by identifying which role discourse is playing in the reproduction of dominance. The notions of 'dominance' and 'power' derive from the hierarchical structure of society: 'dominance' must be intended here as the exercise of social 'power' by elites, institutions or groups, which produce political,

¹ Destutt De Tracy, (1801) Les Éléments d'idéologie

cultural, class, ethnic, racial and gender inequalities. These processes involve different modes of application in discourse: direct/indirect or overt support, enactment, representation, legitimation, denial, mitigation, or concealment of dominance. The objective of the CDA analyst is to identify the structures through which the applications of these processes take place in texts, talks, or other communicative acts² (Van Dijk 1993).

In other words, what is involved in the concepts of dominance and power is the level of acceptance and legitimacy of the exercise of power, or power abuse, but also the negative effects of the result of this abuse: social inequality.

1.5 *Aim of CDA*

In the majority of CDA studies we find a reference to Halliday's systemic functional grammar. This means that, in order to fully understand all CDA's aims and principles, a proper understanding of Hallidayan basic grammar claims is necessary. Halliday (1979) has been the first to stress the relationship between the grammatical system and the social and personal needs that a language must serve. Therefore, he described three main metafunctions of language which are constantly interrelated. The first one is **ideational**: language lends structure to experience. This structure reflects and influences the social structure. The second one is the **interpersonal** function through which relationships between the participants are created. The third one is the **textual** function which constitutes coherence and cohesion in texts. These metafunctions constitute the basis from which CDA research takes place.

In light of what has been stated in the previous paragraphs, we remark the fact that the ideological dimension of discourse is one of the main concerns related to uncovering hidden agendas. The real intentions of the producer of the discourse can be discovered by the interpretation of some particular structures he/she uses in discourse.

² It is important to clarify that this 'top-down' relation of power in the concept of dominance is not the only one: there is also a 'bottom-up' representation, related to a sense of acceptance and compliance of the dominated group. More specifically, in many situations, paradoxically, the dominated group is persuaded that power and power abuse of the dominant group is natural and somehow legitimated. CDA has the aim to find the actual relations of power and dominance in society, but this approach must be included in a broader line of research about power, counter-power and discourse, while our intent in this study is to identify only the strategies framed in the top-down relation, which is also the perspective most frequently adopted by critical linguists and CDA analysts. (Van Dijk 1993, Wodak and Meyer 2001)

Primarily, CDA's aim is to identify the ways in which power is enacted by a given dominant group through the study of the discourse structures they apply.

Van Dijk, in 1998, described the aim of CDA in terms of the levels on which the analysis should operate. There are two dimensions which CDA has the aim to bridge: the micro-level of the social order, which includes language use, discourse, verbal interaction and communication, and a macro-level, which includes the concepts of power, dominance and inequality between social groups. In everyday interaction and experience, the macro and micro levels are unified to form a whole. To do so, as already mentioned, CDA needs real multidisciplinary. Its effectiveness must be measured on the basis of the (modest) academic contribution it gives to a change in society. In other words, the aim is to provide the reasons that justify the need for a change in certain important aspects of society, and more precisely, those aspects that relate with class struggle, decolonization, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Women's Movement. (Van Dijk 1993)

In order to summarize, I would like to report the citation that became the most popular among CDA researchers:

CDA sees discourse – language use in speech and writing – as a form of 'social practice'. Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s), which frame it. The discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them. That is, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned – it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it. Since discourse is so socially consequential, it gives rise to important issues of power. Discursive practices may have major ideological effects – that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they represent things and position people. (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997: 258)

Chapter 2

Language, Gender, and Ethnicity: Some Aspects Concerning the American Society

2.1 Abstract

The aim of this chapter is to describe both historically and theoretically the two main CDA approaches of interest for this study: the language and gender approach and the language and ethnicity approach. Through the explanation of these approaches I will provide the fundamentals for the analysis of the discourse of the two movies, *Summer of Sam* and *Far From Heaven*, in the following chapter.

2.2 The Language and Gender Approach

When, in 1973, Robin Lakoff, now Professor of Linguistics at the University of California, Berkeley, published an article entitled 'Language and Women's Place', reactions were numerous and contrasting.

Some found the entire topic ridiculous, defining it as another manifestation of paranoid feminism, and many scholars argued that her claims were lacking of empirical fundamentals³. Others, mostly women, gave enthusiastic attention to her study, leading to the creation of the so called **language and gender approach** in CDA.

Lakoff claimed that the use of language is fundamental in determining gender inequality and it could contribute to the lack of women's power in two ways: the language used by women themselves and the language used to talk about women.

According to Lakoff, some features of women's language give the impression of a certain weakness and a lack of self-confidence. Some of these features are listed below:

1. Hedging: uncertainty and lack of authority e.g. 'sort of'
2. Super polite forms: 'If you don't mind, please may you...'

³ 'The data on which I am basing my claims have been gathered mainly by introspection: I have examined my own speech and that of my acquaintances, and have used my own intuitions in analyzing it. I have also made use of the media: in some ways, the speech heard, e.g., in commercials or situation comedies on television mirrors the speech of the television-watching community' cit. Lakoff, *Language in Society*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Apr., 1973, pp. 46.

3. Hypercorrect grammar and pronunciation: e.g. women avoid *'ain't'* or double negatives
4. Use of tag questions, which show that women seek for approval: e.g. *'I'm coming with you, all right?'*
5. Exaggerated intonation or stress for emphasis (this strategy is also known as *'speaking in italics'*)
6. Empty adjectives. Lakoff claims that if a man used these adjectives he would appear more feminine, and this could damage his masculine prestige, e.g. *'divine, lovely, adorable, delightful and sweetie'*
7. Use of implication. Lakoff stated women use this because they do not feel the authority to give orders e.g. *'it's cold in here, isn't it?'* instead of *'close the window'*
8. Special lexicon. Such words show that women have been allowed control only over unimportant things, e.g. colors' names: *beige, ecru, aquamarine, lavender* (absent from the vocabulary of most men)
9. Question intonation in declarative statements. Women raise the pitch of their voice at the end of statements expressing uncertainty e.g. *'Dinner's in half an hour?'*
10. *Wh-* imperatives. Asking questions instead of ordering, once again, shows uncertainty and seek for approval: *'Why don't you open the door?'*
11. Sense of humour lacking. Lakoff argued that women don't joke as much or understand jokes.
12. Speak less frequently, proving a lack of certainty
13. Indirect orders *'Wow, I'm so thirsty'* instead of asking for a drink.
14. Apologies to introduce their point of view *'I'm sorry, but I think that...'*
15. Use of intensive *'so'*
16. Ask more questions than men

Lakoff argued that women's way of speaking not only reflects a subordinate position in society, but also produces it, disqualifying them from positions of power and authority. She explains that language in this way is a form of oppression, as it is imposed on women since they are children by societal norms, in the form of expectation, in order to teach them how to be as much feminine as possible and to keep them in their place, otherwise, they run the risk of being rejected by society: *'If she*

refuses to talk like a lady, she is ridiculed and subjected to criticism as unfeminine; if she does learn, she is ridiculed as unable to think clearly, unable to take part in a serious discussion: in some sense, as less than fully human.(...) The ultimate effect of these discrepancies is that women are systematically denied access to power, on the grounds that they are not capable of holding it as demonstrated by their linguistic behavior along with other aspects of their behavior; and the irony here is that women are made to feel that they deserve such treatment, because of inadequacies in their own intelligence and/or education.’ And further in the text: ‘As children, women are encouraged to be ‘little ladies’. Little ladies don’t scream as vociferously as little boys, are chastised more severely for throwing tantrums or showing temper: ‘high spirits’ are expected and therefore tolerated in little boys; docility and resignation are the corresponding traits expected of little girls’ (Lakoff, 1973, pp.48 and pp. 51).

According to Lakoff, the way in which a woman expresses her thoughts and, consequently, her thoughts in general are considered ‘trivial’ because of the linguistic devices she adopts. This view is accepted by both men and women: this is the modality in which a woman is ‘kept in her place’ from the dominant male group.

In reference to CDA’s aim, I stated before that CDA’s aim is to explore the ideological dimension of language in use, analyzing the ways in which discourse reflects, constructs and interprets social reality. This relates perfectly with the second key-factor, suggested by Lakoff, which reflects a subordinated position of woman in society: how is language used to represent women?

Lakoff provided many examples about the English lexicon that reflect the social asymmetry of male and female interactions and express how some words have a negative connotation when referring to a woman, assuming *a special meaning that, by implication rather than outright assertion, is derogatory to women as a group.* (Lakoff, 1973, pp57)

The pair **master/mistress** analyzed by Lakoff is a good example of a meaning shift process. If back in time these two terms were simple male/female equivalents referred to a person that exercises power over another in a master-servant relationship, as a consequence of social changes (slavery doesn’t exist anymore, at least in our western society), these nouns came to acquire new and different meanings, related metaphorically to some extent to their original ones, but divergent in their semantic

association. The noun 'master', nowadays, refers to a man who has acquired perfect ability in a given professional field, normally non-sexual: its metaphorical meaning has shifted from having power over someone, to having power over something. On the other hand, in considering the feminine noun 'mistress', we see how the metaphorical meaning has shifted in a different way: the power of the mistress is still over someone, but in a sexual sense. Lakoff stressed a particular feature inherent to the context and the semantic associations of 'mistress': if 'master' requires as its object only the name of an activity, 'mistress' requires a masculine noun in the possessive to precede it. In other words, being a mistress implies that she must be someone's mistress.

Lakoff provided further arguments on the relationship between men and women: first, she argued that men are defined in terms of their actions in society, while women are defined in terms of the men with whom they are associated.

Another glaring example of this negative connotation of female nouns in opposition to their male equivalent could be the pair **bachelor/spinster**. Lakoff showed how these two terms are denotatively the same (meaning: 'not married person') but differ in their connotation: 'bachelor' seems to be more of a neutral term, often used as a compliment, while 'spinster' normally is used pejoratively: a woman who is a spinster is no more young enough to find a man who would marry her. 'Bachelor' in its metaphorical connotation generally suggests sexual freedom.

Studies carried out also using corpus linguistics have been very useful in order to understand more deeply the real conceived perception of 'men' and 'women'. The usage of these two terms in English examined under the light of corpus linguistics, provides an empirical basis to Lakoff's claims. A study published in 2007 by Antonio Pinna, Professor of English Linguistics at the University of Sassari, aimed to find out which attitudes and practices can be revealed by the analysis of the linguistic contexts of use of these words in representative corpora, and, by looking at their collocates, we can discover the ways in which men and women are represented in society.

A first research on the terms 'man' and 'woman', based on the corpus 'Collins COBUILD English Collocations on CD-ROM' (containing collocates of the 10,000 most frequent words in the Bank of English in 1995) was directed to the analysis of their collocates: the most frequent evaluative adjectives were 'good' for man and 'beautiful' for woman. This is a clear reference to the stereotypes embedded in society:

as they are evaluated on the basis of their physical appearance⁴, women are viewed as objects of male desire; while men, in contrast, are evaluated on the basis of their social roles as productive and efficient members of the community.

Another result showed that the main categories in which these two words appeared to be grouped were:

- Power and misconduct: *man* seems to be more associated with power in physical and socio-economic terms (in this case the most frequent collocates are evaluative adjectives: *strong, big; macho; rich*); and with illegal activities (*rape, kill, attack; knife, gun; arrest, charge*). *Woman* as recipient of violent actions or as deficient in authority (*vulnerable, defenseless, frail, terrified*).
- Social categories: framed in reference to adjectives denoting women according to their marital and reproductive status (*married, single, divorced; infertile, childless; pregnant*); nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class (*Italian, Welsh, Muslim, middle-class*); profession (marked or unmarked: *doctor, teacher, etc.*)

Considering this analysis framework, Lakoff's assertions about the terms 'spinster' and 'bachelor' are confirmed but also expanded by Pinna's study of the instances of their usage. Through an investigation of the word 'bachelor' in the BNC corpus (containing 100+ million words of British English, collected between the 1980s and 1993), it emerged that this word collocates most frequently with: *days, life, living, party, status*, as well as with *elderly, lonely, old*. This results are quite interesting because in Lakoff's claims there is no reference to a negative semantic prosody of 'bachelor'. We have a dualistic picture of this status: a young bachelor reflects that positive aspect connected to a happy existence. This is true as long as bachelorhood is a short term situation and, in fact, when it becomes a long-term state, then it is viewed as more problematic and linked with poverty, old age, loneliness. What is implicated in both views of 'spinster' and 'bachelor' is a 'social rule': according to society, at some

⁴ From the analysis of the concordance lines chosen by A. Pinna (in appendix), moreover, it emerges, from the presence of the contrasting 'but' following the node word, that a positive evaluation is often contrasted with a negative evaluation concerning a social behavior of the beautiful woman, revealing the stereotype of a woman that's beautiful but could be dangerous, tempting, cold, etc.

point in life, one has to get married, otherwise the risk is to be somehow rejected by the community.

As already stated, Lakoff's article became the source for much research and debate, which also covered the two key parts of Lakoff's claim: the first one, that women and men talk differently, and the second one, that differences in women's and men's speech are the result of (and support) male dominance. Later, from these two claims researchers developed the two main branches of the language and gender approach: the **difference approach** and the **dominance approach**.

One of the major contributors to the difference approach has been Deborah Tannen. In her most popular study *You Just Don't Understand*. (1990), she argued that boys and girls live in different subcultures, and for this reason, when they grow up, difference shows up in the way in which women speak a language of connection and intimacy, while men speak a language of status and independence. This model has also been called dual-culture model (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992): for many scholars the most interesting thing has been that cross-sex communication problems are the result of an inadequate knowledge of the 'other' subculture, and that people seem to ignore the possibilities of interaction, and act as passive sponges soaking up gendered identities (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992).

The claims in Tannen's model are represented in a series of generalized contrasts:

- **Status versus support**

Men grow up in a world in which conversation is competitive – they seek to gain status and independence, preventing others from dominating them. For women, instead, talking is more often a way to gain support for their ideas looking for closeness from other people.

- **Independence versus intimacy**

Women in the seeking of closeness and support struggle to preserve intimacy. Men, concerned with status, tend to focus more on independence. These traits can lead women and men to have different views of the same situation.

- **Advice versus understanding**

Deborah Tannen claims that, to many men a complaint is a challenge to find a solution, while men are focused on what they can do, women are simply looking for sympathy.

- **Information versus feelings**

Historically, men's concerns about mere facts or information were seen as more important than those of women with feelings and emotions. Actually, nowadays this situation seems to be reversed so that the giving of information and brevity of speech are considered of less value than sharing of emotions and elaboration: probably because of all the supersensitive claims of women about their feelings being considered trivial? From the viewpoint of the language student there should be no difference in the importance of such dichotomy.

- **Orders versus proposals**

Women often suggest that people do things in indirect ways (same as Lakoff's claims) – '*let's*', '*why don't we?*' or '*wouldn't it be nice, if we...?*' In such cases, men may be more likely to use, and probably would prefer to hear, a direct imperative.

- **Conflict versus compromise**

To understand this contrast we can easily take into consideration those situations, for example in work-contexts, where a decision is not considerate appropriate or unattractive: men will often resist it vocally, while women may appear to accept it, and complain later.

As for the dominance approach, scholars generally argued that differences between women's and men's way of speaking emerge because of male dominance over women and continue in order to keep women subordinated to men. The first studies which could be framed in this view were made by **Don Zimmerman and Candace West** at the Santa Barbara campus of the University of California, in 1975. They based their theory on the assumption that interruption is a strategy for emphasizing conversational dominance and that conversational dominance in turn-taking and turn's duration supports global dominance (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003). According to these theory, in mixed-sex conversations men are more likely to interrupt than women. The subjects of the recording were white, middle class and under 35. Zimmerman and West recorded 31 segments of conversation, in everyday contexts, where '*everyday chit-chat conversation takes place*' (Zimmerman and West, 1975, pp 111). They report that in 11 conversations between men and women, men used 46 interruptions, while women only two. From their small sample Zimmerman and West conclude that, since men interrupt more often they are dominating or attempting to do so. Zimmerman and West (1975), on the basis of the communicative strategies witnessed in their transcripts,

men ‘*deny equal status to women as conversational partners*’, and state that in the same way in which male dominance is exhibited through male control of *macro-institutions* in society, it is also exhibited through male control of at least a part of *micro-institutions*. (Zimmerman and West, 1975, pp. 125).

From my personal experience, collected during my almost 4-month stay in Australia, I can say that Lakoff’s theory actually is not applicable to today’s society. People, in fact, are different as a result of their experiences, provenience, age, and income, and they speak in a dissimilar way in relation to these factors. There is no linguistic structure in English that only women use more often, yet there are certain features which allow speakers to appear less assertive and to be lacking of confidence (or, at least, certainty). This last consideration applies both to male and female speakers, and it also depends on the context and the situation in which speech is produced. It must be clear, anyway, that language is always accompanied by other meaningful aspects of interactions: facial expressions, dress, location, physical contact, and so on which must be taken into consideration to better understand the real intentions of the speaker.

Lakoff develops the logical thread of her article concentrating on the powerlessness of women. I believe that language can contribute to domination and subordination in society in those contexts where we allow it to happen, and in this respect, I would like to argue that it is not women’s language to be powerless *tout court*, but powerlessness may be associated to anyone’s language, because the features associated almost exclusively to women’s language use were later proved to be also used by powerless men.

I would also like to claim that opinions other people have concerning us (as women or men) is our exclusive responsibility, as it is the interlocutor’s own responsibility anything they understand and deduce from the words we speak and our gestures (at least to the extent that our intentions are clear to the interlocutor).

The line of research upon which these theories were constructed suggests that our speech is the result of our (very early) experience in society, and that our will to introduce our ‘image’ to society, as well as the way we decide to keep this image or change it in any way possible, are the result of our speech and attitudes towards society.

2.3 *The Language and Ethnicity Approach*

As for the language and ethnicity approach, I would like to begin by saying that the problems that minority groups face are practically the same of the ‘women group’ of the previous section about the language and gender approach. The general rule we are trying to highlight in this study is that minority groups in general in society have to deal with a series of disempowering strategies enacted by the majority group, and what is on focus in this paper is the way in which these strategies are enacted linguistically, analyzing them according to CDA’s principles.

It is important, by the way, to introduce the topic by attempting a definition of the word ‘ethnic’. Etymologically, ‘ethnic’ comes from the Greek ‘*ethnos*’: a community with a common history, cultural tradition and language. However, defining ‘ethnicity’ is far from easy and univocal. We can start by saying that each of us has cultural, historical and linguistic associations that define our ethnic identity. Many labels can derive from our identity in others’ perceptions. This characteristic can be related to a ‘multilayered’ meaning of the concept (there are also mixed-race individuals). Some scholars differentiate the concept of *ethnicity* from the concept of *race*, defining the latter on the basis of biological differences (skin color, hair, eye shape, and other physical attributes).

However, it could be useful to provide a dictionary definition of ‘ethnic’. The Oxford Dictionary states as follows:

‘ADJECTIVE

1: Relating to a population subgroup (within a larger or dominant national or cultural group) with a common national or cultural tradition:

ethnic and cultural rights and traditions

leaders of ethnic communities

Relating to national and cultural origins:

pupils from a wide variety of ethnic origins

1.2: Denoting origin by birth or descent rather than by present nationality:

ethnic Indian populations

1.3: Characteristic of or belonging to a non-Western cultural tradition:

ethnic jewellery

folk and ethnic music

2: archaic: Neither Christian nor Jewish; pagan or heathen.’

In light of this definition, we understand that ‘ethnicity’ is a concept which cannot be explained without putting it in relation with the dichotomy between the concepts of majority/minority, or in any case with a dominant group. This helps to explain how ‘ethnic’ denotes something that is perceived as racially and/or culturally different from what is mainstream in a ‘dominant’ society. The socio-cultural dominant group⁵ establishes its ideologies, or assumptions, beliefs and value systems as norms which everyone should share as common sense (Linda Thomas, Shân Wareing, Ishtla Singh, Jean Stilwell Peccei, Joanna Thornborrow and Jason Jones, 2004). Minority groups, according to such discourses, are represented as outsiders to the norm from the point of view of those who profess to be the representative of the majority group. What happens as a consequence of labeling on the basis of ethnic belonging or identity is the creation of stereotypes and of an ideological opposition between ‘us’ and ‘them’: the ethnic minority groups are portrayed as a dangerous ‘them’ who threaten the comfort and safety of the majority group, ‘us’.

I am sure that what follows sounds familiar to many of us, nowadays: the strategy aiming to create the threat to *us* is constructed by representing the immigrants like people who steal *our* job, and take away the benefits of *our* taxes and *our* wages. Moreover, chronicle facts that have happened since 9/11 have intensified the ‘fear’ of the other: the ethnic ‘other’ (and the associated problem of immigration) seems to have merged with fears about terrorism (Linda Thomas, Shân Wareing, Ishtla Singh, Jean Stilwell Peccei, Joanna Thornborrow and Jason Jones, 2004).

It is needless to say that all these factors contribute in creating discrimination. The way in which this discrimination is created linguistically is signaled by a terminology which clearly indicates the ‘otherness’ of the addressed group (or single person) characterized by negative labeling of ethnicity which contributes not only to create ethnic prejudice, but also, as a consequence, to disempower ethnic minorities.

Van Dijk (1991), in a study of the British right-wing and popular press, stated that the reporting of crime becomes ‘*over-ethnicised*’, but the reporting of stories

⁵ The meaning of ‘ethnic majority’ does not necessarily refer to a more numerous group: the ethnic majority is such as long as it has the economic and somehow political power in a particular social group. For example, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, the colonization of the West Indian Islands by many European powerful countries, meant the deportation of African slaves to the sugar plantations these powers set up: this numerically larger group of slaves was, socially and politically, an ethnic minority (Linda Thomas, Shân Wareing, Ishtla Singh, Jean Stilwell Peccei, Joanna Thornborrow and Jason Jones, 2004)

considered positive are *'de-ethnicised'*, as we can see from the following excerpt of a letter to the press:

Can you explain why black Englishmen and women who win Olympic medals or excel at games are described as 'English' while those who riot and throw petrol bombs are almost inevitably 'West Indian'? (reproduced in Van Dijk 1991: 212)

However, the retrieval of many abusive or derogatory labels is a way in which ethnic minorities affirm and highlight their ethnic individuality through language use. The use of language, in this concern, is the most powerful way to remark a difference between ethnic majorities and minorities, applied by both of them in order to maintain evident a particular ethnic sense of belonging and identity. In a general view, this will of 'steering clear' from one another by the two groups, is, in my opinion, a way of affirming their powers, articulating, on the side of the minority, a richness in culture and traditions; and on the side of the majority, the aim to keep distant from the minority expressing the economic and social power by the use of the standard variety of the language.

All these statements translate in a positive self-presentation and a negative other-presentation, which signals group membership. One of the main characteristics related the strategy of the positive self-presentation is the **denial of racism**: negative talk about minority groups through a strict denial or mitigation of possible racist affirmations, in a sort of justification, hedging, which all can be collected under the umbrella of the strategy of face-keeping. Van Dijk in his essay published in 1999 entitled *'Discourse and the Denial of Racism'*, explains that denial emerges because the producer of the discourse is *well aware of the fact that they might be understood as breaking the social norm of tolerance or acceptance* (Van Dijk, 1999, pp. 542), expressing the aim of defending his/her society from being accused of racism. This face-keeping strategy is enacted mainly by white speakers and writers: usually they claim that they did not say anything negative, or accuse a misunderstanding of their intentions by the side of the listeners or readers. Sometimes they mitigate negative connotations conveyed in their discourse by using euphemisms, implications or vague allusions. Again, they could, on the one hand, make apparent concessions, and on the other hand, support their negative connotations by presenting supporting 'facts', stories, and/or arguments. Another strategy they enact is the counter-attack against the accuser of racism: the ones who

level the accusations are the real problem as well as racist, intolerant, and against their own people, victim of immigration and the real discriminated ones. Through a negative presentation of the dominated group (the 'other'), the dominant group seek to reproduce the dominance relations. However, Van Dijk noted that there is a contradiction between these strategies and the democratic and humanitarian norms produced by the same dominant group. The dominant group must protect itself against the possible charges of racism, by actually being or becoming anti-racist accepting minorities and considering them as equals, or by denying racism. He concluded that the white dominant groups in North America and Europe actually chose the latter option. (Van Dijk 1999)

In order to explain how ethnic identity is expressed linguistically by ethnic minorities, and to stay in line with the logical thread of the study presented in this paper (analyzing the discourse in the movies *Summer of Sam* and *Far From Heaven*) it could be useful to exemplify some characteristics of African-American Vernacular English (AAVE), also known as Black Vernacular English, or Ebonics, which has other connotations⁶. This is a variety (dialect, ethnolect or sociolect) of American English, used today by the working-class and by the middle-class African Americans.

First of all, it is extremely important to notice that there are many sub-varieties of AAVE, and in this paper the characteristics which will be listed will only be the core features. The list below is based on Carmen Fought's study of 2006, republished in 2008, entitled 'Language and Ethnicity' (which include some of the features studied in Rickford and Rickford (2000:109ff.)⁷). Morphological and syntactic features of AAVE include:

Existential it: instead of *there is*: as in *It's some*

coffee in the kitchen. Often, *it's* is pronounced as *i's*.

Absence of plural -s marking: For example, *four girl*. Not a very common feature overall.

⁶ The word 'Ebonics', not used by linguists, was originally intended in reference to the language of all people descended from enslaved Black Africans. This term was coined by the African-American social psychologist Robert Williams in 1973, in order to avoid other negative connotations such the one of the term 'Non-Standard Negro English'. The original meaning of 'Ebonics' was built up on the fusion of the words 'ebony' (black) and 'phonics' (sound), to identify the linguistic and paralinguistic features of the language spoken by Black people in America. (from the article 'American Varieties:African American English Ebony + Phonics' see reference in webliography)

⁷ Bibliographic reference: Rickford; John Russell and Russell John Rickford, 2000. Spoken Soul: The Story of Black English. New York: Wiley

Absence of possessive -s marking: For example, *at my mama house*.

This feature is more frequent

Absence of third person singular -s marking: For example, *It seem like...* or *She have three kids*. This feature is very frequent

Zero copula (either is or are): For example, *She ϕ in the same grade*.

The first person singular copula (I am) cannot be deleted

Invariant (or habitual) be: As in *Your phone bill be high*, meaning “Your phone bill is usually or often high.” Most frequent with -ing forms as in *He be getting on my nerves*.

Unstressed been: Similar to *have been* or *has been* in other dialects, as in *I been playing cards since I was four*.

Stressed (remote-past or emphatic) BEEN: Indicates an action that has been true for a long time or is emphatically true. For example, *She BEEN tell me that*, meaning “She told me that a long time ago.”

Completive done: an aspect marker signaling completion, as in *I done already finished that*.

Future perfect be done: For example: *I be done did your hair before you know it*, meaning “I will have finished doing your hair before you know it.”

Use of ain't for negation: For example, *I ain't lyin'*. This form is of course extremely common in dialects other than AAVE, as a variant for forms of *isn't* or *hasn't*. The usage that is more unique to AAVE is its alternation with *didn't*, as in *He ain't go no further than third or fourth grade*.

Negative concord: For example, *I don't want nothing nobody can't enjoy*.

Again, this feature (also known as ‘multiple negation’) is common to other dialects as well.

Negative inversion: as in *Can't nobody beat them*.

Preterite had: Use of *had* + *past tense verb* to refer to a simple past event, as in *I had slipped and fell* to mean “I slipped and fell.”

Steady: Used to emphasize the intense or persistent nature of an action, as in *Them students be steady trying to make a buck*.

Come: Used to express indignation, as in *Don't come acting like you don't know what happened.*

Finna: Used to mark an action that is about to take place, as in *I'm finna get up out of here*, meaning "I'm about to leave."

As for the phonological differences between AAVE and other varieties are not notably greater than the phonological differences among regional varieties. In this paper I decided to report some of the main and more noticeable features, collecting them from Carmen Fought (2006):

Metathesis: *ask* pronounced as *aks*

Vocalization or loss of postvocalic /r/: *four* pronounced [fou] or [foə] (like fo'); can also occur with intervocalic /r/ in words like *hurry*

Reduction of final nasal to vowel nasalization: *man* pronounced [mæ̃]

Final stop devoicing: so that *bad* sounds like *bat*

Substitution of /k/ for /t/ in *str* clusters: so *street* sounds like *skreet*

Loss of single final consonants: *five* pronounced [fa:], like fi'

Loss of /r/ after consonants: *throw* pronounced [θou] (like th'ow), *professor* pronounced (like p'ofessor)

Stopping of interdental fricatives: *those* pronounced [douz], *with* pronounced like *wit*. When occurring in the beginning of a word, the th- sound is pronounced as a d-sound. For example: this, they, that: *dis*, *dey*, *dat*. Within a word, -th (unvoiced) is frequently pronounced as an f sound. For example: nothing, author: *nuffin*, *ahfuh*. The voiced -th may be voiced as a v sound. For example: brother: *bruvah*

Consonant clusters at the end of words: When two consonants appear together at the end of a word, speakers of AAVE often drop one of them - they are reduced.

In AAVE, this reduction is systematic. It occurs according to two major rules:

1. If the word following the consonant cluster starts with a consonant, it is more likely to reduce than if the next word starts with a vowel.

example: West Side: *wes side*, vs. West End

2. A final -t or -d is less likely to be deleted if it is part of a past-tense marker -ed.

The sense of belonging to a particular ethnicity, and in this particular case to the

African American community, is expressed not only linguistically through the previously listed features, but also paralinguistically through pragmatics, which is one of the most emphatic aspects of AAVE speakers. For example, the particular intonation patterns, typical gestures, combined with the grammatical and phonetic features mentioned earlier and the women's lexicon (collaborative discourse modes to the use of "culturally toned" diminutives such as 'girl.')(Troutman, 2001, cited in Fought, 2006) variations, contribute to give AAVE a rhythm of its own.

Chapter 3

Analysis and Considerations on the Movies

3.1 Abstract

This chapter presents the analysis of the discourse in the movies ‘Summer of Sam’ and ‘Far From Heaven’. After a synopsis of the plot for each movie, I will go through the study of the discourse, providing a description of the main characters and utterances through the most representative extracts of the dialogues. We will see how relations of power and dominance are enacted and perceived in society, following the two main approaches followed for the study of the dialogues: the language and gender approach, and the language and ethnicity approach.

3.2 *Summer of Sam*

3.2.1 *Movie Data Sheet*

Directed by	Spike Lee	
Produced by	Jon Spike Lee	Kilik
Written by	Victor Michael Spike Lee	Colicchio Imperioli
Starring	John Adrien Mira Jennifer Anthony LaPaglia	Leguizamo Brody Sorvino Esposito
Music by	Terence Blanchard	
Cinematography	Ellen Kuras	

Edited by	Barry Alexander Brown	
Production company	Touchstone	Pictures
	40 Acres and a Mule Filmworks	
Distributed by	Buena Vista Pictures	
Release dates	July 2, 1999	
Running time	142 minutes ^[1]	
Country	United States	
Language	English	
	Italian	
Budget	\$22 million	
Box office	\$19,288,130	

3.2.2 Synopsis

The movie begins with the writer Jimmy Breslin (as himself) introducing the story by telling the viewer about New York's current economic prosperity (*business is booming up and crime is down*). Showing the viewers news articles from 1977 about the .44 Caliber Killer, he presents this as one of the 8 million stories in the 'naked city'.

The framing shifts on a filthy apartment with a man freaking out and screaming to a dog to stop barking. Later, he goes out and shoots at two girls talking in a parked car. In the meanwhile Vinny (John Leguizamo) and his wife Dionna (Mira Sorvino) go to a night club for dancing and having some drinks with their friends. Dionna's Italian cousin asks to be taken home and Vinny offers to give her a ride, allowing Dionna to stay at the club. We soon understand the reason why he offered to take her home: having sex with her in the back seat of his car. Before he can finish, the two are scared off by another couple in the car behind them. As soon as Vinny and Dionna's cousin go away, the .44 Caliber killer kills the couple.

While driving home, Dionna kisses Vinny and notices a strange taste on his lips and she begins questioning what took Vinny so long, but before she can question him further, they arrive at a crime scene, which was the exact same spot where Vinny was having his affair. Vinny decides to go and see what happened, and realizes it is the same couple that scared him off. Vinny gets back to his car and starts vomiting because of the shock, then tells Dionna that the .44 Caliber Killer is back. The next day Vinny's friends, Joey T, Brian, and Anthony start joking about the fact that probably the killer saw Vinny and will come after him, especially if the killer knows Vinny saw him. Soon after, Ritchie (Adrien Brody) shows up in a punk outfit, for which everybody is surprised and mocks him for his new British accent. Ruby (Jennifer Esposito) is the last to arrive and after being dumped by her boyfriend, she immediately shows some interest in Ritchie and his new style.

At Dionna's father's restaurant, the local mob boss Luigi (Ben Gazzara) is asked for help by one of the detectives (Anthony La Paglia) on the .44 Caliber Killer case. Luigi initially refuses, but after hearing the letter left by the .44 Caliber Killer, now called the Son of Sam, agrees. Meanwhile, as Ruby discusses her current difficulties with Vinny at the salon, where he works as a hairdresser, Ritchie comes in asking for money because he has been forced to move into his garage after he walked in on his mother and stepfather (Eddie Sabatini) approaching for sex. Ruby convinces Ritchie to move into the garage and offers her help for fixing it up and decorating it. That night as Ritchie and Ruby finish decorating the garage, Ruby approaches Ritchie for sex but he stops her. As she shows that she is going to leave, he explains that just because he does not want to have sex with her, he does not want her to leave.

The framing shifts to the salon, where, again, Vinny is cheating on Dionna with his boss Gloria (Bebe Neuwirth). After showing some resentment on him cheating on Dionna, Gloria complains, and he quickly gets over it and sleeps with her. As the Son of Sam killings continue, tension rises in the neighborhood, and Ritchie is suspected of being the serial killer. (from Bobby the Fairy scene 42.00-50.00 catcalling Dionna)

Ritchie takes Ruby to a gay theatre where he works as a dancer (and prostitute). Outside the theatre, Ruby admits that she has fallen for Ritchie and begins dressing in punk.

Vinny's paranoia is at limit, and although Dionna tries to comfort him, he is unable to make love with her. As we see from a TV interview (where Spike Lee appears as a journalist) at Luigi's, the police is having too many difficulties in identifying and

arresting the Son of Sam, and Luigi decides to take action by himself offering another \$5,000 to the reward hoping at least to get more names on their list of suspects.

Vinny and Dionna are still facing problems in their intimate relationship, and in the meantime, at a pizzeria, Joey T, Anthony, Brian, and Woodstock are devising their own list which includes primarily only people they don't like. At the top of their list there is Ritchie.

We are now shown a quite violent scene: another killing of the Son of Sam, after finally killing the barking dog, mixed with one where Ritchie is playing his guitar while performing at the gay theatre. News on TV are talking about the killer's new strike, and Woodstock gets high on heroin, Vinny prays and Joey T and the others destroy their suspects' cars in the neighborhood.

While at a diner, Vinny and Ritchie discuss their relationships but are asked by the owner to leave as Ritchie is scaring the customers (1.11.00). Before a fight can break out, they leave. While at the beach, Ritchie tries to establish communication with Vinny in order to explain his views on society and justify his lifestyle, but Vinny just does not understand.

Ritchie, Vinny, Dionna, and Ruby are having dinner and Ritchie invites them to come see him and his band perform at the club CBGB. While in the bathroom, Dionna asks Ruby for advice on what to do about Vinny because she is afraid he doesn't like her anymore. The only (and in my opinion, very eloquent) advice Ruby can give is to not be married to him.

Vinny and Dionna go to the CBGB, but are scared off by all the punk people outside. So instead, they try to get into Studio 54, but the bouncer refuses to let them in. They are however greeted by another man who takes them to another club: Plato's Retreat. There, the two of them participate in a orgy. On the way home, Vinny verbally attacks Dionna, already embarrassed and humiliated, and he insults her because of his jealousy. They fight, and Dionna reveals that she knew he had sex with her cousin, she gets out of the car, he begs her to get into it and, as she does, she takes the driver seat and then drives off, leaving Vinny to run home.

A flashback takes the viewers to the point where it all began: on the TV the news explains that on the July 29th, 1977 the Son of Sam killed Donna Lauria on Burke Avenue in the Bronx, and, in a letter to Jimmy Breslin, he promised he would have been

back on the same day, after a year, to strike again, so police is urging people to stay at home and be safe.

Joey T and the others begin slashing the car tires of everyone on their list, while we see the real Son of Sam having a vision of a black dog telling him to go out and kill. Meanwhile Bobby the Fairy, a gay friend of Joey T's group, sees Ritchie in the gay theatre where Ritchie threatens to kill him if he told anyone. Although Ritchie is only trying to protect his name, Bobby takes this literally. That night, we see the Son of Sam killing two other victims in Brooklyn.

Bobby the Fairy tells Joey T and the others about what happened at the gay theatre, and their suspicion on Ritchie being the Son of Sam is all the more strong. They all reveal to Vinny that Ritchie has been dancing and shooting porn films with Ruby at the gay theatre and ask if he knew that. Although Vinny is shocked, he still refuses to accept that Ritchie is the Son of Sam, but reluctantly agrees to help Joey T and the others by telling them where Ritchie and his band perform. Joey T and Anthony go to CBGB to try and find Ritchie, but, before Ritchie arrives at the club, he meets Vinny outside. Vinny begins asking Ritchie if he is involved in some strange activities or if he is gay, and if he is the Son of Sam. Ritchie is upset for what Vinny has thought of him, and what is more, he is also angered that he brought Joey T down to get him, so he and Ruby walk off.

The following day, a composite sketch of the killer is released on the newspapers. Joey T, not surprisingly, while drawing spiky hair on the sketch tries to convince Vinny that it looks just like Ritchie: Vinny is now convinced that Ritchie is the .44 Caliber Killer, he freaks out and when he goes to the salon (drunk, and high on drugs), he screams to Gloria and dumps his drink on her, storming off. When he arrives at home, Gloria has already called Dionna and told her about all the women he cheated on her with. Vinny attempts to apologize and tries to explain that Ritchie may be the killer, but Dionna does not want to hear his reasons anymore and leaves him.

Joey T and the others decide to take action against Ritchie and take him to Luigi. Anyway, before they go, Joey T and the others decide to go at Vinny's. They violently convince Vinny to go and lure Ritchie out of the garage, with the promise not to hurt him.

In the meanwhile, without Joey T and the other knowing it, the police have captured David Berkowitz, the real Son of Sam. However, Vinny knocks on Ritchie's garage door and, with the excuse of wanting to talk to him because Dionna left him,

Vinny asks him to come outside, not wanting Ruby to hear. As the two talk, Vinny tries to tell Ritchie to run, but before he can understand what Vinny is saying, Joey T and the others spring on him. Vinny watches as Ritchie uses his guitar to defend himself, but is quickly beaten senseless by the group. Ruby is restrained by Bobby the Fairy as they kick Ritchie. However, Ritchie's stepfather, Eddie (Mike Starr), comes out of the house with a pistol, shooting to the sky. As Joey T tries to explain who Ritchie is, Eddie reveals to them that the cops had already caught the Son of Sam in Yonkers, much to the group's surprise.

Jimmy Breslin is now explaining the events of the summer of 1977: David Berkowitz was trapped by an eyewitness who saw a parking ticket under his windshield as he sped away on July 1, 1977, when he shot his last two victims. He finishes by repeating that there are 8 million stories in the 'naked city', and this was one of them.

3.2.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

The interactions between male and female characters which will be taken into account for the analysis of this movie will be those between the major characters: Vinny and Dionna, Ruby and Ritchie. In these interactions we will first identify the differences between the two main characters of the male group, and the two main characters of the female group.

This extract of dialogue is taken from the scene where Dionna and Vinny are in the car on the way back home from the club, right after Vinny has cheated on her with her Italian cousin:

Dionna: You danced so great tonight, baby.

Vinny: Ah, 'cause you're beautiful, that's why.

V: Ah, *don't stop*. It feels so good.

D: *What... What took you so long?*

V: I just stopped to take a leak.

I drank too much tonight, you know?

D: *Where? At the house?*

V: *Come on! What, are you writin' a book*

or somethin'?

D: *No, I'm just asking.*

V: *Yeah. Yeah, you're asking. Sure.*

D: *I just asked* you what took you so long.

V: I know, *sweetie pie.*

You danced beautifully tonight, too,
you know? It was a lot of fun.

The first thing we notice in this conversation is that the interaction is based on Dionna's suspicion of her husband cheating on her. While caressing his head, she kisses him but, since she notices a strange taste, she stops caressing him. At this point, he orders 'Ah, don't stop. It feels so good'. Dionna, attempts to hide her suspicion by asking: 'What...what took you so long?' showing uncertainty with the repetition at the beginning of the question. The conversation continues with Vinny using the excuse he had to stop to urinate (*take a leak*) because he had drank too much. Dionna expects her husband to answer if he stopped and cheated on her with her cousin. Vinny's explanation leads Dionna to ask him where he stopped, and she uses one of the strategies indicated by Lakoff in her article 'Language and Women's Place': the implication. He obviously deviates the conversation trying to minimize the problem, answering in a scornful way that she is actually making up a story where there is nothing of the sort. By introducing his answer with 'come on', moreover, he is also stating indirectly that he understood her real intention, and wants her to stop investigating. Dionna does not directly ask what she really wants to know, and she 'agrees' to his avoidance by stating that she was just asking. At this point we see how Vinny makes her intentions look trivial and stupid, when he says 'Yeah. Yeah, you're asking. Sure', letting her understand he knows that she is being jealous. Of course, he does not reassure her by saying he did not do anything wrong: instead, he agrees to her answer in order to cut the discourse, calling her 'sweetie pie' (a metaphor of the WOMEN ARE SWEETS type, where Dionna is reduced to the status of an object of male consumption) and saying that she danced beautifully. Once again, he is not only deviating the conversation, but he is also underestimating her intelligence, trying to keep her calm using the strategy of saying something nice about her and their evening.

This conversation reproduces one of the main strategies through which men keep women at a subordinate level by making them seem unnecessarily suspicious, as we see

especially in the interaction described above. Women, in turn, adhere to this strategy because, as Lakoff pointed out, they are convinced they deserve this lower position in society.

We see another similar interaction between Vinny and Dionna, when Vinny, devoured by his frustration, sense of guilt and fear, goes at Dionna's father's restaurant, where she works as a waitress, interrupts her work, in order to tell her as follows:

V: Dionna? Dionna, ***I gotta talk to you.*** → 'gotta' (= *have got to*) is a deontic semi-modal verb, i.e. marker of obligation. Though the obligation is formally on the speaker, Vinny is indirectly ordering Dionna to stop working and talk to him for a while: at the moment, nothing is more important of what he is going to tell her, not even her job.

D: Vinny, what are you doing here?

V: ***I just gotta talk to you for a minute, okay?*** → while 'just' is aimed at cancelling any other possible implications that his words might have by asking D. to focus on what was uttered, 'okay' intensifies the illocutionary force of the utterance (i.e. the order given to D.) as it is a marker typically used to ascertain whether an addressee with an inferior status has understood what was said. In this sense, D.'s status is being reduced to that of someone whose grasp of English is limited, for ex. a child or a foreigner

D: ***Now? Honey, we're in trouble. We got Luigi here and we're not ready.*** → Implication. Dionna does not want to say 'I can't leave my job at the moment because everything concerned with it (Luigi's waiting for his dinner, for example) is more important than you'.

V: ***Just sit down with me here.*** → imperative

D: ***Vinny! What's wrong with you?*** → speaking in italics

V: ***I need to talk to you, please.*** → another indirect imperative hedged by the politeness particle 'please' and by the presentation of the order as a personal need

And listen to me for once, OK? → Vinny uses tag questions in every interaction. This shows his lack of certainty reflected in a continuous seek for confirmation, expressing his weak and frustrated personality throughout the entire movie. However, with Dionna, the interaction is starting with a series of

hedged imperatives and continues with polite requests implying his personal need: Could you? Could you do that for me?

D: All right.

V: All right?

What I saw last night...made me think about a lot of things, OK?

It opened up my eyes really wide to everything.

And those murders made me realize...

...how much I love you. I love you, Dionna.

And I swear to God... I swear, I promise...

I promise you and God that I'm gonna be the best husband...

...that you ever had in your entire life.

If I had eight tongues, it wouldn't be enough to tell you how much I love you. → *Vinny tries to persuade Dionna using the legitimation strategy, elaborating a series of reasons that are setting the foundation for his following apologies: he legitimates by swearing to God and explaining that the murders made him realize how much he loves her*

D: OK. ***You swear to God?*** → *she wants Vinny to repeat his legitimation*

V: I swear to God, I swear to God, I love you.

D: OK. *(they kiss passionately)*

V: ***I'm so sorry about everything.*** → *apologies (!)*

I love you so dearly.

D: ***Baby, um... I'm in the middle of work. I... I...***

Dad's in trouble and I gotta get stuff out. → *still, Dionna hesitates about telling the truth to Vinny: what it is more important at the moment is helping her father in serving Luigi. She is unable to tell Vinny that she cannot stay so long sitting there with him*

V: ***Make up an excuse and let's go somewhere.*** → *imperatives*

D: ***Baby, I can't.*** → *Dionna hedges her refusal introducing it by addressing to Vinny with 'baby'.*

V: I'll take you to dinner.

D: ***Why don't you stay here?*** → *Lakoff's Wh- imperative: women don't feel powerful enough to be able to use imperatives with others*

I'll make you something really nice.

I'll be back in 20 minutes.

Sit down. → *direct imperative*

I'll get you a glass of wine...

A glass of wine!

We also have an example of the completely inverse phenomenon. This is represented in the scene following the participation of Vinny and Dionna to an orgy. Driving on the way back home they talk and soon fight about it. Here we see a violent awakening of Dionna, in an ascendant tone she first starts the conversation by asking if orgies were another 'shortcut' of Vinny. He doesn't answer and then explodes asking with a direct question 'Did that guy fuck you better than me?'. She is already embarrassed and avoids the argument signaling with 'I don't wanna talk about that'. Vinny repeats his question and she tries to justify her actions by saying that she did it for him, and that she was too drugged, again hiding her frustration for thinking that she is not sexually appealing to him anymore. He insults her, and at this point we see her exploding: she uses bad language for the first time against his husband and throws at him all of her frustration:

D: Is this another one of your shortcuts?

So what, you're not gonna talk?

The whole way home?

Come on, Vinny. Tell me something.

What do you think?

V: Did that guy fuck you better than me?

D: I'm embarrassed.

I don't wanna talk about that.

V: Fuckin' embarrassed?

Did he fuck you better than me?

D: I did it for you.

V: You did it for me.

Oh, that's nice. You did it for me.

Did you like it for me?

Did you fuckin' come for me, huh?

Was that for me?

D: That was the pills. That was the coke.

V: Don't blame the pills,
you fuckin' lesbian whore.
Don't fuckin' do that shit.

At this point in the conversation we find the violent awakening of Dionna: completely breaking the cultural rule of the submissive, obedient, and passive wife, she inveighs against her husband by calling him a 'whore', not only in reference to what had just happened, but also in reference to the past cheatings on her, which soon in this extract she will confess she is aware of.

D: You were there, too.
You're a fuckin' whore.

V: ***I can't be a whore cos I'm a man, OK?***

You're the fuckin' whore,

you stupid lesbian fuckin' whore! → here we see how the female role in society is (through Vinny's eloquent sentence) the only one that can be associated to this word: a man is never subordinate enough to be called a whore, a woman is. In this case, since the previous scene represented Dionna in a threesome with a man and a woman, is not simply a whore but a **STUPID LESBIAN FUCKING WHORE**. 'Stupid' because she was supposed to know that only a woman can be a whore, 'lesbian' because of the threesome, and finally 'whore' because he dared cheating on him for once (as opposed to his multiple infidelities).

D: You're a faggot fuckin' hairdresser. (slaps him on his face) → since he cannot be a lesbian whore, than Dionna calls him a faggot, which is an offensive word for gay. 'Faggot hairdresser' is to be intended here as a stereotype of the homosexual male hairdresser.

V: Get the fuck out of the car.

D: You get the fuck out.

V: I said get out!

D: There's a psycho killer out there!

V: I hope he fuckin' kills you.

Get the fuck out of my car!

D: It is my car! I will not get out!

You get the fuck out!

V: I don't give a shit!

Get the fuck out!

D: I will not get out of the car.

V: Get out!

D: You get out of my car! Get out now!

V: Fuckin' piece of shit.

Fuckin' make me sick, you fuckin' slut.

D: I am a slut? You're calling me a slut?

You lowlife piece of shit!

You fucked my cousin!

You didn't think I knew about that.

I smelled her pussy juice all over your fuckin' face!

You fuckin' sick bastard! How dare you?

All this time I'm thinking

there's something wrong with me.

You perverted sick fuck! → *Dionna explodes and clearly expresses her thoughts without hedgings or tag questions, as opposed to her previous interventions in other conversations*

V: *Come on, Dionna, please.*

I'm sorry. Get in the fuckin' car. → *at this point Vinny tries to convince Dionna to stop fighting, and attempts to adjust the situation by saying he is sorry. He also uses hedges like 'come on' and politeness forms like 'please'. What follows is an imperative form to order Dionna to get back in the car.*

D: No.

V: Come on. Get in the car.

Come on. Let's go.

D: Fuck you.

V: Come on. Get in the car. Please, baby.

D: Don't you dare "baby" me! I'm gonna wait here
until somebody comes along.

I gonna wait until some *soul brother* → *epithet used to refer to black men (as opposed to 'soul sister')*

comes in his big black Cadillac.

And you know and I know → reference to Vinny's jealousy

he's got a big black dick, too. → stereotypes about black men

V: *Don't talk like that. Get in the car.* → two imperatives. The first one is a prohibition: in reference to a woman's attitude, the way she is talking is not appropriate, and the second one is an order

D: Oh, fuck you.

V: Please, please,

don't make me have to beg you.

Don't make me have to hurt you. → implicates a threat

D: Hurt me?! Don't you dare lay a pinky on me!

I'll get him to kick your ass,

then I'll fuck him!

You wanna watch, Vinny?

Will that turn you on? → Dionna, proposing him to watch, is implying here that she thinks her husband is a pervert since normality does not turn him on anymore.

You *linguine* dick motherfucker! → epithet for a member of the Italian American community

You wanna watch while I suck a big

black dick in a big black Cadillac?

V: Shut the fuck up!

D: You shut the fuck up.

V: Get the fuck inside the car now!

D: Hello! Anybody out there?

V: Shut the fuck up and get in the car.

D: Any black dick out there?

It better be big cos

there's *some free pussy!* → she is implying that now she is single

V: *I don't get hard any more*

because you don't turn me on any more. → clear statement: he finally opens up about the problem they're facing

D: You're a fuckin' pervert.

V: Get in. I'm sick of this.

I'll take you to your father's,

then I don't want to see you.

All right. You wanna drive?

Drive me over there, you fuckin' *dyke!* → *another word for 'lesbian'*

D: Faggot fuckin' hairdresser!

I hope he kills you! I hope you die here!

V: Dionna! Dionna, come back here.

Dionna, come back!

Don't fuckin' leave me *here!* → *in front of a graveyard a man should not be afraid, not even at night...this expresses the weakness of Vinny as a man.*

D: I hope he fuckin' kills you,

you fuckin' faggot *pansy!* → another word for 'homosexual'

V: Stop that fuckin' car! Come back!

D: Fuck you!

V: Dionna, come on! Come back!

D: Stick it up your fuckin' ass!

V: Dionna, don't fuckin' leave me here!

Dionna!

Another interesting conversation is that between Ritchie, Joey T, Brian and Anthony, where we see an only-male interaction, completely opposite to the previous one. Ritchie, in his new punk outfit and 'attitude' has just come back from England, and he shows up to his friends right in the moment when Brian is kicking Woodstock for offering some half-dead and broken lobsters to Joey T:

Ritchie: You ain't Bruce Lee.

Stop kicking Woodstock.

Anthony: Is that Ritchie?

Ritchie: Yeah.

Anthony: What the hell happened to you?

Look at this freak.

Joey T: Nice outfit. Where'd you get it, off the dead?

Brian: Hey I thought vampires only came out at night.

R: Yeah, 'cept on leap year.

What's happening, guys?

J: Don't give us that 'what's happening guys' bullshit.

You come back to the neighborhood lookin' like a freak,
soundin' like a British fag...

...we're supposed to be OK with that?

R: You're fuckin' right.

How's your wife and kid, JT?

J: I got divorced.

Moved back in with my mother.

(...Woodstock intervenes trying to sell half-dead lobsters)

R: Woodstock, I need some smoke. (Woodstock is going away and doesn't answer)

J: I'm handling that now. What do you want? I got nickels.⁸

R: Right. I'll take two then.

B: Hey, Ritchie, you heard about the killer?

R: Yeah, yeah, I heard.

What's up, Vin? Not gonna say hello?

Vinny: Hello.

Where the fuck were you last night, huh?

R: You drove past me outside the club.

V: Can you do me a favor and drop this stupid
accent and talk to me for real, huh?

R: All right.

V: Why didn't you come in, you could have said hello,
we could have talked or somethin'?

R: I wasn't really dressed for disco dancing.

A: I wasn't really dressed for disco dancing!

Look at this jerk-off! He was dressed
for Halloween, this fuckin' goblin.

(overlapping - Vinny: Leave him alone, alright?)

B: Hey, porcupine...

Vinny saw the dead bodies last night.

R: You saw the bodies?

V: Yeah, I saw the bodies.

⁸ Nickel: 1) A bag of weed that is .5 of a gram. It can go for about \$10, no more than that. (from Urban Dictionary, see reference in bibliography)

I was on my way home. But I didn't see him, alright?
see no fuckin' killer, you numbnuts!
So don't fuckin' spread that word around.

This is an example of a typical only-men interaction for this movie.

The first thing we notice is the bad language, expressing violence, which we mostly see in Anthony's and Brian's gestures. When Ritchie arrives, instead of greeting his old friends, he defends Woodstock that is being kicked by Brian. His gestures express a cocky behavior, so his intervention must be interpreted as a way of greeting his old friends. They 'welcome' him commenting negatively his new punk style, his British accent, and his spiky hairstyle (later calling him *porcupine*): 'Anthony: *What the hell happened to you? Look at this freak!*'. Mockery is the keyword in male interaction. Actually, they do not hide their refusal for his new style, as they directly express their disapproval both by jokes, e.g. 'Joey T: *Nice outfit. Where'd you get it, off the dead?*' (probably because of the skeleton in his necklace), 'Brian: *Hey I thought vampires only came out at night.*', and both as mockery and insults, e.g. 'Anthony: (mocking) *I wasn't dressed for dancing! Look at this jerk-off! He was dressed for Halloween, this fuckin' goblin.*' As we see, at first Ritchie accepts the mockery, for example answering to Brian that vampires do go out only at night, except for leap year, but after a while he stops smiling and does not answer any more to Anthony's jokes. Actually, Anthony and Brian are openly hostile to Ritchie, as we understand later in the movie.

As opposed to typical women interaction, men do not show their feelings when asked intimate questions, as we see here: 'Ritchie: *How's your wife and kid, JT?*' – 'Joey T: *I got divorced. Moved back in with my mother.*' The conversation soon interrupts and shifts on something more important to Ritchie who wants to buy some weed: Woodstock, who before Ritchie's departure was the neighborhood drug dealer, is going away. So, without showing any particular interest on Joey T's situation at home, Ritchie interrupts the conversation to call Woodstock, but since the dealer now is Joey T, he buys a nickel from him. We understand from this interaction that men are not really interested in personal problems.

However, the most important thing which emerges from this interaction is the hierarchical organization of the group: Joey T is the most dominant figure to which Anthony and Brian 'obey'. Vinny, which is afraid that the .44 Caliber Killer might have

seen him the night before, is the weakest figure of the hierarchy, while Ritchie is the outsider. Woodstock doesn't count at all in this group.

From the interaction between Vinny and Ritchie, we understand that they are closer friends in respect to the other three interlocutors:

R: *What's up, Vin? Not gonna say hello?* → *expecting Vinny to greet but also noticing something is not alright with him*

Vinny: Hello.

Where the fuck were you last night, huh? → *this indirect question signals suspicion*

R: You drove past me outside the club.

V: Can you do me a favor and drop this stupid accent and talk to me for real, huh?

R: *All right.* → *with a hinted smile to show acceptance of the fact that everybody, Vinny included, hates his new British accent*

V: *Why didn't you come in, you could have said hello,*

we could have talked or somethin' → *This question seems to express a certain resentment for the fact that Ritchie, having seen Vinny driving past him outside the club, did not say hello or talk to him. Another interpretation might be that Vinny is indirectly questioning Ritchie about his moves the night before.*

R: I wasn't really dressed for disco dancing.

A: I wasn't really dressed for disco dancing!

Look at this jerk-off! He was dressed for Halloween, this fuckin' goblin.

(overlapping - Vinny: *Leave him alone, alright?*) → *In spite of everything, Vinny defends his friend from the violent attitudes of Anthony*

B: Hey, porcupine...

Vinny saw the dead bodies last night.

R: *You saw the bodies?* → *this question is not just a seek for confirmation, but is indirectly asking for a further explanation from Vinny*

V: Yeah, I saw the bodies.

I was on my way home. *But I didn't see him, alright? see no fuckin' killer, you numbnuts!*

So don't fuckin' spread that word around. → Vinny with this statements is filling multiple purposes: first, he is answering to Brian's previous provocations about the possibility for the killer to be aware of the fact that probably Vinny saw him; secondly, he is ordering not to spread the word (because actually he is afraid that the killer might have seen him); lastly, he is providing further information to Ritchie.

At this point it could be useful to analyze another interaction: the one between Dionna and Ruby. Dionna would like to have some advice, she is afraid Vinny doesn't like her anymore.

Dionna: *You and Ritchie*

seem really happy together. → she observes that the couple seem happy in order to introduce her problems with her husband, in contraposition

Ruby: Yep, we are. Just try and enjoy it

while it lasts. You know what I mean?

D: I guess that's a good philosophy

as long as you're not married. → here the reference to her problem is clear

Listen, um...

I know that you've been
with Vinny before.

I mean, it's not a secret or anything. → hedging her intromission in Ruby's past

R: That was a long time ago.

A long time ago, before you two got
together, let alone got married, *all right?* → tag question. Ruby is supposing Dionna is jealous

D: *No, no, no, no. I know that. I know that.*

I'm not...I'm not accusing you of anything. → Dionna corrects Ruby's thoughts

R: *Then what do you want?* → direct question (!)

D: All I... wanted to say was that...

...since you've been with him...

...maybe you could tell me what he likes. → indirect question hidden in an uncertain statement about Ruby's ability of telling her what Vinny likes. Dionna is looking for some information about her husband in order to please him

R: You're serious?

D: Yeah.

If I knew, I wouldn't be asking.

I mean... **Look.** → to introduce her arguments and justifications she seeks for Ruby's approval

You think this is easy for me? → she is attempting a justification which legitimizes her questions about Ruby's past with Vinny

Talking to you about Vinny, **you know...** → tag question

...my husband's sexual likes and dislikes.

R: **And so you ask me, cos I should know.** → Ruby explains Dionna's real intentions

D: No... → it should be 'yes'

You guys looked happy when you were goin' out.

And you're so sexy and confident and everything.

Listen. I mean... → again, she is continuously reformulating her arguments in order to explain the reason why she wants that kind of information and to avoid possible misunderstandings with Ruby

...sometimes I-I think that, um...

...that, **you know**, he's cheating on me.

Anyway, **you know**, I wa... I wanna please him... → tag questions

...but I, I don't think that I do.

You have any advice? Anything? → she finally directly asks what she really wants

R: **Look**, Dionna. → same strategy as Dionna's

You are... very pretty, **OK?**

You're sexy. **I happen to know** that Vinny loves you very much. → this introduction for the following statement implies another meaning: Ruby is practically saying that probably Dionna doesn't expect her to know that Vinny loves her

D: I know he loves me but, um...

...I think I disappoint him.

R: *So what do you want me to do?*

Do you want me to tell you

how to fuck your husband? → Ruby's assertiveness is reflected in a hedged way by imposing what she understood from the conversation in the form of a question, in order to look for a confirmation from Dionna

Yeah, fine. I'll tell ya.

First...

...you can't be his wife.

That's number one. Too late for that. → Ruby is implying that Dionna is already his wife, so she will not be able to please him in a sexual way anymore

Although this movie is the only one by Spike Lee which is not about the black community, we see some aspects of it in the scene where the black journalist John Jeffries (Spike Lee himself) goes in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn to interview the black community and see their 'darker perspective':

Woman 1: I'm just hoping that they get him quick.

I don't care. → 'I don't' care about the rest'

John Jeffries: Thank you.

W1: Thank you.

Man 1: It's terrible. Bad for Brooklyn...

...bad for New York, bad for America

and bad for the world. → stressed sentence (low pitch voice)

JJ: Thank you, sir.

Your view.

Man 2: Let me tell you. → *typical of AAVE to introduce an argument*

Son of Sam knows better than to

come into *Bed-Stuy* with that crap.

Cos we don't care. He's not that crazy. → *legitimation through inclusion in the black community group*

I would love to beat him down right now.

He would wish he was dead. I'd just

love to catch him right here in *Bed-Stuy*.

JJ: Thank you.

Woman 2: **Exactly. Hello.**

My name is Cassandra Buchanan.

I live there at 85 Crown Street.. → politely provides her personal information, in order to appear as much sincere as possible about what she thinks and is going to state, in a challenging tone

...and I am going to give you

your darker perspective. → the challenge to the white community is encoded in this comparative grade adjective

The darker perspective is: → she structures her discourse and speaks very slowly in order to be as clear as possible

...I thank God, I thank God, I thank God... → repetition: in order to be clear and to express her happiness for the killer not being a black man.

...that it is a white man

that kills all of those white people.

Because if it were a black man...

...who kills all of those white people... → correct grammar typical of women speech (black women as well)

...there would be the biggest race riot...

...right here in New York City. → clearly states the darker perspective in the racist sense

And I'd like to say one thing. → this is a signal that she politely shifts to another argument

I am surprised that you are in the black community. → implication: she means that because he works for the white community he should not be in the black community

I didn't think you liked black people. → denunciation tone which confirms her implication

JJ: **John Jeffries here...**

...in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section

of Brooklyn, New York. → he interrupts the conversation without signaling it to the interviewed

Lastly, we observe how the homosexual aspect is represented in two ways. Ritchie works at a gay theater and is a gay prostitute. In his case, we are not shown any verbal interaction between Ritchie and his customers: the only thing we see are glances of understanding and silent approaches. The only exemplification is personified by Bobby the Fairy, who is always targeted by the neighborhood, and violently mocked by Brian and the others. At first, after joking with Brian and sexually advancing him, we see Brian putting the cigarette out on his hand, in this interesting dialogue:

Anthony: It said in the Post

the killer's a **woman hater**. → *typical stereotype for the gay community*

That's you, Bobby. You could be the killer.

Joey T: .44 Calibre queer.

Anthony: A real **homo-cidal** maniac.

Brian: Guilty! Put him through the **penal** system. → *Brian's and Anthony's jokes are always pun-upon-words with a sexual background*

Bobby: **Only if I can have you as my cellmate**. (slowly caressing Brian's shoulder and showing his tongue) → *implication*

Brian: How 'bout that, you motherfucker?

Bobby: You asshole! You fucking asshole!

I hate you! → *as if his feelings to a real man were important: Bobby the Fairy uses exaggerated women's language to seek for approval by other members of the male community*

Joey T: **Don't burn him! He's a paying customer!** → *he doesn't really want to defend Bobby the Fairy because it is not right to hurt people in general, but because he is a paying customer!*

Later we see Ritchie kicking him at the gay theater because he is afraid he could tell someone in the neighborhood (and that is what he does actually) about his secret job (performing as dancer and shooting porn films with Ruby). All of these reactions are always originated by Bobby's extremely gay attitude, which in the '70 was totally a taboo, much more than it is nowadays. His way of talking (*Hello, Ritchie. Mr Macho Man, tough Bronx boy. What are you doing here?*) exaggerates women's speaking features, his gestures and his way of dressing as well. He is not properly a transvestite, but he reproduces all the stereotypical gay features (as we can understand by the epithet

‘the Fairy’ which is eloquent about his attitudes and others’ attitudes in his regards as well).

For a general discussion on the discourse in this movie, as the focus of the whole movie is mostly on the ‘perfect’ couple Vinny and Dionna, we trace some general traits of their interaction, according to the literature on language and gender. In the interaction between Dionna and Ruby in the lady’s room, we are able to see the main differences between the two main women of the movie. Apart from the differences in their appearance (Ruby has abandoned her disco style and is now a punk girl, because now she is Ritchie’s girlfriend, while Dionna is more simple and elegant), we find the major ones in their attitude towards one another and towards other people in general.

Dionna never uses bad language, instead, she uses indirect questions and implications. She represents the stereotypical passive woman that does not feel powerful enough and is afraid of the consequences that expressing her real thoughts may have. Tag questions are her way of seeking for others’ approval, comprehension and closeness. This passiveness and acceptance of her inferiority, by the way, totally disappears when she decides not to be manipulated by Vinny anymore. We are shown a more violent Dionna, using bad language and rough expressions against her husband. She decides to get down at her husband’s level, probably in order to show him that she is not as weak as him, and as soon as she explodes, Vinny steps back and attempts to re-establish a connection.

On her side and particularly in this case, Ruby, who is considered the ‘neighborhood skunk⁹’, with her assertiveness is able to understand what Dionna is actually asking to her and in a more direct way, also throughout the use of bad language, she makes her go straight to the point. In Ruby’s turns, tag questions (but not hedgings) have the purpose to seek for Dionna’s understanding of her intention to explain clearly what she means, putting her in a subordinate level (similarly to what a man would do), and in order not to hurt her feelings too much. More precisely, we see this at the moment when, during their conversation in the lady’s room, Ruby states that, although Dionna is beautiful and Vinny loves her very much, she must not be his wife to please him sexually. This is a very common strategy in women-only interactions: the

⁹ Skunk: Skunk is a word more commonly used to describe females of the human race. Mainly females that are on the sluttier side. (Urban Dictionary: <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=skunk&page=2>)

first part, safely exposed as a compliment (as if it were the good face of the coin), is aimed at hedging the second part, which expresses the sad reality of the situation (the other, bad face of the coin).

Vinny, in general, as we already stated, is the weakest loop in the neighborhood. Although he seems to be protected by Joey T, who represents the strongest figure of the dead end road's male hierarchy where they use to spend their days, he reproduces his weakness not only when Joey T and the others joke about the fact that the killer might have seen him, or when they convince him about Ritchie being the killer, but also when he interacts with Dionna. At first he manipulates her with sweet words, and, as long as she agrees to his manipulation, she is the only one with whom he can prove his strength. However, when Dionna decides to stop being manipulated, he reacts begging her not to leave him and attempts to convince her that everything he did was justifiable because of his frustration about Ritchie suspected of being the killer, and he promises that he won't cheat on her anymore. Here again, we see another more direct Dionna using bad language, and directly exposing her thoughts (no implications, no hedgings, and so on). Vinny, in turn, tries to legitimate morally his intentions (transcendentally) by saying:

*I know you can't
get away with shit in life any more. (→ since she left him?)
You know, God sees everything,
plain and simple.*

and implying that she cannot live without him, and she needs him to 'get away with shit'.

3.3 *Far From Heaven*

3.3.1 *Movie Data Sheet*

Directed by	Todd Haynes
Produced by	Jody Allen
	Christine Vachon

Written by	Todd Haynes		
Starring	Julianne Moore		
	Dennis Quaid		
	Dennis Haysbert		
	Patricia Clarkson		
	Viola Davis		
	James Rebhorn		
Music by	Elmer Bernstein		
Cinematography	Edward Lachman		
Edited by	James Lyons		
Production company	Consolidated Film Industries		
	TF1 Cinema		
	Section Eight		
	Vulcan Productions		
Distributed by	Focus Features		
Release dates	November 22, 2002		
Running time	107 minutes[1]		
Country	United States		
Language	English		
Budget	\$13.5 million[2]		
Box office	\$29 million[2]		

3.3.2 Synopsis

This film is about a typical 1950s middle class family, set in the suburbs of Connecticut: the beautiful and absolutely perfect wife Cathy, with her handsome husband Frank, a successful executive at Magnatech, a company selling television advertising, their two children, Janice and David, and Sybil, Whitaker's black maid.

We are shown the first problem when, one evening, Cathy receives a phone call from the local police who are holding Frank. On the phone he says that it's all a mix up and they won't let him leave alone, so she has to go and take him.

The morning after, while the children are catching the bus, Frank is heading out to work, and everybody is in a rush, Mrs Leacock arrives to interview Cathy, who as a reader of the magazine *Weekly Gazette*, is the embodiment of the perfect mother, housewife and wife to the successful executive at Magnatech, and, in fact they are known as Mr and Mrs Magnatech. During the interview, she notices a shadow in her yard: she walks outside, quite scared, to find Raymond, the son of their previous gardener, Otis, who passed away, as he explains to Cathy. She apologises for having been suspicious at first and talked to him in a 'rude' manner. This is the moment when they first meet in the movie, and begin their friendship.

In the meanwhile, Mr Whitaker, who has been exploring gay bars for a while, is often late at work. One evening, Cathy decides to bring him dinner at work, but she finds a terrible surprise: her husband is kissing a man in his office. She runs away and goes back home. He soon reaches her at home and vaguely explains that a long time before he had 'problems', so at the end of their discussion they decide it is better to go and see a specialist for conversation therapy. However, at this point, their relationship is strained and Frank becomes an alcoholic.

During a local art show, Cathy unexpectedly meets Raymond, and they start a discussion about modern painting, giving the other attenders reasons to start a gossip about them.

The problems between Cathy and Frank worsen when, after an evening party, he attempts to make sex with Cathy, but cannot. As soon as she tries to console him, he strikes her, forcing her to hid the wound with her hair.

The day after, her best friend Eleanor notices her wound, and consequently she realizes that Cathy is facing marital problems. As soon as Eleanor leaves, Cathy goes out in the garden and explodes crying. Raymond sees her and, after politely asking her

if he could do something for her, he tries to cheer her up by inviting her to take some fresh air in order to take her mind off things. At first, she politely refuses, but after a while she changes her mind and spends the day out with Raymond. They go to a bar in the black neighborhood, and obviously, she is the only white person. They are seen together by one of the most gossipy of Cathy's neighbors, who immediately spreads the rumor. Everybody in town starts to avoid her, for example at a ballet performance of her daughter the mothers of the other girls do not want their daughters to socialize with hers. Frank finds out about her friendship with Raymond and gets furious. Cathy at this point decides to give an appointment to Raymond to tell him that their friendship isn't 'plausible', and goes away after telling him he is beautiful.

Cathy and Frank for Christmas holidays go on vacation. The situation between the two seems to be healing, but at the hotel, Frank has another sexual encounter with a young man.

Back in Hartford, three white boys assault a black girl, in order to teach her a lesson, as David says. One evening, Frank comes back from work and starts to cry. He confesses to Cathy that he has found a man who loves him and wants to be with him, and for this reason, on Cathy's deduction, he wants a divorce. After some weeks, Sybil confesses that the little colored girl who got hit was Raymond's daughter, Sarah. Cathy drives to the Deagan's and Raymond tells her that they are packing up and moving to Baltimore, since colored people are throwing stones at their window every night. At one point when she informs him that she is to be single again, he addresses her as 'Mrs. Whitaker', she begs him to call her Cathy. She suggests indirectly that since there nobody would know them, they could be together, but Raymond refuses, explaining his refusal using this sentence: 'I've learned my lesson about mixing in other worlds'. After some adjustments with her divorce from Frank, ultimately, Cathy goes to the train station to say goodbye to Raymond: without words they look at each other and slowly wave at each other as the train leaves.

3.3.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

Cathy and Frank are the typical flawless affluent American couple of the 50s. Cathy is the stereotypical middle class woman, polite, always well dressed and

impeccable in everything she does, living a wealthy life with her handsome husband Frank, a successful executive at Magnatech, and their two beautiful children. They embody the perfect middle class family of the 1950s' American society, at least outwardly.

The whole story is based on the mainstream values of that society, which works as the engine of its characters' actions. These values are represented through the characters: homosexuality, first of all, is (as always) the biggest taboo, and is never indexed in conversation, i.e. language is not a means to construct and convey the characters' homosexual orientation. As a matter of fact, we do not see any important verbal interaction between Frank and other homosexuals, except from the one he listens to while going out from a cinema, between two men, in order to understand where the gay bar is.

Man 1: ***I thought you really enjoyed the scene in the gentlemen's lounge.*** (they laugh) → *implication as joke. What we understand from this implication is the possible reason why he might have liked that scene: they are gay, and this utterance has the aim to establish a closer contact.*

Man 1: How about a drink?

Man 2: Sure.

Man 1: ***I know just the spot.*** → *from this sentence Frank understands that he has to follow them in order to meet some other homosexuals. The 'just' implicates that he knows the best places for them*

Moreover, according to the society's values represented in this movie, having any type of contact or relationship with colored people is quite as much despicable as being homosexual. The clearest example of this is the way in which Cathy's friendship with Raymond, the black gardener, is regarded by her neighborhood: for a middle-class white woman with an affluent position in society it is not 'plausible' to be friends with a colored man.

The role she is expected to play is that of a mother and wife, a personification of American middle class healthy values, as we see from the interview at the beginning of the film, with Mrs. Leacock:

Sybil: Mrs. Whitaker, this is Mrs. Leacock. She said she had an appointment with you this morning. → *Sybil, even though she uses correct grammar and is very polite, her intonation is plain.*

Cathy: **Oh, jiminy, I completely forgot the time. Please forgive me.** → 'jiminy': exclamation of surprise, 1803, colloquial form of Gemini, a disguised oath, perhaps *Jesu Domine "Jesus Lord."*¹⁰ In this sentence we see Cathy's first social 'mistake': she is always perfect, but this time she forgot the time of her appointment (probably because the night before her husband had been at the local police station), and had to make Mrs. Leacock wait for some minute. For this reason she begs her pardon.

Mrs. Leacock: I do apologize, Mrs. Whitaker, but **candid views** are always the best. → *this statement has a double meaning: 'candid' means sincere, spontaneous; 'view' can be intended both as 'snapshot' (since Mrs. Leacock photographer took a picture of Cathy and Frank kissing goodbye before Frank went to work), and both as 'point of view', in reference to the sincerity with which Cathy expresses her apologies and explains the reasons for not being properly ready for the interview.*

Frank: Good-bye, darling.

C: Good-bye, dear.

F: Mrs. Leacock.

Mrs. L: Pleasure, Mr. Whitaker.

Your husband's a very **charming** man, Mrs. Whitaker. → special lexicon typical of women speech

C: Thank you. We're **rather fond of him** ourselves. → *The implication of this utterance is represented by the impossibility of expressing deep feelings in public: it is not proper and educated for a classy woman's attitude: Cathy has to 'dose' her words and feelings. Another signal is the fact that, even though Mrs. Leacock is addressing only Cathy, she answers using the first person plural, taking the distances from Mrs. Leacock compliment..*

Now, **please, won't you come in?** → 'now' signals that she wants to quit that topic in order to start the interview which is referred to with the indirect imperative that performs a polite invitation

Make yourselves at home. → direct imperative as politeness form

¹⁰ From the Online Etymology Dictionary: <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=jiminy>

I suppose I still can't imagine why you would want an interview with someone like me in the first place. → showing humility is one of the major characteristics in women's language: their lack of power does not allow them to see the reasons why someone could consider them important, and in Cathy's case, she does not feel much different or better than other women as mother, wife and housewife.

Mrs. L: Readers of the Weekly Gazette, Mrs. Whitaker, **women just like yourself with families and homes to keep up.** → she wants to highlight that she wants to interview a woman just like her: she can set a good example for other women.

A good society paper need not be a gossip rag. → in contraposition to classic gossip magazines ('rags' = pejorative), Mrs. Leacock is implying that her purpose is to speak about real and healthy values, interviewing someone who could set a good example

You are the proud wife of a successful sales executive-planning the parties, and posing at her husband's side on the advertisements. → her husband is successful and she is proud of him: women's lack of power is expressed in Cathy's possibility to just feel proud for her husband's success, plan parties for him and his company, and pose at his side on the advertisements. That was the highest aspiration a woman was supposed to have in 50's society.

To everyone here in Connecticut, you are Mr. and Mrs. Magnatech.

C: Thank you. ***I'm very flattered.***

But, really, my life is like any other wife or mother's.

In fact, I don't think I've, I've ever wanted anything... → although she expresses herself with uncertainty by the hedging 'I don't think', she compares herself humbly to any other woman: she feels equal to other women, as we understand from the interrupted sentence that could be interpreted as if she never wanted anything more than what she has. Only being her husband's first supporter can be her higher ambition as woman.

At this point the conversation interrupts: Cathy sees a black man in the yard, and walks outside to ask, politely, if she can 'help' him, but as he steps towards her, she steps back and suspiciously asks 'who are you?'. He introduces himself: Raymond Deagan (Dennis Haysbert), son of their usual gardener, who has died. Cathy, who has a

good heart, at first apologies for talking to him in that way, and then instinctively reaches out to touch Raymond on the shoulder in sympathy, and inside the house the gesture is noted by Mrs. Leacock, who includes it in Cathy's description defining her as a 'friend to Negroes.' The following conversation is an extract of the dialogue between Cathy and Raymond:

C: Excuse me. **May I help you?**

Who are you? → these two questions imply 'what are you doing in my yard?', however we notice that the first one is a politeness form to ask if the addressee is looking for something in particular in order to help them, but since is followed by the question 'who are you' we understand that the whole utterance is an implication aimed at knowing if the addressee is doing something that could endanger her safety

R: I'm sorry, ma'am. My name is Raymond Deagan
Otis Deagan's son.

I was just taking over some of his... → Raymond receives the real intention of her previous utterance, and, after answering to the actual question 'who are you?', he also answers to the hidden question 'what are you doing in my yard?'...

C: **Oh, you're Otis's son.** →... *but Cathy, who suddenly understands that he is not someone that could hurt her, interrupts him and steps back to her previous implicating question 'who are you', repeating his answer, in order to communicate that now she knows she can feel safe*

R: Yes.

C: **I'm terribly sorry for speaking to you in that manner.** → 'terribly': special lexicon which dramatizes her utterance. Here, what she communicates is an extreme sensitiveness, which could be interpreted in two ways: 1) she feels actually sorry for the way in which she addressed Raymond; 2) she feels sorry for seeming suspicious because he is colored, she did not know him, and he was in her backyard for no apparent reason (which led her to think she could have been in a dangerous situation), and continues by saying '**I didn't know who was in my yard.**'

R: Oh, **no need.** → *implication: he politely accepts her apologies*

C: **How is your father?**

I know he was in the hospital. → as a woman, who typically try to create a close connection with her interlocutor, she asks a personal question about Raymond's father

R: Yes, **well**, my father's passed away,

I'm afraid. → he hedges the news of his father's death (euphemism: he passed away)

C: **Oh... Oh, I-I had no idea.**

I'm, I'm so very sorry.

Please, accept our deepest condolences.

Your father was a wonderful, dedicated man. → after some uncertainty she finds the words to comfort Raymond for his father's death. She perfectly fills the stereotypical role of sensitive woman who empathizes with other's feelings

R: Thank you.

Sybil: Mrs. Whitaker?

The caterer's on the line.

C: Oh, thank you, Sybil.

I beg your pardon. Would you excuse me for just a moment? → super polite form

R: Of course.

For her being so naïve about trusting other people to believe that nothing like an affair exists between them, she is cruelly pointed at by other members of her social group, especially other women. Not even her best friend Eleanor believes in her good intentions:

C: You know **it's funny.** → implication: she does not want to show that she actually expected to find herself thinking back at Raymond, so she introduces this utterance by saying that she finds it funny

E: What's that.

C: This whole time, the only person

I've been able to talk to. About any of this.

Was Raymond Deagan. → pausing so much in order to find the best words to hedge her utterance

E: **What?** (Eleanor looks at Cathy in disbelief.) → *implication: 'are you seriously meaning you actually had some kind of relationship with that colored man?'*

C: It's true. **Well, not in the way**

Mona intended - Nothing like that! → *she is making a clear reference to the gossip that Mona Lauder spread about her and Raymond having an affair, and denies it firmly, but always without clearly mention words like 'sexual affair' or anything similar: it is not appropriate for a woman to even mention sex related details*

We would just talk! → *she feels the need to be more precise in order to exclude any other possibility for Eleanor to think about a possible affair with Raymond*

But... Somehow → *implicates that even though they would just talk, it was something more special than just speaking about everything and anything it made me feel - oh, I don't know.* → *hedging the following utterance*
Alive somewhere.

C: **Oh Eleanor,** → *she wants to catch her attention while she further explains what she actually means*

I know it sounds

ridiculous and mad.. → *imply that she knows that Eleanor will not accept what she is going to say, so she presents her thoughts as 'ridiculous' and 'mad', in order to anticipate Eleanor disapproval: this strategy is aimed at hedging the interlocutor reaction (sort of apology which introduces her thoughts)*

But I do, I think of him. What he's

doing, what he's thinking. **I do** –(Eleanor glances off.) → *she emphasizes her utterance in order to show that, even though it is ridiculous and mad, she wants her friend to accept the fact that she thinks of a colored man (in an innocent way)*

C: E! (Eleanor gets up and starts tending to the tray of empty cups.)

E: **What can I say?** You're so full of

surprises. **I'm speechless.** → *implication: actually, she knows what to say, although she does not want to say clearly what she thinks about this situation in order to not hurt her friend's feelings too much*

C: What do you mean?

E: *Though I'm sure I must have looked
entirely the fool, crusading away
against Mona Lauder and all her so-called
inventions!* → she is blaming herself for defending her ingenuous friend,
while Mona Lauder was right about her, and she expresses her anger talking
about herself, and not about Cathy, which now she sees as the real traitor

C: Eleanor! How can you say such a thing?

E: *I didn't say a word! Who am I to
tell anyone how to lead their lives?* → this question actually states her
lack of power in judging her friend's attitudes, but despite this, she has made her
mind about her

C: But El! Nothing happened between
us! I told you that!

E: Cathy it's none of my business. But
you certainly make it sound as if something had.

In conclusion, I found particularly interesting the way in which interracial love and homosexual love are represented through two different strategies: as for the first type of relationship, between Cathy and Raymond, the perspective that the movie is able to instill is the sad one of a non 'plausible' future. Furthermore, their love is never realized, i.e. we do not see them kissing; they touch three times throughout the whole movie (when Cathy meets Raymond for the first time she touches his shoulder in order to politely comfort him for his father's death, they dance at the black diner, and the second time he touches her shoulder and she touches his hand, when she goes at the Deagans' as soon as she discovered that the little girl who had been kicked was Sarah). In contraposition, homosexual love is perfectly represented as absolute taboo, and it actually was during the 50's (and partly today, too), when people did not even dare to name it. Here is an example, in an extract of conversation between Eleanor, who seems a more direct woman, and Cathy about their participation to an art show:

(...)

E: Though I'm sorry to say Mona Lauder
will be attending. *Turns out* her → *gossip talk*
uncle's in town, some hot-shot artdealer

from New York. **I think** I met → *hedging*

him at one of Mona's soiree's. A

bit **flowery** for my tastes. → *euphemism to say that this man is gay (female indirectness)*

C: How do you mean?

E: Oh, **you know**. → *she is elaborating another clearer explanation*

A touch light on his feet? → *another euphemism with the same purpose*

C: **You mean...** → *she is requiring a further explanation*

E: Yes, darling. **One of those**. → *this is the least indirect way in which Eleanor is able to refer to gay people*

Of course I could be mistaken. Just an

impression I got. → *this implies that the most positive perspective is that she had only had a wrong impression about that man being gay, so, since homosexuality is absolutely negative, she is implying that she hopes for him that he is not gay*

C: You don't care for **them** particularly?

E: Well, no, not particularly. Not that I actually know any. **Call me**

old-fashioned, I just like all the men I'm around to be all men. → *here is a more direct expression of her opinion about gay men, even though she still does not use any other alternative clearer statement such as 'I do not like gay men'*

Say! Why the third degree?

C: It's not the third degree, I'm just interested, that's all. In your views.

However, when Frank falls in love with a young man, the affair is represented as a matter of hotel rooms and furtive appointments. We are not shown any dialogue between him and his lover. In contraposition with Raymond's and Cathy's relationship, however, we can perceive that they sexually realize their love.

The scenes in which Frank's homosexuality is explicitly taken into account are those which take place in the private sphere of the Whitakers. The first time, when he attempts an explanation of his homosexuality to Cathy; a second time, when he decides to see a doctor for conversation therapy; and a third one, when he communicates to Cathy that he has fallen in love with someone and wants the divorce:

1) (Cathy has just saw Frank kissing a man in his office, she runs off and goes home. He reaches her minutes after:)

F: Cathy.

C: **Mr. Maynard Left an estimate for the roof.**

I put it in the kitchen. Twelve hundred something. → she does not even attempt to say something about what she just saw: she deviates, actually expecting him to provide an explanation

F: Cathy.

C: **I can't.** → she expresses her impossibility in facing the problem at the moment

F: **I don't** → he perceives what she is actually requiring, but cannot say anything

C: What?

F: **Eh, you see, uh.** Once, a long time ago,
a long, long time ago, I had, **um,**
um, problems. **I just figured that was... that was it.**
I... I never imagined- →

C: **You had problems?**

F: **Yes.**

C: **You, uh, never spoke to anyone... a doctor?** → they do not even know really how to face this problem. She does not even ask details about the problems he had: this might be a signal of the subordinate position of a woman, who cannot even expect her husband to provide such private explanations. However, she suggests indirectly that he could speak to a doctor, by asking if he ever did before.

F: No.

C: No one? ...I don't understand.

F: Neither do I.

C: What if, I mean, there must be people who...

F: I don't know.

C: Because otherwise, I don't know what I... → this is a hidden request for him to find a solution because she is unable to do it

F: Cathy. All right.

C: **Thank you.** → her subordinate position is expressed through this thanking as if his homosexuality was her problem: actually it is an implication. She is asking him to

find a solution and afterwards, when he understands that she is asking him to see a doctor, he accepts. At this point she feels in the position of thanking him as he accepted her 'hidden' request. This part of the conversation is a signal that somehow, even though from a subordinate position, she has some kind of power of decision in the context of the couple, as we will see in the last extract.

2) (At the doctor:)

Rosalyn: Mr. and Mrs. Whitaker, this is Dr. Bowman.

Dr: Mr. Whitaker, **how do you do?** → *politeness form of greeting from man to man, in contraposition to the compliment the doctor directs to Cathy.*

F: Hello. → *the politeness greeting of the doctor does not need a real answer, since he was not actually asking how Frank was doing.*

Dr: Mrs. Whitaker, how **lovely**. → *a typical adjective used to compliment a woman: this is an expression of the objectification of a woman. They can be complimented for their appearance only.*

C: Thank you. → *women usually agree to this treatment, and Cathy, politely does too.*

Dr: I suppose we may as well get started.

*Actually, uh, Mrs. Whitaker, **I think it might be best** → hedging (super politeness) the following indirect request not to follow them in the room because they need privacy*

if your husband and I conversed in private.

C: **In private**. Yes, of course. → *she repeats in order to let him understand, from her subordinate position, that she totally understand what he is indirectly asking*

Dr.: I think it would be best. → *this form of agreement still hedges his request*

C: Certainly, Doctor.

I'll see you later.

F: I'll see you later, dear.

Dr: Today, the general attitude regarding this sort of behavior is naturally more modern, more scientific than it ever has been before. But for those who do seek treatment,

who possess the will and desire to lead a normal life, → implication of the fact that the 'scant 5 to 30 % rate of success' only works for those who want a complete heterosexual conversion

*there still remains only a scant
five to thirty percent rate of success
for complete heterosexual conversion.*

For many, it's the treatment itself
that often changes the *patient's mind*. → *the doctor's opinion is that
homosexuality is a patient's 'mind'. The treatment is not aimed to 'cure' a
illness, but to change the patient's mind (he is a psychiatrist)*

F: What does it, uh, comprise of?

The treatment. → *he needs to re-elaborate in order to explain that his
question is about the treatment and not the 'patient's mind'*

Dr: The treatment's comprised of psychiatric sessions
twice a week, sometimes more.

F: **Just talking?** → *he also re-elaborates the doctor's answer in order to look
for confirmation. Also, this seek for confirmation expresses a need for a hedging about
the idea of a 'cure': the treatment is comprised of 'just talking'*

Dr: Yes. Though some patients have explored
additional, more behavioural methods.

F: Behavioural?

Dr: Electroshock aversion therapy for instance.

Or hormonal rebalancing procedures.

I know this can all seem rather daunting at first.

I suggest you take some time.

Think over the various options we've discussed.

Discuss it with your wife.

F: **No, I already know.** → *he does not need his wife's opinion to take decisions*

I want to begin treatment.

I can't let this thing destroy my life, my family's life.

I, uh, I-I know it's a sickness, because it makes me feel despicable. →
*here is how Frank sees his homosexuality as a sickness because of the way it
makes him feel. Notice the contraposition between the opinion of the doctor and
his: the doctor, since he knows that the possibilities of being 'converted' are
low, considers homosexuality is not really a sickness but a 'sort of behavior'.*

I promise you, Dr. Bowman, I'm going to beat this thing.

I'm gonna break it.

So help me God. → *legitimation for his promise (to the doctor and for the sake of his and his family's life, not for the sake of Cathy)*

Dr: Why don't you confirm those
times we discussed with Rosalyn.
I'll see you here same time
next Tuesday.

F: Thank you, Doctor.

Dr: Mr. Whitaker, Mrs. Whitaker.

C: Thank you, Doctor.

Frank?

F: What?

C: I'm *just* proud of you, *that's all*. → *since she notices her husband is quite nervous and embarrassed, she tries to hedge her utterance, highlighting the fact that all she wanted to say was that she is proud of his strength in deciding to take action against his homosexuality (this also expresses her lack of power: by saying she is proud of him she both make it all look as if it was his decision, but actually the idea of a lack of power disappears if we think that she actually indirectly pushed him to see a doctor)*

F: *Don't say that*. → *strong imperative which implies he is ashamed and she has nothing to be proud of*

C: Well, I am.

He seems a very decent man,

Dr. Bowman. *Don't you think?* → *seek for confirmation of her idea. Moreover, she is indirectly implying her next utterance*

Frank?

F: I don't know, Cathleen.

I suppose he's decent.

C: But *you must have liked him enough to want to see him again*.

F: *Who else am I going to see?* → *implication: he perceives her utterance as another request to see other doctors*

C: Well, I'm sure there are numerous doctors
in Hartford or Springfield if you...

F: Look, I just want to get the

whole **fucking** thing over with! → *not properly middle class speech of the 1950s. Also, this is the only time we see an example of bad language in this movie.*

Can you understand that? → implies that he see his wife as an inferior human being who is not totally capable of understanding any situation

C: *Frank, please don't.* → *Cathy, scared, politely asks Frank not to use that tones to her, slightly stepping outside her subordinated position*

F: *I... I'm sorry.*

All right, Cathy, I'm so sorry. → *as she steps outside her subordination, he steps back and apologies to Cathy.*

In these interaction we see how male supremacy was enacted in 50s society. Cathy's role, and that of other females in this movie, is defined by the male-dominated American culture of the 1950s. First of all, Cathy is represented, since the beginning of the film, as the perfect housewife, wife, and mother. She knows her place in her male-female relationships, and she enacts it by perfectly fitting it being a supportive wife and dedicated mother:

An important element reflecting the fact that the female role is produced by male supremacy is represented in the scene where Cathy is perfecting her makeup in front of the mirror, and her daughter is present, watching her while sitting on the sofa. The ideal that the male element of society has modeled for the female one is that a woman must look pretty: She must be good looking for her husband, and for his friends and business associates.

J: Mother?

C: Mm-hmm.

J: When you were a little girl, you looked just like me, right?

C: Mm-hmm.

J: So, when I grow up, does that mean I'll look like you?

C: Is that what you want, darling, to look like me?

J: Yes, I hope I look exactly as pretty as you.

C: What a lovely compliment coming from my perfectly lovely daughter.

We see another example of the male supremacy in the big party scene at the Whitakers, when a drunk Frank says, '*You should see her without her face on*', meaning

‘without make up on’, implying the fact that she is ugly as a monster, expressing the fakeness of her appearance and implying that of her attitudes.

At the end of the film, she is facing divorce, and in the last few scenes of the movie we see a different and more assertive Cathy in respect to Frank (when they speak on the phone:

C: Hello.

F: Cathy, did I wake you?

I...I'm sorry to call this late.

I hope I didn't, uh

C: Uh, no. I was awake.

F: I, uh, didn't want to
upset the children.

C: No. No, of course not.

F: How are they, by the way?

C: Fine. Just fine. They still
ask when you'll be coming home.

F: I know. That's, uh, partly
why I'm calling really. I got a call from Dick yesterday
and he said that everything was set,
um, papers drawn up. And he wanted to know how Thursday
was for you. : or sometime?

II told him I thought you had car pool Thursdays,
but I wasn't absolutely certain, so I said I would check.

C: You never could remember my car pool days.
And they've always been the same.
Wednesdays and Fridays, long as I can remember.

F: Right. Uh. Same old absentminded

C: What time did you say on Thursday?

F: What?

C: The appointment. What time?

F: Three. Uh, three o'clock.

C: All right.

F: Okay. Uh, well great. That...That was it, uh, really.

I...know it's late.

C: It is.

F: So I'll see you... On...on Thursday then.

C: See you Thursday.

F: Good-bye, Cathy.

C: Good-bye, Frank.

In order to analyze the racial ideology presented in the movie through the interracial, repressed, and unrealized love between Cathy and Raymond, I chose to analyze the dialogues in the following scenes.

1. At the art show, when they have a conversation about abstract art
2. When Raymond finds her crying desperately in her yard, and invites her to go with him for a ride out of town. After a while we see them at a black diner, where Cathy is the only white person
3. The scene in which Cathy decides to talk to Raymond about their non-plausible friendship

1. At the art show:

C: Raymond, what a *tremendous* → *typical adjective of women's speech*
surprise finding you here.

R: Mrs. Whitaker, hello.

C: Is this your daughter?

R: Yep, this is my Sarah.

C: Hello, Sarah.

S: Hello.

(we hear boys playing outside: 'Bobby, get over here!')

R: Say, Sarah,

isn't that Hutch and his little
brother I see playing out front?

You remember them,

don't you, baby? → Tag question, in this case in the interaction father-daughter, in order to give her the possibility to recall her memory. This question implies another request: he wants her to go outside and play with them.

Oh, sure you do. → he convinces her she actually remembers those boys
The day we went
to the Hutchinson house?

S: Oh, yeah.

R: What do you say you go out and see

if they'd like to play for a while? → *Wh- imperative in the interaction father-daughter. He uses the same strategies that a mother would (probably because he is a widower and has to fulfill also the mother's role)*

Ah, go on. **For Daddy?** → *to convince her and let him talk alone with Cathy*

Attagirl. → *American slang expression of approval or exhortation, typically used by someone in authority to a subordinate or a younger person*

C: Oh, Raymond, she's **lovely**.

R: Thank you.

C: Well, how **on Earth** did you find out about this show?

R: Well, I **do** read the papers. → *implication: he emphasizes that, despite the fact he is black, he reads the papers just like white people*

C: W - **No, of course you do.** → *implication, she is saying that she did not mean that he does not read the newspapers. Embarrassment*

I **just** meant that it's- → *implication: she is excluding other alternatives in order to prevent any other misunderstanding*

it's such... it's a coincidence.

R: I know. I was just teasing you.

C: **Because, you know, I'm not prejudiced.**

**My husband and I have always believed
in equal rights for the Negro**

and support the N.A.A.C.P. → *the series of implications in this conversation are explained in this turn: she is adding without anybody's request, that she is not racist, and also she and her husband support the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.*

R: I'm glad to hear that. → *Raymond looks at her level-eyed. It is important to note that he has a business degree, but has inherited his father's gardening business.*

C: **I just wanted you to know.** → *implies that she does not want to be mistaken and considered prejudiced.*

R: Well, thank you.

C: Oh, not at all.

2. Ride out of town with Raymond

R: Mrs. Whitaker?

Is there anything I can do?

You sure?

C: I'm... I'm fine. → *she makes an effort in faking a smile while crying. Since crying is normally associated to babies, and, generally, weak women, a stronger woman is not supposed to cry, especially in public, so she goes in the yard, hoping not to be seen by anyone, but Raymond, unfortunately for her, is there. At this point she tries to hold back her tears.*

I **just**, um

I... It's a difficult time
with my husband.

R: Oh. It happens with married people.

C: I know it does. I'm **just-** → *the use of 'just' in this case indicates the uncertainty in explaining how she feels, trying to exclude other options in order to prevent the interlocutor from asking further questions*

It's just embarrassing.

Please forgive me. →

R: **Forgive you?** → *implicates that he means she has nothing to be forgiven for*

Mrs. Whitaker, listen.

I have to pick up some shrubs
from a farmhouse just out of town.

Which means I gotta get a move on.

Why don't you come along for the ride?

Some fresh air, change of scenery **might help you**

take your mind off things. → *instead of investigating further, he offers to help her by distracting her*

C: Ooh. Oh, no.

I, uh, I **couldn't**. Uh → subjunctive, more polite

Thank you, Raymond,

for offering. → *excluding other possibilities for Raymond to being thanked for*

You're very kind.

R: You sure?

(...)

C: Raymond.

R: Mrs. Whitaker. → *we see a discrepancy in social position between the two: although she is a woman, her position is higher, so she simply calls him by his name. Raymond, as a gardener and colored person, calls her more formally Mrs. Whitaker*

C: Hi.

R: Hello.

C: Oh, wouldn't you know it. I just received

a call and suddenly everything's changed.

Anyway, I... → *she is not in the position to directly say 'I changed my mind about your invitation'. As a woman normally would not invite herself over to anything. By using the connector 'anyway' she is indirectly asking Raymond to invite her once again so she now is able to say yes:*

C: You changed your mind.

Well, good.

(Raymond hands Cathy a bunch of hamamelis flowers)

C: Oh, it's **lovely**. → *female speech: typical adjective. Female attitude: she says it is lovely even if she does not know what type of flower that is*

What is it?

R: Hamamelis

well, flowering witch hazel.

Fairly rare in these parts.

C: It's beautiful.

You were right. What a

perfectly lovely spot. → *again, typical adjective of female speech*

Is that a path? → *indirectly introduces her following hedged imperative*

R: I think so.

C: **Let's have a peek.**

R: All right.

C: Sometimes it's the people
outside our world

we confide in best.

R: But once you do confide,
share with someone,
they're no longer

really outside, are they? → *general moral of the movie*

Oh. Look!

How lovely.

R: Did he cause that?

C: *He didn't mean to strike me.* → *she justifies her husband*

R: I am so sorry.

C: No. Heaven knows

we all have our troubles.

I'm sure you,

yourself

R: What?

C: I don't know. Ever since running

into you at the exhibition,

I kept wondering what it must be like

to be the only one in a room.

Colored or whatever it was.

How that might possibly feel.

I'm sure I've- I've never

R: Well, I suppose you sort of

grow accustomed to it over time.

I mean, don't get me wrong. → *hedging*

There is a world,

even here in Hartford,

where everybody

does indeed look like me. → *colored*

Trouble is, very few people

ever leave that world.

I only want what every father

wants for his child.

The opportunities growing

up I never had. → *another moral, this time about the black minority*

C: Naturally.

R: But I tell you something. If you're really interested

C: Oh, I am.

R: You hungry? I mean,
could you eat something?

C: I suppose I could.

R: **Tell you what,**
I'm **gonna** take you → **typical AAVE**
to one of my favourite spots.
On good days, it's got
hot food, cold drink,
and just about discernable music.

C: **It's hard to beat that.** → *implication: she is indirectly saying that since no other place can beat that one, she would really like to visit it.*

R: **There you go.** → *more informal*

(...)

Lady at the diner: Let me help you with that, ma'am.

C: Oh. Thanks very much.

R: thank you.

C: I'm **hardly dressed** for a restaurant. → *as a woman she is concerned about restaurants' dress code, and she is implying that she feels out of place, seeking for Raymond to tell her she is not:*

R: You look fine.

C: Raymond.

R: Don't worry. This is a very friendly place.

Say there, Esther.

What, you can't say hello anymore?

Esther: Looks like you speakin' just fine for yourself. → *'g-dropping' typical of AAVE speakers and other dialects*

R: Oh, now you just sore because I haven't → *dropping of the verb to be*
been coming around like I used to.

E: Is that so? → *as he enters with Cathy, everybody looks at them with disapproval and hostility*

R: Mm-hmm. Now what do you say about bringing
us over a couple of drinks?
What would you like?

C: Oh,uh, a daiquiri **if they...** → *he safely interrupts her, preventing her from probably saying 'if they have it': as a white person she should not call into question a black diner's supply*

R: One daiquiri

and a bourbon on the rocks.

Thank you, **doll.** → *objectification*

Man: What do you think

you're doing, boy? → *implication: 'you should not go out with a white woman'*

C: Thank you.

Well, I hope you're

finding this very amusing. → *irony. The only time in which Cathy uses it*

R: What do you mean?

This is a very welcoming place.

How you doin', Gus?

See what I mean?

C: Thank you.

R: Thank you, Esther.

Here's to being the only one. (*they toast*)

You know, we don't have to stay here.

If you feel uncomfortable

C: No. **As long as I stay away from Esther,** → *second and last time she uses irony*

I think I'll be fine.

R: All right then.

C: Thank you, Raymond,

for a lovely afternoon

R: No. Thank you, Mrs. Whitaker. I've had one as well.

C: Mrs. Whitaker sounds

so formal. Would you...

R: Would I what?

C: ...Ask me to dance? → *implication: this is the moment in which it is slightly more clear what they feel for one another. She would like him to call her Cathy instead of Mrs. Whitaker, but she changes her mind suddenly and makes him ask her to dance. This one again is an indirect imperative, presented as a polite request.*

As Cathy goes to her daughter's recital, she notices the hostility of other mothers towards her and her daughter. Once at home, she receives a call from Eleanor who tells her about the 'vicious talk' in the town, and all of a sudden she has to interrupt her call because her husband, visibly drunk and furious, is observing her from the other side of the room. As she hangs up with Eleanor, Frank storms against her, telling her that she knows from Dick Dawson, a friend of theirs, about what the 'whole friggin' town is talking' about. He blames her for not realizing the effect that her friendship with the colored gardener could have on him and the reputation he has been able to build for himself, the children, her and the company. Cathy, frightened from her husband's reaction, tries to justify herself saying that what Mona Lauder saw was a product of her hateful invention, and if it is true that on occasion she spoke to Raymond Deagan, in Hartford 'the idea of a white woman even speaking to a colored man' is not accepted, and concludes, lying, that she has already given Raymond notice and they won't see him again. Frank leaves with an abrupt 'fine'. In this scene, we notice how Frank's reaction is disproportioned as opposed to Cathy's when she saw him cheating on her with a man. There is a double point of view in this regard: on the one side, Frank's homosexuality is considered as a shortcut, a problem more similar to a illness, and not a vicious behavior; and, on the other side, Cathy's friendship (or unrealizable love) is absolutely wrong, and since Mona Lauder saw her with Raymond on his truck, now everybody is talking about it as if she actually cheated on her husband, and what is more, she is supposed to be cheating him with a colored man.

As for the linguistic features, we see how Frank uses a more direct and violent way of speaking to his wife, by using colloquial expressions, expletives and swear words, while Cathy uses perfectly correct grammar and does not allow any bad language to appear in her utterances, although she manages to show some strength (still uncertainly though) by raising her voice at her husband:

F: Just tell me one *goddamned* thing.

C: What?

F: Is it true, what they've been saying?

C: Frank, I can't believe you even...

F: Because if it is, even in the slightest,

I swear to God, *Cathleen* → *he calls her Cathleen only when he is nervous*

C: Frank, I am sorry you even

had to hear such nonsense. → *politely implies that what he heard was not true (a nonsense)*

F: Yeah, well, Dick Dawson didn't seem
to think it was such nonsense
when he snuck away from his desk to phone me today.

C: Good heavens.

F: He says the whole *friggin'* town's talking! → *bad language*

C: Frank, please. Sybil will hear you. → *implication: 'do not yell at me'*

F: I sent her out! **Christ** (*imprecation*), Cathleen, **do you even have the slightest idea** about what this could mean? **Don't you realize** the effect → *Frank implies that Cathy is not capable to understand what the consequences of her relationship with Raymond could be*

it's **gonna** have on me and the reputation I have spent the → *gonna: informal*
past eight years trying to build for you and the children
and for the company?

C: Frank, I swear to you, whatever

Mona Lauder saw or thought she saw
was entirely a figment of that woman's hateful imagination.
Yes. I have spoken to Raymond Deagan on occasion.

He brought his little girl to Eleanor's art show. **But**
But, apparently, even here in Hartford, the idea of a white
woman even speaking to a colored man → *legitimation*

F: Oh, please! **Just save me the Negro rights!** → *implication: he assumes Cathy is using the Negro rights as an excuse*

C: You know what that woman is capable of!

And besides, **I... I've** already given him notice, and **we...**
we won't be seeing that man again. → *uncertainty: she is lying*

F: Fine.

3. Cathy decides to talk to Raymond, they first meet at a bar, but since people look at them suspiciously, they decide to go somewhere else, and start talking on the street:

R: What is it?

What happened?

C: I wanted to see you in person, Raymond.

I... I just... I can't.

R: Can't what?

C: It isn't *plausible* for me

to be friends with you. → *a friendship with a colored man is not acceptable for a white woman*

C: You've been so very kind to me and I've been

perfectly reckless and foolish in return, thinking...

R: Thinking what? That **one person** could reach out to **another**, → *that one person is referred to Cathy, and the 'another person' is himself*

take an interest in another and maybe for one

fleeting instant could manage to see

beyond the surface, beyond the color of things?

C: Do you think we ever really do see beyond those things,

the surface of things?

R: "Just beyond the fall of grace, behold that

ever-shining place."

C: Yes. I do. I don't really have a choice. I wish I could.

Good luck to you, Raymond.

R: Mrs. Whitaker. (*holding her arm*)

Man: You! **Boy!** Hands off! Yeah! You! → *even though this man is scolding a colored man, he calls him 'boy', which is more common in the black community and must be intended as a form of verbal racism.*

R: Raymond, *please* don't. **You're so beautiful.** → *polite request, without specifying what she wants Raymond to do, because it is clear from the scolding of the man opposite the street. Instead of saying goodbye, she expresses a clear opinion about Raymond, which implies her feelings for him.*

This is the most important exchange between Cathy and Raymond, concerning race and social roles. Of course, it is the society she lives in who regulates what is plausible about friendships with people of another race. The way in which she decided to dress underlines her uncertainty: she is wearing a heavy coat, a head scarf, and sunglasses: similarly to a disguise, we interpret it as a metaphor of the social masks that

white women like her must wear in order to be how society expects them to be. Cathy apologizes to Raymond for being ‘reckless and foolish’ about their relationship. Raymond in his words implies that she has nothing to be sorry for, and that it is not a crime to see beyond the surface, and, especially, beyond the color of things. Cathy, in order to express her doubts: ‘Do you think we ever really do? See beyond those things?’. Raymond responds with a line of poetry: ‘Just beyond the fall of grace behold that ever shining place.’¹¹ For Raymond, a society that sees beyond racial difference is the perfect ‘shining’ ideal that is still to come, if people like he and Cathy are brave enough.¹²

The racial topic is the main one in this movie: Raymond Deagan violates many of the tenets of white supremacy. For example, he dared to get a business degree, even though he inherited his father’s gardening activity, and he had the impudence to educate himself and be interested about art, rather than humbly pretend to be illiterate. And, worst of all, he committed the deadly mistake of showing romantic interest in a white middle-class woman.

In a more general view, for his crimes against white superiority, Raymond is ostracized, his business ruined, his daughter attacked, his home vandalized, and all of this forces him to move from Hartford. However, it is important to underline that it was not just white people who did these things; but the black community reacts with equal (or maybe with more) violence: Raymond tells Cathy that it was his black neighbors who threw rocks through his window every night, being ironical about the fact that it seems that somehow in Hartford black and white people live in harmony, at least in this way. White people don’t attack Raymond physically, but when he crosses the line of white social tenets, his business and his family are destroyed. What we understand, anyway, is that this black intolerance is a product of white intolerance. Black folks know that when someone in their community breaks the rules, they could (and usually did) all suffer from it, being more hostilely marginalized by society.

To a lesser degree, Cathy’s life is destroyed as well, because of her association with a colored man. If we get back to the scene when Cathy first met Raymond. She is

¹¹ Since I did not find a quote for this line , I suppose it was written by the scriptwriter particularly for this film

¹² Cathy and Raymond are having their conversation under the cinema ‘the Ritz’, where Frank noticed the gay men.

being interviewed by Mrs. Leacock and sees a black man in her backyard. The thing a white woman is supposed to do according to her middle-class white community, when seeing a black person in a place they are not expected to be, is to panic, at least: Cathy panics and Mrs. Leacock suggests to call the police. What follows, is Cathy going out to talk to Raymond. Mrs. Leacock sees her speaking kindly towards Raymond, and thus in her article she describes Cathy as someone who is 'kind to negros'. This description of Cathy, is acceptable in her society as long as it is not too close, and it reflects her superiority towards an inferior black person. If this hierarchical relationship is abolished becoming a friendship (or, even worse, a romantic relationship), it is not acceptable and firmly condemned.

Another important element of the racial ideology represented in this movie is the following. In the 1950s America, many black people chose to be invisible to white people, as Raymond states at some point in the trip with Cathy. Indeed, white people seem not to know they live in their community, and this is also signaled in the movie, during the party scene, when one of the white male guests says that there is no problem with black people in Hartford, because there are no black people in Hartford. Soon after, the camera frames a black waiter and other black staff.

In conclusion, the themes of male dominance, homosexuality, and racism are central in this movie. The director Haynes has perfectly mastered the material in highlighting the differences between dominant and dominated groups in society. Cathy's social role and position is challenged by the violent attitudes and homosexuality of her husband, but also by her romantic friendship with Raymond. Frank, on the other hand, has to deal with a culturally-defined gender role, and his homosexuality, as an absolute taboo oppresses him; although he is able to mask his sexual orientation by playing his society-defined role of dominating white man. Moreover, Raymond, as a black man, is constrained by the role society attributes to him: he is not supposed to be educated (business degree), to show interest in art, but most of all, he is not allowed to be friends with white women. Haynes conveys these ideologies casting a critical light on them. By showing how fake and unnatural they are, he is complaining about these ideologies that are still enacted in a not very dissimilar way in our society nowadays.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to analyze the relations of power and dominance in society through the study of the transcripts of the movies 'Summer of Sam' and 'Far From Heaven'. Critical Discourse Analysis can be an extremely helpful approach in describing how these relations are enacted in discourse, through the utilization of some particular linguistic strategies.

An analysis of the relationship between language and gender made us understand how male supremacy is applied to and perceived by women. It makes clear how power is enacted, and thanks to the described manipulative mechanisms of acceptance, we can see how suddenly the situation of the two main couples in the movies changed and became problematic: the power flux is inverted when the females took action for their own sake, becoming more assertive and taking decisions for the males. In the movies we are shown two different (in age, social class, and period in which the story is set), yet very similar women. Their similarities are expressed in their attitude, simple and elegant, and especially in their subordination to their husbands, perfectly appropriate for the roles they are constrained to fit in by the dominant male element. In both movies we see the sudden breaking of this construction by the main female characters. Dionna and Cathy, in fact, leave their husbands for the same reasons: they cheated on them. Although Frank and Vinny have different sexual orientations (and homosexuality is the worst taboo), cheating on their wives tends to be more acceptable, as dominant males: it is more plausible for a man to cheat, because they cannot be considered as 'prostitutes'. A woman who cheats on her husband is more despicable, and a woman who is presumed to cheat on her husband with a colored man was(in the 50's, but to some extent today too), even worse than a prostitute. The racial element, although more present in Far From Heaven, is in both movies interpreted as the representation of the black communities as weaker minorities, both in the 50s and in the 70s. However, in Summer of Sam, at least they are interviewed in the news on TV in order to give voice to their critical opinions about the Son of Sam's murders in the white community (Italian American, which is always a cultural minority), through the use of the cinematographic strategy of the 'film' (news on TV) inside the film (Summer of Sam). In Far From Heaven, the racial ideology is the main theme: the romantic relationship between Cathy and Raymond is something totally unacceptable both for the

white and the black community. Apart from Cathy's reaction about the aggression which Raymond's daughter, Sarah, undergoes, the stigmatization of racism is represented mostly in Cathy's discourse, when she continuously re-elaborates sentences in order to avoid Raymond's misunderstanding, as she does not want him to think she is racist (such as all the other members of her white middle-class social group). As for the black community, we are shown that they do not accept a black man to be in any kind of relationship with a white woman either, both at the black diner, where Raymond takes Cathy in order to make her understand how it feels to be 'the only one', and when Raymond confesses to Cathy that black people throws stones at his windows every night now that 'vicious talk' has been spread in town.

A general and final consideration is that, since every social group has its rules, beliefs and stereotypes, it is crucial to be aware of all perspectives in order not only to understand how power is produced and perceived, but also, by a compelling consideration of today's events and attitudes towards minorities, to help in providing a new point of view and an awakening in order to ease these discrepancies in society.

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National Association for the Advancement of Colored People: <http://www.naacp.org/>

Script of the movie "Far From Heaven":

http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/f/far-from-heaven-script-transcript.html

Script of the movie "Summer of Sam":

http://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=summer-of-sam

Slang Definitions:

<http://www.urbandictionary.com/>

Appendix

1	leggy, curvaceous, dark and beautiful	woman,	29. Call me now on 0839 102216.
2	a still handsome man and a beautiful	woman	- Lucky that Henry didn't want me!
3	The stream took on the form of a	woman	-a beautiful virgin innocently tempting
4	Then you see her, a beautiful	woman,	about 30, sitting on a comfortable
5	had fallen in love with a beautiful	woman	and, after transferring most of the
6	our wife, I know: she is a beautiful	woman	but she's hard and cold like the cou
7	ESS Antonia de Sancha is a beautiful	woman.	But her affair with Heritage Secret
8	--that this was a beautiful	woman	but it also had to have a feeling of
9	lack guy seeks attractive, beautiful	woman	for lasting relationship. Age immate
10	With the portrait of a beautiful	woman	found five years ago, dubbed the Mon
11	you find a picture of a beautiful	woman	having a wash in Hitler's bath! I
12	`A very beautiful, very terrible	woman.	I think he might have killed her if
13	. `She's the most beautiful	woman	in the world - More beautiful than A
14	perience. The result is a beautiful	woman	of substance," says society photogr
15	an's friend has just won a beautiful	woman,	one he would have liked for himself
16	in contrast, was a thin, beautiful	woman	past middle age who ruled her large
17	eting an exquisitely beautiful young	woman	says how pleased she is that the tow
18	in a long white dress, a beautiful	woman;	the other of a two-year-old girl wi
19	is neighbours, and she's a beautiful	woman,	true, but she talks like a street k
20	Sometimes when you meet a beautiful	woman,	you know their beauty is more than

Concordance lines for '*beautiful woman*'. Pinna, Antonio (2007) "Corpus linguistics: resources and activities for EFL". *Annali della Facoltà di Lingue e Letterature Straniere dell'Università di Sassari*, Vol. 4, p. 19-38.

1	milar, straight-forward, good-looking	man,	21-35. Pot (returned). Box 27185 YO
2	to deport him. 'He's a lovely gentle	man	and a good Christian who wants to save
3	ncies. One example concerns that	man,	and great editor, John W. Campbell J
4	president of our division # and a	man	at that. When it came my turn, I began
5	at odds. Ekman appeared a good	man,	but he was homosexual and a drug addict
6	me to the outer door. He was a good	man,	courteous, compassionate. I hoped he
7	the saying goes you can't keep a	man	down, or out of the game even, and
8	being, as he puts it, 'a very gentle	man	/ Even-tempered and good natured", 'Jus
9	his name ooh he's a good actor this	man.	He were was a good actor. Well they
10	was very kind. I thought what a	man	he was and remembered that, in the be
11	at a nice guy. Hansen: Good man,	man	- If you're going to use a mobile pho
12	here's a \$5,000 reward, 'cause a good	man	is hard to find when he -- or she --
13	By now, shooting is too good for the	man,	Mayle's fellow - villagers now want
14	him anyhow - But he a good	man	nuh - No trouble yourself no more 'b
15	Mrs O'Rourke. Well, dear, your	man's	away on a business trip, is he?" sa
16	Amounts to the same thing, right?	Man's	no fuckin' good to us, either way -
17	woman there took a good look at	man's	face. She could identify him, which
18	work for the common good of	man.	That observer might also believe that
19	surprisingly good job playing straight	man	to the comic antics of the four leads
20	I remember him as a tall, virile	man	with rugged good looks who might have

Concordance lines for 'good man'. Pinna, Antonio (2007) "Corpus linguistics: resources and activities for EFL". *Annali della Facoltà di Lingue e Letterature Straniere dell'Università di Sassari*, Vol. 4, p. 19-38.

Transcripts of the conversations analyzed in Summer of Sam:

1)

Dionna: You danced so great tonight, baby.

Vinny: Ah, 'cause you're beautiful, that's why.

V: Ah, don't stop. It feels so good.

D: What... What took you so long?

V: I just stopped to take a leak.

I drank too much tonight, you know?

D: Where? At the house?

V: Come on! What, are you writin' a book
or somethin'?

D: No, I'm just asking.

V: Yeah. Yeah, you're asking. Sure.

D: I just asked you what took you so long.

V: I know, sweetie pie.

You danced beautifully tonight, too,
you know? It was a lot of fun.

2)

V: Dionna? Dionna, I gotta talk to you.

D: Vinny, what are you doing here?

V: I just gotta talk to you for a minute, okay? D: Now? Honey, we're in trouble.
We got Luigi here and we're not ready.

V: Just sit down with me here.

D: Vinny! What's wrong with you?

V: I need to talk to you, please.

And listen to me for once, OK? Could you? Could you do that for me?

D: All right.

V: All right?

What I saw last night...made me think about a lot of things, OK?

It opened up my eyes really wide to everything.

And those murders made me realize...

...how much I love you. I love you, Dionna.

And I swear to God... I swear, I promise...

I promise you and God that I'm gonna be the best husband...

...that you ever had in your entire life.

If I had eight tongues, it wouldn't be enough to tell you how much I love
you.

D: OK. You swear to God? V: I swear to God, I swear to God, I love you.

D: OK. (they kiss passionately)

V: I'm so sorry about everything

D: Baby, um... I'm in the middle of work. I... I...

Dad's in trouble and I gotta get stuff out.

V: Make up an excuse and let's go somewhere.

D: Baby, I can't V: I'll take you to dinner.

D: Why don't you stay here?

I'll make you something really nice.

I'll be back in 20 minutes.

Sit down.

I'll get you a glass of wine...

A glass of wine!

3)

D: Is this another one of your shortcuts?

So what, you're not gonna talk?

The whole way home?

Come on, Vinny. Tell me something.

What do you think?

V: Did that guy fuck you better than me?

D: I'm embarrassed.

I don't wanna talk about that.

V: Fuckin' embarrassed?

Did he fuck you better than me?

D: I did it for you.

V: You did it for me.

Oh, that's nice. You did it for me.

Did you like it for me?

Did you fuckin' come for me, huh?

Was that for me?

D: That was the pills. That was the coke.

V: Don't blame the pills,

you fuckin' lesbian whore.

Don't fuckin' do that shit.

4)

D: You were there, too.

You're a fuckin' whore.

V: I can't be a whore cos I'm a man, OK?

You're the fuckin' whore,
you stupid lesbian fuckin' whore!

D: You're a faggot fuckin' hairdresser. (slaps him on his face)

V: Get the fuck out of the car.

D: You get the fuck out.

V: I said get out!

D: There's a psycho killer out there!

V: I hope he fuckin' kills you.

Get the fuck out of my car!

D: It is my car! I will not get out!

You get the fuck out!

V: I don't give a shit!

Get the fuck out!

D: I will not get out of the car.

V: Get out!

D: You get out of my car! Get out now!

V: Fuckin' piece of shit.

Fuckin' make me sick, you fuckin' slut.

D: I am a slut? You're calling me a slut?

You lowlife piece of shit!

You fucked my cousin!

You didn't think I knew about that.

I smelled her pussy juice all over your fuckin' face!

You fuckin' sick bastard! How dare you?

All this time I'm thinking

there's something wrong with me.

You perverted sick fuck!

V: Come on, Dionna, please.

I'm sorry. Get in the fuckin' car

D: No.

V: Come on. Get in the car.

Come on. Let's go.

D: Fuck you.

V: Come on. Get in the car. Please, baby.

D: Don't you dare "baby" me! I'm gonna wait here
until somebody comes along.

I gonna wait until some soul brother comes in his big black Cadillac.

And you know and I know

he's got a big black dick, too

V: Don't talk like that. Get in the car.

D: Oh, fuck you.

V: Please, please,

don't make me have to beg you.

Don't make me have to hurt you.

D: Hurt me?! Don't you dare lay a pinky on me!

I'll get him to kick your ass,

then I'll fuck him!

You wanna watch, Vinny?

Will that turn you on? You linguine dick motherfucker!

You wanna watch while I suck a big

black dick in a big black Cadillac?

V: Shut the fuck up!

D: You shut the fuck up.

V: Get the fuck inside the car now!

D: Hello! Anybody out there?

V: Shut the fuck up and get in the car.

D: Any black dick out there?

It better be big cos

there's some free pussy!

V: I don't get hard any more

because you don't turn me on any more.

D: You're a fuckin' pervert.

V: Get in. I'm sick of this.

I'll take you to your father's,

then I don't want to see you.

All right. You wanna drive?

Drive me over there, you fuckin' dyke!

D: Faggot fuckin' hairdresser!
I hope he kills you! I hope you die here!

V: Dionna! Dionna, come back here.

Dionna, come back!

Don't fuckin' leave me here

D: I hope he fuckin' kills you,
you fuckin' faggot pansy!

V: Stop that fuckin' car! Come back!

D: Fuck you!

V: Dionna, come on! Come back!

D: Stick it up your fuckin' ass!

V: Dionna, don't fuckin' leave me here!

Dionna!

5)

Ritchie: You ain't Bruce Lee.

Stop kicking Woodstock.

Anthony: Is that Ritchie?

Ritchie: Yeah.

Anthony: What the hell happened to you?

Look at this freak.

Joey T: Nice outfit. Where'd you get it, off the dead?

Brian: Hey I thought vampires only came out at night.

R: Yeah, 'cept on leap year.

What's happening, guys?

J: Don't give us that 'what's happening guys' bullshit.

You come back to the neighborhood lookin' like a freak,
soundin' like a British fag...

...we're supposed to be OK with that?

R: You're fuckin' right.

How's your wife and kid, JT?

J: I got divorced.

Moved back in with my mother.

(...Woodstock intervenes trying to sell half-dead lobsters)

R: Woodstock, I need some smoke. (Woodstock is going away and doesn't answer)

J: I'm handling that now. What do you want? I got nickels.

R: Right. I'll take two then.

B: Hey, Ritchie, you heard about the killer?

R: Yeah, yeah, I heard.

What's up, Vin? Not gonna say hello?

Vinny: Hello.

Where the fuck were you last night, huh?

R: You drove past me outside the club.

V: Can you do me a favor and drop this stupid
accent and talk to me for real, huh?

R: All right.

V: Why didn't you come in, you could have said hello,
we could have talked or somethin'?

R: I wasn't really dressed for disco dancing.

A: I wasn't really dressed for disco dancing!

Look at this jerk-off! He was dressed
for Halloween, this fuckin' goblin.

(overlapping - Vinny: Leave him alone, alright?)

B: Hey, porcupine...

Vinny saw the dead bodies last night.

R: You saw the bodies?

V: Yeah, I saw the bodies.

I was on my way home. But I didn't see him, alright?

see no fuckin' killer, you numbnuts!

So don't fuckin' spread that word around.

6)

Dionna: You and Ritchie
seem really happy together.

Ruby: Yep, we are. Just try and enjoy it
while it lasts. You know what I mean?

D: I guess that's a good philosophy
as long as you're not married.

Listen, um...

I know that you've been
with Vinny before.

I mean, it's not a secret or anything

R: That was a long time ago.

A long time ago, before you two got
together, let alone got married, all right?

D: No, no, no, no. I know that. I know that.

I'm not...I'm not accusing you of anything.

R: Then what do you want?

D: All I... wanted to say was that...

...since you've been with him...

...maybe you could tell me what he likes.

R: You're serious?

D: Yeah.

If I knew, I wouldn't be asking.

I mean... Look.

You think this is easy for me?

Talking to you about Vinny, you know...

...my husband's sexual likes and dislikes.

R: And so you ask me, cos I should know.

D: No...

You guys looked happy when you were goin' out.

And you're so sexy and confident and everything.

Listen. I mean...

...sometimes I-I think that, um...

...that, you know, he's cheating on me.

Anyway, you know, I wa... I wanna please him

...but I, I don't think that I do.

You have any advice? Anything?

R: Look, Dionna.

You are... very pretty, OK?

You're sexy. I happen to know that Vinny loves you very much.

D: I know he loves me but, um...

...I think I disappoint him.

R: So what do you want me to do?
Do you want me to tell you
how to fuck your husband?
Yeah, fine. I'll tell ya.
First...
...you can't be his wife.
That's number one. Too late for that.

7)

Woman 1: I'm just hoping that they get him quick.

I don't care.

John Jeffries: Thank you.

BW1: Thank you.

Man 1: It's terrible. Bad for Brooklyn...

...bad for New York, bad for America
and bad for the world.

JJ: Thank you, sir.

Your view.

Man 2: Let me tell you.

Son of Sam knows better than to
come into Bed-Stuy with that crap.
Cos we don't care. He's not that crazy.
I would love to beat him down right now.
He would wish he was dead. I'd just
love to catch him right here in Bed-Stuy.

JJ: Thank you.

Woman 2: Exactly. Hello.

My name is Cassandra Buchanan.
I live there at 85 Crown Street...and I am going to give you
your darker perspective.
The darker perspective is:
...I thank God, I thank God, I thank God....
...that it is a white man
that kills all of those white people.

Because if it were a black man...
...who kills all of those white people...
...there would be the biggest race riot...
...right here in New York City
And I'd like to say one thing.
I am surprised that you are in the black community
I didn't think you liked black people.

JJ: John Jeffries here...

...in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section
of Brooklyn, New York.

8)

Anthony: It said in the Post
the killer's a woman hater.
That's you, Bobby. You could be the killer.

Joey T: .44 Calibre queer.

Anthony: A real homo-cidal maniac.

Brian: Guilty! Put him through the penal system.

Bobby: Only if I can have you as my cellmate. (slowly caressing Brian's shoulder and showing his tongue)

Brian: How 'bout that, you motherfucker?

Bobby: You asshole! You fucking asshole!

I hate you!

Joey T: Don't burn him! He's a paying customer!

Transcripts of the conversations analyzed in Far From Heaven:

1)

Man 1: I thought you really enjoyed
the scene in the gentlemen's lounge. (they laugh)

Man 1: How about a drink?

Man 2: Sure.

Man 1: I know just the spot.

2)

Sybil: Mrs. Whitaker, this is Mrs. Leacock.

She said she had an appointment
with you this morning..

Cathy: Oh, jiminy, I completely forgot the time
Please forgive me!

Mrs. Leacock: I do apologize, Mrs. Whitaker,
but candid views are always the best.

Frank: Good-bye, darling.

C: Good-bye, dear.

F: Mrs. Leacock.

Mrs. L: Pleasure, Mr. Whitaker.

Your husband's a very
charming man, Mrs. Whitaker.

C: Thank you. We're rather
fond of him ourselves.
Now, please, won't you come in?
I suppose I still can't imagine
why you would want an interview with
someone like me in the first place.

Mrs. L: Readers of the Weekly Gazette,
Mrs. Whitaker, women just like yourself
with families and homes to keep up.
A good society paper need not be a gossip rag.
You are the proud wife of a successful sales executive-
planning the parties, and posing at her husband's
side on the advertisements.
To everyone here in Connecticut,
you are Mr. and Mrs. Magnatech.

C: Thank you. I'm very flattered.
But, really, my life is like any other wife or mother's.
In fact, I don't think I've, I've ever wanted anything...

3)

C: Excuse me. May I help you?

Who are you?

R: I'm sorry, ma'am. My name is Raymond Deagan

Otis Deagan's son.

I was just taking over some of his

C: Oh, you're Otis's son.

R: Yes.

C: I'm terribly sorry for speaking to you in that manner. I didn't know who was in my yard.

R: Oh, no need.

C: How is your father?

I know he was in the hospital.

R: Yes, well, my father's passed away,

I'm afraid.

C: Oh... Oh, I-I had no idea.

I'm, I'm so very sorry.

Please, accept our deepest condolences.

Your father was a wonderful, dedicated man.

R: Thank you.

Sybil: Mrs. Whitaker?

The caterer's on the line.

C: Oh, thank you, Sybil.

I beg your pardon. Would you excuse me for just a moment?

R: Of course.

4)

C: You know it's funny.

E: What's that.

C: This whole time, the only person

I've been able to talk to. About any of this.

Was Raymond Deagan.

E: What? (Eleanor looks at Cathy in disbelief.)

C: It's true. Well, not in the way

Mona intended - Nothing like that!

We would just talk!

But... Somehow

it made me feel - oh, I don't know.

Alive somewhere.

C: Oh Eleanor,

I know it sounds

ridiculous and mad..

But I do, I think of him. What he's

doing, what he's thinking. I do -(Eleanor glances off.)

C: El? (Eleanor gets up and starts tending to the tray of empty cups.)

E: What can I say? You're so full of

surprises. I'm speechless.

C: What do you mean?

E: Though I'm sure I must have looked

entirely the fool, crusading away

against Mona Lauder and all her so-called

inventions!

C: Eleanor! How can you say such a thing?

E: I didn't say a word! Who am I to

tell anyone how to lead their lives?

C: But El! Nothing happened between

us! I told you that!

E: Cathy it's none of my business. But

you certainly make it sound as if something had.

5)

E: Though I'm sorry to say Mona Lauder

will be attending. Turns out her

uncle's in town, some hot-shot artdealer

from New York. I think I met

him at one of Mona's soiree's. A

bit flowery for my tastes.

C: How do you mean?

E: Oh, you know.

A touch light on his feet?

C: You mean...

E: Yes, darling. One of those.

Of course I could be mistaken. Just an
impression I got.

C: You don't care for them
particularly?

E: Well, no, not particularly. Not
that I actually know any. Call me
old-fashioned, I just like all the
men I'm around to be all men.
Say! Why the third degree?

C: It's not the third degree,
I'm just interested, that's all. In your views.

6)

F: Cathy.

C: Mr. Maynard Left an estimate for the roof.

I put it in the kitchen. Twelve hundred something.

F: Cathy.

C: I can't.

F: I don't

C: What?

F: Eh, you see, uh. Once, a long time ago,
a long, long time ago, I had, um,
um, problems. I just figured that was... that was it.
I... I never imagined-

C: You had problems?

F: Yes.

C: You, uh, never spoke to anyone... a doctor?.

F: No.

C: No one? ...I don't understand.

F: Neither do I.

C: What if, I mean,
there must be people who...

F: I don't know.

C: Because otherwise, I don't know what I...

F: Cathy. All right.

7)

Rosalyn: Mr. and Mrs. Whitaker, this is Dr. Bowman.

Dr: Mr. Whitaker, how do you do?

F: Hello.

Dr: Mrs. Whitaker, how lovely.

C: Thank you.

Dr: I suppose we may as well get started.

Actually, uh, Mrs. Whitaker, I think it might be best
if your husband and I conversed in private.

C: In private. Yes, of course.

Dr.: I think it would be best.

C: Certainly, Doctor.

I'll see you later.

F: I'll see you later, dear.

Dr: Today, the general attitude
regarding this sort of behavior
is naturally more modern,
more scientific than it ever has been before.
But for those who do seek treatment,
who possess the will and desire to lead a normal life,
there still remains only a scant
five to thirty percent rate of success
for complete heterosexual conversion.
For many, it's the treatment itself
that often changes the patient's mind.

F: What does it, uh, comprise of?

The treatment.

Dr: The treatment's comprised of psychiatric sessions

twice a week, sometimes more.

F: Just talking?

Dr: Yes. Though some patients have explored
additional, more behavioural methods.

F: Behavioural?

Dr: Electroshock aversion therapy for instance.

Or hormonal rebalancing procedures.

I know this can all seem rather daunting at first.

I suggest you take some time.

Think over the various options we've discussed.

Discuss it with your wife.

F: No, I already know.

I want to begin treatment.

I can't let this thing destroy my life, my family's life.

I, uh, I-I know it's a sickness, because it makes me feel despicable.

I promise you, Dr. Bowman, I'm going to beat this thing.

I'm gonna break it.

So help me God.

Dr: Why don't you confirm those
times we discussed with Rosalyn.

I'll see you here same time
next Tuesday.

F: Thank you, Doctor.

Dr: Mr. Whitaker, Mrs. Whitaker.

C: Thank you, Doctor.

Frank?

F: What?

C: I'm just proud of you, that's all.

F: Don't say that.

C: Well, I am.

He seems a very decent man,

Dr. Bowman. Don't you think?

Frank?

F: I don't know, Cathleen.

I suppose he's decent.

C: But you must have liked him enough
to want to see him again.

F: Who else am I going to see?

C: Well, I'm sure there are numerous doctors
in Hartford or Springfield if you...

F: Look, I just want to get the
whole fucking thing over with!
Can you understand that?

C: Frank, please don't.

F: I... I'm sorry.
All right, Cathy, I'm so sorry.

8)

J: Mother?

C: Mm-hmm.

J: When you were a little girl, you looked just like me, right?

C: Mm-hmm.

J: So, when I grow up, does that mean I'll look like you?

C: Is that what you want, darling, to look like me?

J: Yes, I hope I look exactly as pretty as you.

C: What a lovely compliment coming from my perfectly lovely daughter.

9)

C: Hello.

F: Cathy, did I wake you?

I...I'm sorry to call this late.

I hope I didn't, uh

C: Uh, no. I was awake.

F: I, uh, didn't want to
upset the children.

C: No. No, of course not.

F: How are they, by the way?

C: Fine. Just fine. They still

ask when you'll be coming home.

F: I know. That's, uh, partly

why I'm calling really. I got a call from Dick yesterday

and he said that everything was set,

um, papers drawn up. And he wanted to know how Thursday

was for you. : or sometime?

He told him I thought you had car pool Thursdays,

but I wasn't absolutely certain, so I said I would check.

C: You never could remember my car pool days.

And they've always been the same.

Wednesdays and Fridays, long as I can remember.

F: Right. Uh. Same old absentminded

C: What time did you say on Thursday

F: What?

C: The appointment. What time?

F: Three. Uh, three o'clock.

C: All right.

F: Okay. Uh, well great. That... That was it, uh, really.

I...know it's late.

C: It is.

F: So I'll see you... On...on Thursday then.

C: See you Thursday.

F: Good-bye, Cathy.

C: Good-bye, Frank.

10)

C: Raymond, what a tremendous

R: Mrs. Whitaker, hello.

C: Is this your daughter?

R: Yep, this is my Sarah.

C: Hello, Sarah.

S: Hello.

(we hear boys playing outside: 'Bobby, get over here!')

R: Say, Sarah,
 isn't that Hutch and his little
 brother I see playing out front?
 You remember them,
 don't you, baby?
 Oh, sure you do.
 The day we went
 to the Hutchinson house?

S: Oh, yeah.

R: What do you say you go out and see
 if they'd like to play for a while?
 Ah, go on. For Daddy? Attagirl.

C: Oh, Raymond, she's lovely.

R: Thank you.

C: Well, how on Earth did you
 find out about this show?

R: Well, I do read the papers.

C: W - No, of course you do.
 I just meant that it's-
 it's such... it's a coincidence.

R: I know. I was just teasing you.

C: Because, you know, I'm not prejudiced.
 My husband and I have always believed
 in equal rights for the Negro
 and support the N.A.A.C.P.

C: I just wanted you to
 know.

R: Well, thank you.

C: Oh, not at all.

11)

R: Mrs. Whitaker?

 Is there anything I can do?

 You sure?

C: I'm... I'm fine.

I just, um

I... It's a difficult time
with my husband.

R: Oh. It happens with married people.

C: I know it does. I'm just-

It's just embarrassing.

Please forgive me.

R: Forgive you?

Mrs. Whitaker, listen.

I have to pick up some shrubs
from a farmhouse just out of town.

Which means I gotta get a move on.

Why don't you come along for the ride?

Some fresh air,

Change of scenery

might help you

take your mind off things.

C: Ooh. Oh, no.

I, uh, I couldn't. Uh

Thank you, Raymond,
for offering.

You're very kind.

R: You sure?

(...)

C: Raymond.

R: Mrs. Whitaker.

C: Hi.

R: Hello.

C: Oh, wouldn't you know it. I just received
a call and suddenly everything's changed.

Anyway, I...

C: You changed your mind.

Well, good.

(Raymond hands Cathy a bunch of hamamelis flowers)

C: Oh, it's lovely.

What is it?

R: Hamamelis

well, flowering witch hazel.

Fairly rare in these parts.

C: It's beautiful.

You were right. What a

perfectly lovely spot.

Is that a path?

R: I think so.

C: Let's have a peek.

R: All right.

C: Sometimes it's the people

outside our world

we confide in best.

R: But once you do confide,

share with someone,

they're no longer

really outside, are they?

Oh. Look!

How lovely.

R: Did he cause that?

C: He didn't mean to strike me.

R: I am so sorry.

C: No. Heaven knows

we all have our troubles.

I'm sure you,

yourself

R: What?

C: I don't know. Ever since running

into you at the exhibition,

I kept wondering what it must be like

to be the only one in a room.

Colored or whatever it was.
How that might possibly feel.
I'm sure I've- I've never

R: Well, I suppose you sort of
grow accustomed to it over time.
I mean, don't get me wrong.
There is a world,
even here in Hartford,
where everybody
does indeed look like me.
Trouble is, very few people
ever leave that world.
I only want what every father
wants for his child.
The opportunities growing
up I never had.

C: Naturally.

R: But I tell you something. If you're really interested

C: Oh, I am.

R: You hungry? I mean,
could you eat something?

C: I suppose I could.

R: Tell you what,
I'm gonna take you
to one of my favourite spots.
On good days, it's got
hot food, cold drink,
and just about discernable music.

C: It's hard to beat that.

R: There you go.

(...)

Lady at the diner: Let me help you with that, ma'am.

C: Oh. Thanks very much.

R: thank you.

C: I'm hardly dressed for a restaurant.

R: You look fine.

C: Raymond.

R: Don't worry. This is a very friendly place.
Say there, Esther.
What, you can't say hello anymore?

Esther: Looks like you speakin' just fine for yourself.

R: Oh, now you just sore because I haven't
been coming around like I used to.

E: Is that so?

R: Mm-hmm. Now what do you say about bringing
us over a couple of drinks?
What would you like?

C: Oh,uh, a daiquiri if they...

R: One daiquiri
and a bourbon on the rocks.
Thank you, doll.

Man: What do you think
you're doing, boy?

C: Thank you.
Well, I hope you're
finding this very amusing.

R: What do you mean?
This is a very welcoming place.
How you doin', Gus?
See what I mean?

C: Thank you.

R: Thank you, Esther.
Here's to being the only one. (they toast)
You know, we don't have to stay here.
If you feel uncomfortable

C: No. As long as I stay away from Esther,
I think I'll be fine.

R: All right then.

C: Thank you, Raymond,

for a lovely afternoon

R: No. Thank you, Mrs. Whitaker. I've had one as well.

C: Mrs. Whitaker sounds

so formal. Would you...

R: Would I what?

C: ...Ask me to dance?

12)

F: Just tell me one goddamned thing.

C: What?

F: Is it true, what they've been saying?

C: Frank, I can't believe you even...

F: Because if it is, even in the slightest,

I swear to God, Cathleen

C: Frank, I am sorry you even

had to hear such nonsense.

F: Yeah, well, Dick Dawson didn't seem

to think it was such nonsense

when he snuck away from his desk to phone me today.

C: Good heavens.

F: He says the whole friggin' town's talking!

C: Frank, please. Sybil will hear you.

F: I sent her out! Christ (imprecation), Cathleen, do you even have the slightest idea about what this could mean? Don't you realize the effect it's gonna have on me and the reputation I have spent the past eight years trying to build for you and the children and for the company?

C: Frank, I swear to you, whatever

Mona Lauder saw or thought she saw

was entirely a figment of that woman's hateful imagination.

Yes. I have spoken to Raymond Deagan on occasion.

He brought his little girl to Eleanor's art show. But

But, apparently, even here in Hartford, the idea of a white

woman even speaking to a colored man

F: Oh, please! Just save me the Negro rights!

C: You know what that woman is capable of!

And besides, I... I've already given him notice, and we...

we won't be seeing that man again.

F: Fine.

13)

R: What is it?

What happened?

C: I wanted to see you in person, Raymond.

I... I just... I can't.

R: Can't what?

C: It isn't plausible for me

to be friends with you.

C: You've been so very kind to me and I've been

perfectly reckless and foolish in return, thinking...

R: Thinking what? That one person could reach out to another,

take an interest in another and maybe for one

fleeting instant could manage to see

beyond the surface, beyond the color of things?

C: Do you think we ever really do see beyond those things,

the surface of things?

R: "Just beyond the fall of grace, behold that

ever-shining place."

C: Yes. I do. I don't really have a choice. I wish I could.

Good luck to you, Raymond.

R: Mrs. Whitaker. (holding her arm)

Man: You! Boy! Hands off! Yeah! You!

R: Raymond, please don't. You're so beautiful.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Chapter 1: Critical Discourse Analysis: An Overview.....	3
1.1 Abstract.....	3
1.2 Definition.....	3
1.3 CDA’s Background	4
1.5 Aim of CDA	9
Chapter 2: Language, Gender, and Ethnicity: Some Aspects Concerning the American Society	11
2.1 Abstract.....	11
2.2 The Language and Gender Approach.....	11
2.3 The Language and Ethnicity Approach.....	19
Chapter 3: Analysis and Considerations on the Movies.....	26
3.1 Abstract.....	26
3.2 Summer of Sam	26
3.2.1 Movie Data Sheet	26
3.2.2 Synopsis.....	27
3.2.3 Critical Discourse Analysis	31
3.3 Far From Heaven	49
3.3.1 Movie Data Sheet	49
3.3.2 Synopsis.....	51
3.3.3 Critical Discourse Analysis	52
Conclusion	79
Bibliography	81
Websites.....	82
Appendix.....	83
Transcripts of the conversations analyzed in Summer of Sam:.....	84
Transcripts of the conversations analyzed in Far From Heaven:	93