

# PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY AND WOMEN'S POSITION IN ACTION MOVIE GENRE: CASE STUDY OF PIERRE MOREL'S *TAKEN*

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## Abstract

Action movie has established itself as one of the leading movie genres which has been present in the film industry for a long time. However, action movie genre has been characterized as male-oriented. This study aims to reveal the issue of patriarchal society and women's position represented in action movie entitled *Taken*, directed by Pierre Morel. Research problems in this study are related to: (a) how is the superiority of men depicted in the movie, and (b) how is women represented as the secondary subject. To analyze the movie, this study used the theory of Simone de Beauvoir especially in her book, *The Second Sex*. The result of this study showed that *Taken* movie reproduce the stereotype of action movie genre as male-oriented and women is considered as the secondary subject.

**Keywords:** *Taken*, Action Movie Genre, Patriarchal Society, Secondary Subject, Simone de Beauvoir.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The shaping of men and women equality means that there is still a differences or classes of sex between men and women classes. The process of establishing a behavior that is not learned or performed by an individual at present is referred to as Shaping. Shaping can also be defined as the procedure that involves reinforcing behaviors that are closer to the target behavior, also known as successive approximations. The concept was first developed and used by B.F Skinner, who is known for his theories that involve learning behaviors through reinforcement. The theory involves reinforcing behavior that are

successively closer and closer to the approximations of the desired, or targeted, behavior. The process of shaping is vital because it's not always likely that an organism should display the exact target behavior spontaneously. However, by reinforcing the behavior that is closer and closer to the desired behavior, the required behavior can be taught/learned. For instance, teaching new tricks to a dog, teaching a kid how to walk and the likes. The step by step procedure of reinforcing different behaviors until the ultimate behavior is achieved is called Successive Approximations.

Based on Beauvior (1949) about the patriarchal which about the women that is a second object of men, women always female looked as the secondary or nonexistent player in the major social institutions. Beauvoir asserted that men defines to be human, the first object and the leader. Simone De Beauvoir (1953) took a very similar view to traditional Marxists, only instead of seeing religion as assisting in the subjugation of the workers, she saw it as exploiting and oppressing women. She argued that religious faiths encouraged women to be meek, to put up with inequality, exploitation and suffering and doing so will bring rewards in the afterlife.

*Taken* is a 2008 English-language French action thriller film written by Luc Besson and Robert Mark Kamen, and directed by Pierre Morel. It stars Liam Neeson, Maggie Grace, Famke Janssen, Katie Cassidy, Leland Orser, and Holly Valance. Neeson plays Bryan Mills, a former CIA operative who sets about tracking down his teenage daughter Kim (Grace) and her best friend Amanda (Cassidy) after the two girls are kidnapped by Albanian human traffickers while traveling in France during a vacation.

*Taken* was released in France on February 27, 2008 by EuropaCorp, and later in the United States on January 30, 2009 by 20th Century Fox, the movie has grossed more than \$226 million. Numerous media outlets have cited the film as a turning point in Neeson's career that redefined and transformed him to an action film star. The first film in the *Taken* franchise, *Taken* was followed by two sequels—*Taken 2* and *Taken 3*—released in 2012 and 2014, respectively. A television series for the series premiered in 2017 on NBC, with Clive Standen portraying Bryan Mills.

The action movie genre itself is identical with masculinity value. It often depicts a strong male hero, while women character is often portrayed as the second object in the context of patriarchal society. It is assumed that *Taken* movie use the similar formula and stereotype towards women. This study aims to reveal the patriarchal society and how women character is depicted in the movie. Based on that, research problems in this study are (a) how is the superiority of men depicted in the movie, and (b) how is women represented as the secondary subject.

## 2. DISCUSSIONS

### 2.1 Female as The Second Object

The movie Taken reveals about the patriarchal issue, when female looked as the secondary or nonexistent player in the major social institutions and men asserted to be the human, the leader.



(00:11:43)

From the picture above, it can be seen that the women looks weak. It can be seen by how she leads her head into the man beside her and she looks sad and crying like she fears of something. While the man comforting her by let her cry on his chest and hug her like he will protect her. His expression is calm like he can handle the situation while the girl looks like she can handle it and needs the man's help.



(00:43:47) & (00:43:50)

Moreover, from the picture above, it can be seen women as the second object of the men in the way the man treats the woman in the picture. The expression of the woman was scared and afraid, she has wrinkle between her eyebrows and not looking to the man's side. While the man that makes her scared lift up his finger and make it to be one like he

gonna tame her. The expression of the man in the second picture reveals that he mad to the women, and become a dominant or the higher level from the woman. The woman can not against the man it can be seen how scared her to the man.



(00:53:29)

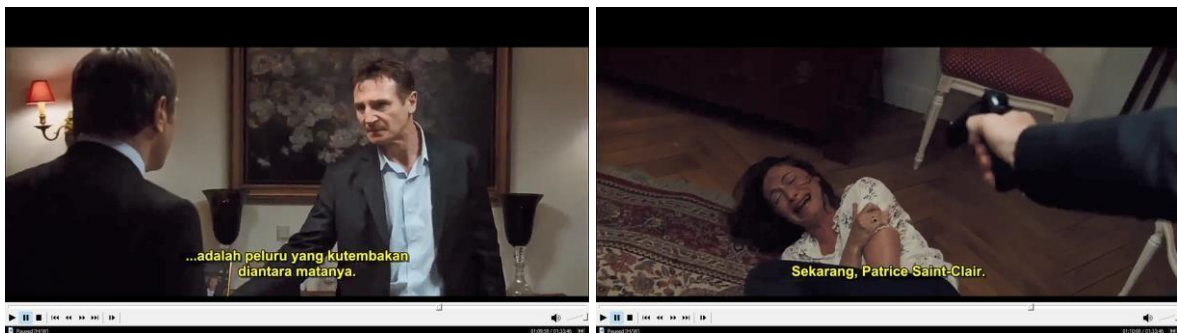
In the picture above, it reveals how the man treats or taking care of her. The woman beside him looks like sick, the pale skin and how she sleeps so painfully. There is an intravenous or infusion beside the girl and in front of the man. The picture describes how weak women in here and who taking of her is a man that looks so strong or healthy in this picture.

## 2.2 The Superiority of Men



(00:48:56) & (00:48:59)

In the two pictures above reveal the dominant or how powerful the men are. The men in the picture holding the gun. There is a clue that only a man can holding the gun. This picture reveals the bravery action about the men that always using the gun to attack each other, it means that when the men have to fight each other they can fight until die.



(01:09:59) & (01:10:00)

In the pictures above, reveal about the dominant of the men towards women. The one of the man is holding gun and point it to the women who looks scared and crying. She crawling and hold her arm when the gun pointed to her. It can be counts to woman as the second object of the man that makes him to be the dominant or powerfull object. The man's who holding the gun expression looks calm but a little bit confuse because of the wrinkle between his eyebrows and staring to the man in front of him like he was blackmail him.



(01:23:55)

The picture above reveals two man fighting each other. The one guy is holding a knife and the other holding the guy's hand to make sure the knife is not hurting him. The way to guys fighting each other reveals the powerful of the men in this film. They do not fight in the normal way but using the weapon.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Action has established itself as one of the leading genres which has been

present in the film industry for a long time (Neale,2000). Action genre has been characterized as male-oriented

(Tasker 2004: 8). *Taken* was one of the films with action genres which reveals the feminism issue, especially in the way shaping women and men equality. According to Beauvoir (1949), patriarchal is, that they are controlled by men. Beauvoir asserted that men defines to be human and the female is an object, the female looked as the secondary or nonexistent player in the major social institutions. Mostly the scene in *Taken* was dominated by the man or woman always be the weak side and the man will be the one who solves the problem. How the women look as the second object of the men and how weak the women in this film draw clearly in this film. And the dominant of the men because of most of the action film is

dominant by the men. That's why the author using the Beauvoir's theory to analyzing this movie that reveals a lot of scene that the men are dominant and look the women as the second object of nonexistent player in the major social institutions.

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