



# Intersectionality between Gender and Class in Modern Culture

---

*An analysis of the Sex and the City movies*

**Maria Reznik, Secil Safedof**

**Supervisor: Fredrik Sunnemark**

Bachelor's thesis in Political Science, 15 ECTS

University West

Spring term 2013

## Abstract

This thesis aims to explore how gender and socioeconomic class is portrayed in the two *Sex and the City* movies. The underlying purpose is to critically assess the celebration of emancipated women, as the movies allegedly portray. The intersection between gender and class will enable to analyse the depiction of different femininities and their power relationships. The uniqueness of the thesis is that the two movies have until today by large been ignored by the academia therefore it will hopefully commence a discussion which is long overdue. The result of analysing from an intersectional perspective will include a wider range of factors and provide a comprehensive interpretation of contemporary society as well as its interrelation with movies.

Popular culture | Intersectionality | Gender | Class | Discourse analysis.

**Table of contents**

Table of contents .....3

1. Introduction .....4

2. Literature review .....6

3. Theoretical approach .....10

    Concepts .....10

    Analytical Framework .....19

4. Specified Aim & Research Questions.....21

    Aim .....21

    Research questions .....21

5. Method .....21

    Research design .....21

    Analysing data .....24

6. Analysis .....25

7. Conclusion.....43

8. Reference list.....46

## 1. Introduction

A whole separate thesis can be written in an attempt to define the study of 'political science', however a common working definition can be power struggle and deployment of power. Power relations do not only exist on national levels and between political parties affiliated bodies but is also present in everyday life. The well-known slogan “the personal is political” does not mean that all conflicts on a personal level are of political concern, it rather means that even personal conflicts should be able to become a political matter.

A personal struggle, if portrayed in a popular and acclaimed movie can be elevated to become a political issue. The various mass and social media available in the 21st century has an interactive effect on society as it has the ability to provide a snapshot of a particular aspect of society and simultaneously influence it by what it portrays. Movies shown in a movie theatre can have various purposes such as to scare its audience, make it dream about future or extraterrestrial universes, get informed about contemporary issues or learn about the past. Take for example the two *Sex and the City* movies which followed six successful seasons on HBO (Home Box Office) which itself was based on a book with the same title written by Candace Bushell (First Published 1 August 1997 by Warner Books) loosely based on her and her friends' experiences. The book's inspiration can also be attributed to Helen Gurley Brown's book from 1962 – *Sex and the Single Girl*.

The series and subsequently the movies follow the lives of four women in their thirties and early forties: Carrie Bradshaw, Samantha Jones, Miranda Hobbes and Charlotte York in New York City. There are multiple interrelated storylines and the various contemporary issues faced in modern western society are frequently touched upon such as relationship amongst friends and family, sexuality, femininity and professional life. By doing so it normalises certain issues that have been considered taboo in society and brings them on to the radar which might positively influence the lives for certain members of the audience who might previously have been trapped in thinking they were alone facing a particular issues.

More importantly however, *Sex and the City* has been celebrated for portraying the victory of feminism – showing the freedom, emancipation and equality of women and how they are on a near to equal playing field with men, something women could not dream of before the feminist movements. Jane Gerhard (2005) argues that the first thematic of the series is female friendship and the second is female sexuality itself which is explored dually in the series – via the main four characters engaging in sexual activities with multiple partners and subsequently

discussing it in a frank manner amongst themselves which she argues is as great of an enjoyment to them as the sexual encounter itself. Kim Akass and Janet McCabe state in their book *Reading Sex and the City* that the series have contributed to the cultural discourse of fashion trends, relationships, contemporary femininity and the single woman (Gerhard, 2005. Akass & McCabe, 2004).

Fanny Ambjörnsson, a leading author in the fields of gender and class argues that it is misleading to group women into a single category. This line of analysis highlights a common weakness of the previous studies of *Sex and The City*. Furthermore Kimberlé Crenshaw, who devised the concept of intersectionality, argues that the sources leading to inequalities do not operate in isolation but rather in conjunction with one another and therefore ought to be viewed accordingly. Thereby accounting for class in addition to gender will open a whole new world of potential inequalities previously left unexplored.

It also prompts one question whether it is fair to celebrate the achievements of feminism via the *Sex and the City* movies; whether all women have genuinely emancipated and whether the aforementioned emancipation applies to all or to some at expense of others. In the intersection between gender and class a spectrum of femininities can be mapped. Hence, instead of studying the power relationships between men and women, which has been the focus of earlier studies, this thesis will analyse the power relationships between different class femininities portrayed in the *Sex and the City* movies.

The structure of the thesis will commence with a literature review that will provide a background and foundation to the issues that will be addressed and also identify the gaps currently present in the academic literature. It will be followed by a theoretical approach that will explain the concepts that will be employed in the analytical framework. The research design and methods chapter will reveal that this is a qualitative analysis and that the case study design is the most appropriate design to carry out this research and answer the research questions. It will also consider and show why the alternative methods are inappropriate. Subsequently an intersectionality analysis will be applied to the movies in order to comprehensively address our research questions. The two *Sex and the City* movies will be used as a single source and will not be compared to one another.

## 2. Literature review

The focus of this thesis is to portray and explore the interrelationship of women from different socioeconomic classes and their respective femininities. Concurrently the power relationships between them will be evaluated. The blueprint continuously employed are the women from the *Sex and the City* movies. This literature review will endeavour to decipher how the study of femininity has evolved and transformed through times and determine the influencing factors and academic studies. A gap will emerge whilst delineating the direction of the study, which has been identified and alluded to by various academics however not comprehensively explored. This gap is the pivot of the thesis.

### The different study approaches of movies and popular media

The mainstream, dominant and cross-border movie industry originated from Hollywood. Many, if not most, of the Hollywood media concerns an aspect, which involves, or is relevant to the American society and its many relations. Thereby the literature about the industry will be according. The rise and spread of the feminist movement, continuing through present day, influences all aspects of society and has significantly impacted the movie industry and academic literature, as well as the literature about the industry (Ryan & Kellner, 1990, Benshoff & Griffin, 2004).

Most literature about popular culture explain that current discourses in the society are usually reflected in popular culture, such as in movies. It is one of the means to illustrate and highlight problems, politics, conflicts, various movements, developments and strengths and weaknesses of a society. The books/literature are often structured chronologically, meaning that they outline what type of movies were popular at a specific time and what messages were conveyed via the movies. In short, movies were and still are one of the means to illustrate discourses, it does not necessarily have to be the current discourse (Ryan & Kellner, 1990, Benshoff & Griffin, 2004).

There are volumes of literature about gender issues that covers topics like popular culture, gender representation and the evolution of the feminist movement. In this literature, the gender representation has conventionally been studied in two predominant ways. The arguably more prevalent, is the men versus women approach, where femininity traits are identified as the opposites to the masculine traits (Hollows, 2000. Harzewski, 2011). The emerging patterns in movies portrayed women from a particular standpoint namely emotionally vulnerable, domesticated and highly dependent on the man both financially and

emotionally. Women were usually portrayed as men's objects and fetishes of men's desires (Ryan & Kellner 1990: 137-139. Dines & Humez, 2003. Harzewski, 2011). The movies portrayed a male dominated society that can be described with one single word that is used in the majority of this literature, namely patriarchy<sup>1</sup>.

Before embarking on the latter study approach, it is necessary set the scene a bit further.

### Intersectionality

Feminism is an expanding movement fighting for equality, liberty, freedom and respect for women since the beginning of the first wave feminism in the 1920's (Benshoff & Griffin, 2004. Hollows, 2000). Kimberlé Crenshaw in the 1980's devised an analytical tool she labelled intersectionality. It provides, she argues, an alternative perspective on inequality since it invites to account for other crucial factors contribution to inequality such as ethnicity/race, class, sexuality and age which initially were marginalised. The supporters of this thinking state that it provides a fairer understanding of inequalities and power relations in the society (Crenshaw, 1994). Irrespective of the combination of the causative factors of oppression which are selected for analysis, the fundamental purpose and function of intersectionality is to evaluate and discuss the power relationship between different groups in hierarchical societies (Crenshaw, 1994).

### A study approach in transition

The feminist movement has fought hard to break the barriers and erase this image of weak women and as men's objects (Ryan & Kellner 1990: 137. Dines & Humez, 2003).

Correspondingly more movies began to portray the independent and working woman who is capable of supporting herself, without a man's involvement (Harzewski, 2011).

In alignment with the intersectional analysis, contemporary literature, acknowledging shortcomings of preceding portrayals has begun to address the issue of inequalities within groups with a special focus on females since feminism has attracted substantial academic attention (Ambjörnsson, 2004).

More recent literature, which there is a few of, present another possible way of analysing inequalities within gender, namely the power relations between different femininities. Fanny

---

<sup>1</sup> Dictionary definition of patriarchy:  
"a society, system, or organization in which men have all or most of the power and influence"  
(www.macmillandictionary.com )

Ambjörnsson is a leading author in Sweden who has introduced the viewpoint of discussing different femininities and their relations (Ambjörnsson, 2004. Skeggs, 2001).

### The second approach: femininity versus femininity

In her book “I en Klass För sig – Genus Klass och Sexualitet bland Gymnasietjejer” Fanny Ambjörnsson highlights the important roles of class, sexuality and ethnicity. She observed and studied thirty, 16 to 18 year old girls at Swedish high-schools enrolled on different courses and fields of studies. She asks the girls and attempts to address questions which relate to definition of ‘girl’, concepts of normality and abnormality, perception of right and wrong and what is perceived to be a ‘good’ in alternative to ‘bad’ girl.

Through her research it emerged that the girls were compartmentalised into various categories depending on their socioeconomic status, affiliations and association and discipline of study amongst many other categories. It happened in both a voluntary and involuntary fashion and once girls identified themselves with a group of similar characteristics they tended to live up to the expected traits but also cast judgment, positive and negative, of other groups. This could become a breeding ground for ostracisation.

Using intersectional analysis, a second gender representation approach emerges, which does not only juxtapose women to men but shows that there is a power dynamic, and sometimes even a struggle, amongst women. It is commonly influenced by class, sexuality and ethnicity. Ambjörnsson’s book triggered and inspired this line of investigation and reasoning by conducting a study on girls in their developing ages. It showed that the power dynamic is more deep rooted and wider than a simple ‘men versus women’ analysis. As popular culture is simultaneously a reflects and influences the contemporary society, it will be an extension of this line of study to analyse the power dynamic and femininities portrayed in popular culture. A further academic gap, which inadvertently will be addressed, is that studies of popular culture have only faintly been made from a political science perspective.

### The gap the thesis is filling

The *Sex and the City* movies have not been analysed from an intersectional perspective yet, which is a crucial gap to fill in since the movies reveals inequality and power relations among women (Ambjörnsson 2004: 24-28). The majority of previous literature about *Sex and the City*, the series or the book, usually analyse women versus men, which is when they commit the mistake to group all kind of women into one group. It is underlined when Ambjörnsson



employs the term normative femininity to describe the expected female traits (Ambjörnsson, 2004: 28-29). She also points out that norms and expected behaviour change accordingly to the discourse (Ambjörnsson, 2004: 22-23). This reinforces the point that the research and analysis has to be taken further to encapsulate the power struggles present in modern society.

### The role of the preceding series

The *Sex and the City* TV series preceded the two movies with the first and last episode airing in 1998 and 2006 respectively. To date it is frequently rerun in many countries worldwide. The series were a global phenomenon of the time and enjoyed an unprecedented success whilst breaking many barriers and taboos. It enjoyed a maintained success throughout its course predominantly because it had a mutually reinforcing relationship with the aspect of society it was portraying. It reflected the society and prevalent values of the times and also influenced and set a trend for the future (Akass & McCabe, 2004).

This success attracting the enormous pool of audience inevitably became an interest in the academic world to study this as a phenomenon but also the values, relationships and power dynamics of society. A multitude of books, articles and journals have been published debating many angles of the series. However, as said, the series were reflective and relevant for the particular time they were aired and they evolved together with its audience throughout the life of the series. Its success hinged on the series closely monitoring, understanding, and reflecting the interest of the day. However, since the last episode aired in 2008, that day was some time ago. This does not make it irrelevant or obsolete however provided the speed with which currently things change, some could be considered outmoded or a thing of the past (Harwevski, 2011. Akass & McCabe, 2004).

Thereby a study of the two movies is more appropriate for two main and evident reasons: (i) they are chronologically closer to present day and since the movies followed a similar structure, reflecting and influencing present day society, it makes them more relevant for present purposes; and (ii) the academic study and analysis of the movies is not even closely as exhaustive as the it is for the series. Thus there is an overwhelming case in favour of studying the *Sex and the City* movies.

### 3. Theoretical approach

The ontological position in the qualitative research will be constructivism (Bryman 2008: 366). From this point of view, reality is local and specific, meaning that it varies between individuals and groups and changes over time. Constructivism is informative and reflective rather than inquisitive i.e. seeking for the truth. Therefore it can be said that ‘reality’ from this point of view is not discovered, but it is constructed. So it is the actors and current values that portray what the contemporary rationality is.

Bryman (2008) points out that people employ the various categorisations to facilitate the understanding of the world. Some of the categorisations are static however others are products of a society a particular time therefore their respective composition can be fluid and change over time (Bryman 2008: 20-22). We will next go on to explore certain key concepts that frequently reoccur throughout the thesis.

#### Concepts

##### **Gender:**

A possible explanation for why previous literature about gender mainly outlines and discusses in a ‘man versus women’ fashion may be because one of the definitions of gender is the power relations between the two, according to the author Joan W. Scott (Scott, 1986). In his article “*Gender: a Useful Category of Historical Analysis*”, she presents and evaluates the understanding of the concept of ‘gender’ throughout times from various ideological perspectives. One of the conclusions that can be drawn is that gender (and many other concepts) does not have a static definition. In her words, “those who would codify the meanings of words fight a losing battle, for words, like the ideas and things they are meant to signify, have a history.” (Scott, 1986: 1053)

Historic study of women were narrow and focused on women only, which led to the introduction to the concept of ‘gender’ that was associated with a broader meaning. The meaning of ‘gender’ for American feminists, who initially employed the concept, was a distinction between the two sexes. To be more specific, men and women were defined in terms of exhibiting opposite characteristics to one another. These definitions, or the expected traits of each gender, are also known as normative femininity or masculinity (Scott, 1986:1054. Ambjörnsson, 2004). The distinctive difference between the genders is couched in patriarchy which postulates that man and masculinity is superior to women and femininity. In

other words femininity is frequently associated with being petite, quiet, caring, dependent and weak, while masculinity is associated with the opposite; being big, strong, aggressive, leading and non-emotional (Benshoff & Griffin, 2004: 203-205).

Additionally, the concept gender rejects the biological differences between the sexes but rather emphasises the cultural constructions. This means that gender is an analytic category where socially created ideas about men's and women's roles are discussed and analysed. (Scott, 1986: 1056). The French philosopher Michael Foucault introduced the term discourse, which alludes to the notion of ideas and understandings are created by the society and thereby continuously change and evolve. The conclusion that can be drawn is that the understanding of gender varies accordingly to the discourse and thereof does not have a certain definition, as stated in the quote above. However, gender refers to the identity of each sex, Scott phrases: "Gender is, in this definition, a social category imposed on a sexed body." (Scott, 1986: 1058) Relating this to Foucault's discourse it suggests that it is the social category that is in constant change. In other words, the identity of the sexes and normative femininity/masculinity alters along with the discourse. (Marsh & Stoker, 2010:170-171).

Joan W. Scott identifies the weakness that gender is most often restricted to the kinship system, that is, the household and family social structures. She emphasises that the view needs to be broadened, especially in modern societies, and include the gender construction within the labour market, the educational system and the polity (suffrage system) (Scott, 1986: 1068).

Conclusively, the theorising of gender, according to the Scott, is that gender is a signifier of power relationships. The sexual differences, or the normative femininities/masculinities as authors also refer to it, highlight differentiation and the concept of gender provides a sphere where the complex human interactions are to be analysed and hopefully understood (Scott, 1986: 1070). The term power relationship suggests a hierarchal structure, meaning that oppression must be present. In this thesis we will identify the hierarchal structure in specifically the *Sex and the City* movies, understand and analyse the power relationships between the women only. The intersectional analytical tool will enable us to analyse three femininities in the movies where the hierarchal structure is created by the class differences.

## **Intersectionality:**

Before introducing the three femininities it is crucial to understand what intersectionality is and how gender and class intersect in this research. The following explanation of intersectionality will begin with a brief history about the feminist struggle, which in turn gave rise to the idea of intersectionality created by Kimberlé Crenshaw.

The waves of the feminist movement throughout history endeavoured to eradicate the oppression against women by giving them a right to vote, a right to own property, reproductive freedom and freedom from discrimination at the workplace and other institutions. In the 1970 the African-American scholars identified that most feminist scholars to date were middle class, educated white women, commonly also known as WASP (Shields 2008: 302). Under the feminist label they campaigned for and advanced goals in their individual interest which included reproductive rights and adequate contraception employing the rhetoric of “free choice”, equal access to male dominated professions and better political representation in state institutions. Certain aspects of oppression were inevitably left unnoticed as the WASPs involved in the feminist movement generalised struggles related to them as the struggles of the entire womanhood.

Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in the 1980s engaged in a study trying to ascertain the reason why black women were still discriminated at the workplace notwithstanding the presence of anti-discrimination laws in the US. Her interim conclusion, which subsequently led to her theory on “intersectionality”, was that the law differentiated between two kinds of discrimination, namely gender and race and when both were present simultaneously or it was not possible to ascertain the exact grounds of discrimination it became difficult to apply the law to oust the discrimination. She therefore employed a proverbial description of an intersection to make it possible to simultaneously consider all sources of oppression.

In its simplest form she invites one to imagine a crossing of two roads, an intersection, where traffic is going all direction: north/south, east/west. When an accident happens at that intersection it can be due to the fault of one car travelling from any direction or from all of them and sometimes it will be impossible to establish the car at fault (Crenshaw 1989: 149). Similarly in events of oppression and discrimination it can happen on one or multiple grounds simultaneously therefore making it futile to analyse the grounds individually. For example if a black female is laid off work on the grounds of her race and gender, it will be hard to prove a case of discrimination if those factors are looked upon individually and there are black males

and white females still at the workplace. This signifies the importance of taking into consideration multiple axis of oppression; to do otherwise presumes the whiteness of women, the maleness of people of colour and the heterosexuality of everyone (Risman 2004: 422).

Intersectionality in this essay will mainly be used as an analytical tool to ascertain and theorise inequality. Real life is unfortunately not as simple as a crossroad because there is an infinite amounts of grounds of oppression and it is beyond this essay to theorise all of them however it is endeavoured to consider the most common ones namely gender, class (or socioeconomic status), race, and sexual orientation. As intersectionality will invite us to simultaneously look at all the contributors of inequality. We will concentrate on gender and class only, which will provide us the understanding of differences within the group of women.

### **Intersectionality between gender and class:**

The identification of the different femininities in every class may be recognised with the help of a symbolic system. The French sociologist and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu pioneered and utilised it as one of the investigative frameworks in order to study the dynamics of power relations in the society. The author Beverley Skeggs identifies Bourdieu's economic metaphors that are the four types of "capitals", which reveals the distribution of recognition (Skeggs, 2001: 296).

The 'economic capital' includes wealth consisting of income, financial inheritances and monetary assets. The 'cultural capital' is divided into the long-lasting nature and character of the body and mind; cultural goods; and the institutionalised state such as educational qualifications. 'Social capital' means connections and group memberships as a resource generated by relationships. Lastly, 'symbolic capital' implies the recognition and legitimation of all the above capitals. It is the legitimation that brings power. Therefore, symbolic capital must be legitimated before earning symbolic power (Skeggs, 2001: 296).

Hence, the global volume of the capital people possess, the composition of their capital and the weight of the capital determine the distribution of people in the social space, or simply in the society. It enables to recognise others as well as oneself in a system of judgement and classification.

Skeggs argues that femininity is an achievement as well as an investment. By that she means that not all classes have access to femininity and it depends on the possessed capitals named above and the possibility of investing into femininity. This point is accurately summarised by her saying: “Being, becoming, practising, and doing femininity are very different things from women of different classes...” (Skeggs, 2001: 297). She also highlights the simultaneous relation between feminine appearance and feminine characteristics, where the appearance can suggest which traits one obtains. A lot of weight is put on the appearance in femininity studies, as Skeggs repeats in several of her articles: “...to look is to be.” (Skeggs, 2001: 297).

It is understood that Bourdieu’s symbolic capital may be converted into symbolic power when legitimated. It begs the question of whom it is or ought to be legitimated by. Beverley Skeggs in her book *Formation of Class & Gender* discusses and explains the process of becoming legitimated in the context of respectability: “To not be respectable is to have little social value or legitimacy.” (Skeggs, 1997: 3).

Respectability is one of the essentials in the construction of class. It signifies how one speaks and acts, who one speaks to, how one classifies oneself and others, what one studies and how one knows who he/she is or is not. Due to the fact that some classes lack respectability, it has become a property to desire and to achieve. The classes that are positioned with respectability are normalised by it (Skeggs, 1997: 1). As representing each femininity according to class we will explore which class is possessed with respectability and why, as well as understand the hierarchal structure between the classes explaining who legitimises.

### **The three femininities**

#### **Working class femininity:**

According to Beverley Skeggs the concern about respectability is present due to the class that does not possess it, namely the working class. The working class is identified as dangerous, threatening, revolutionary, polluting and therefore not respectable (Skeggs, 1997: 1). When specifically women from the working class are described they are identified as “...the loud, white, excessive, drunk, fat, vulgar, disgusting, hen-partying woman...” (Skeggs, 2005: 965).

As previously mentioned, appearance is an important factor to consider. When discussing the working class woman, the most reoccurring word describing their clothing and appearance is

excess. Their tastelessness results with a cheap look, such as wearing inappropriate clothes according to their figure and/or weather. They are described as usually wearing tiny mini-skirts, plastic stilettos and have an excess amount of make-up on and badly dyed hair, as an example (Skeggs, 2005: 966-967).

When concerning behaviour and language, as with their clothing, it is also an excess. They are loud, so they are sometimes heard before seen, or they simply scream to each other from each end of a street. They are known as having unhealthy habits that include smoking, poor diet and alcohol consumption. Their behaviour and attitude is sometimes masculinised, partly because the working class women occupy tough labour requiring physical strength, where femininity is excluded (Skeggs, 2005: 967. Skeggs, 2001: 297). The working class women are seen as rough, tough, cocky, loud, rude and lacking manners. Their way of speaking and appeal can to others seem like they are lacking respect and are rather seen as disparaging and threatening (Ambjörnsson, 2004: 57, 99).

The image of working class women is also suggestive of their familial relations. Instead of building careers, they give birth to children (often at an early age) who they cannot take care of because of their irresponsibility (Skeggs, 2005: 967). The working class consists of a group of women who come from households with parents who usually are not highly educated. They have low-paid jobs or do not work at all resulting in bad economy, poor living standards, living in poor areas of the city and bad grades. This in turn results with that women who are associated with the working class only have the opportunity to go to schools, which they might not want to do. They seldom study at universities and the pattern reveals that they often follow their parents' footsteps (Ambjörnsson, 2004: 33-34).

Since femininity is an achievement and requires investments, economic and cultural resources are not immediately available to working class women. Their behaviour and excess appearance distances them from femininity. The question of what femininity is, still remains. At this stage it is possible deduce what femininity is not however the middle and upper class will reveal an understanding and image of femininity and the relations therein.

### **Middle class femininity:**

What distinguishes the middle class from the working class is that "...the middle class have no choice but to choose" (Skeggs, 2005: 974). To choose is a freedom, which provides access to

the symbolic capital, or property, as it is also called. This suggests that the middle class women have access to the resources to perform femininity (Skeggs, 2005: 977).

Moreover, the middle class are in constant desire to improve and distance themselves from those who do not have the possibility and resources to do so. They want to improve the body, mind, accommodation, relationships and ultimately the future. Improvement is a means when the already possessed capital becomes valuable in a wider context than the local. Since the middle class do not want to be categorised as the working class by themselves or others, they clearly discern themselves via their appearance, their body and clothing style. Women from the middle class invest in their bodies to look healthy. It also reflects her caring of herself to herself and others. This includes in the investment of cultural capital and thereby conveys respectability (Skeggs, 1997: 82-84).

The working class women are distinguished from the middle class by the characterisations of their excessive style and ignorance, proliferates and sexual deviance. Conversely middle class women, due to their subtle and appropriate style, exhibit elegance and respectability. They are however not desexualised. Clothing, as well as the body, is a cultural capital. The sophisticated, classical and elegant styles are what constructs a woman's image from the middle class and also distinguishes her from the working class. The clothing and manners characterises the women (Skeggs, 1997: 79-84).

Middle class women usually come from households where their parents occupy jobs within the frames of the middle class, regardless whether it is lower middle class or upper middle class. This often implies that their parents have some form of higher education, which consecutively leads their children choosing to study on university level (Ambjörnsson, 2004: 34). The middle class women usually occupy positions of authority, such as teachers, doctors and social workers (Skeggs, 1997: 82).

Achievement of being involved in femininity are provided power to evaluate others. Thus, in order to convert the single capitals into symbolic capital, the women require access to the power networks, meaning those with power are those who legitimise (Skeggs, 2001: 302; Skeggs, 1997: 87). The hierarchal structure becomes evident, the middle class women evaluate and sometimes even legitimise the working class femininity and the upper class women legitimise the middle class femininity. It is essential to keep in mind that the distance between the working class femininity and middle class femininity is greater than between the middle and upper class femininity.



### **Upper class femininity:**

The upper class femininity may be viewed as the goal and achievement of femininity, which often the middle class women strive for. The ideal of femininity has had since the 18<sup>th</sup> century a kinship with the lifestyle and values of the upper class, which is “...ease, restraint, calm, and luxurious decoration.” (Skeggs, 2001: 297) It is a class representing purity and heterosexuality, which can all be summed up in the concept of lady. Again, appearance signifies behaviour. The difference between the middle class women and upper class women does not differ greatly in their clothing styles except the prices and labels (Skeggs, 2001: 297; Skeggs, 1997: 85-86).

Access to knowledge and to the capitals framed by Bourdieu establishes the class differences. As it will be revealed below, the upper class has the most access and thereby possesses most capitals, or property, leading them to have the most symbolic power in the hierarchy of the three classes.

Upper class women highly value their role as mothers, which is explicit since they occupy their children with activities in order to further develop their abilities aiming for full self-realisation. Moreover, they have the possibility to attend the prestigious schools, employing the prestigious tutors for further development (Ostrander, 1980. 28-29).

The use of femininity by women can ensure their position in the upper class by marriage. This suggests that, as a wife, the woman is expected to create a comfortable home and to be a good and supportive companion. All the domestic concerns are of her responsibility since the husband usually has a demanding occupation. The main point is that the man is usually the economical provider (Ostrander, 1980. 30).

The upper class women have the freedom to spend their time on charity associations and volunteering work. Her interests do not lay in earning money, but rather in self-satisfaction. Further reasons why volunteer work is a common phenomenon among upper class women is that it may be a family tradition. Again, this illustrates that the family is highly valued and prioritised. It is also an opportunity to personally work in positions of power and prestige since it is one of the few arenas where they are in contact with other classes, where they are sought as prestigious contacts by other classes (Ostrander, 1980. 30-33).

As a conclusion, the upper class women are keen on maintaining their position and power. As understood from the middle class, investment in the appearance; the body and the clothes

signifies the women's character of being caring and proper, providing the possibility to remain in the position of possessing symbolic power (Skeggs, 1997: 87).

## Analytical Framework

**Figure 1. Analytical framework for studying class-based femininities and their intersectionality**

			Class		
			Working class	Middle class	Upper Class
Femininity	RQ 1	Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loud</li> <li>• Vulgar</li> <li>• Threatening</li> <li>• Revolutionary</li> <li>• Rude</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proper manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proper manner</li> </ul>
		Dress (appearance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheap look</li> <li>• inappropriate clothes</li> <li>• excess</li> <li>• unhealthy look and lifestyle</li> <li>• rough appearance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sophisticated, classical, elegant, appropriate and subtle styles</li> <li>• healthy lifestyle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of femininity</li> <li>• Lady</li> <li>• More expensive prices and labels than previous class</li> </ul>
		Family/sexuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give birth to children at early age</li> <li>• not educated parents</li> <li>• highly sexual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smaller families</li> <li>• not as many children as working-class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value role as mother and wife</li> <li>• Women can ensure upper-class position by marriage.</li> <li>• The man is the main economical provider</li> </ul>
		Work/education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unemployed</li> <li>• low-paid jobs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents occupy positions is within the frames of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibility to attend prestigious schools</li> <li>• Women can</li> </ul>

				<p>middle class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• higher education</li> <li>• positions of authority</li> </ul>	<p>spend time as she wishes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer work, charity.</li> </ul>
RQ 2	<p>Power relations between the class based femininities (superior/subordinated (inferior) us/them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distance themselves from the classes above.</li> <li>• Has no or little opportunities to become legitimised by the middle-class women.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively distance themselves from the working class</li> <li>• In constant desire to improve to reach next class.</li> <li>• Much smaller gap between middle-class and under-class than with working-class.</li> <li>• Greater chances of becoming legitimised by upper-class women.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most access to resources needed to perform femininity</li> <li>• Highest up in the hierarchy of the three class femininities</li> <li>• In power of legitimising middle-class women.</li> </ul>	

## 4. Specified Aim & Research Questions

### Aim

The aim of this research is to conduct a discourse analysis of the *Sex and the City* movies and study how gender and class interact in the portrayal of femininities. The following questions will be addressed throughout the research.

### Research questions

- How is the femininity of working class women, middle class women and upper class women portrayed in terms of talk, dress, family, work and sexuality in the *Sex and the City* movies?
- How is the power relationship between these femininities portrayed in the movies?

## 5. Method

### Research design

Our research questions have led us to the decision to use the case study design to comprehensively address the questions which entails a full and intensive analysis of one single case (Bryman 2008: 52-53). The single case will be explained below, followed by a discussion of why this design is the most appropriate one.

Thomas (2011) has provided a workable definition of case study analysis which is

*“...analyses of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods. The case that is the subject of the inquiry will be an instance of a class of phenomena that provides an analytical frame — an object— within which the study is conducted and which the case illuminates and explicates.”* (Thomas, 2011: 513).

For this thesis the case we are addressing is the construction of femininities in current political discourse. Thus, the case is political discourse observed in the *Sex and the City* movies. Please note that this is not a case of popular culture and/or movies, but studying the two movies within political science is rather a contribution. As mentioned in the literature review, considering popular culture in the sphere of political science has rarely occurred.

Moreover, the *Sex and the City* movies are appropriate to study when analysing the construction of femininities in a contemporary discourse, in our opinion, for the following reasons. Each persona, not only the main characters, has clear positions in the movies. The movies are evidently exaggerated, (the disadvantages of exaggeration is mentioned below) which eases to recognise the hierarchal structure and relationships. We have chosen to concentrate on the relationships between the women only since the main characters are females and the general plot is about successful ladies. Hence, we question the success and highlight the inequalities within the womanhood.

There are various benefits we derive from employing the case study analysis – the main one is that it gives us great latitude to frame and structure the case that we are interested in as we are not limited by methodologies and procedures of other techniques. The case study analysis allows following both the deductive or inductive research. We have employed the deductive approach, meaning that the research questions, which are based on the theories and concepts introduced, enable us to collect data. Bryman points out that, within the case study design, the deductive relationship between theory and research is more common in quantitative studies, while the inductive research is commonly used in qualitative studies. This research is qualitative, as it will be explained in the next paragraph, and since the case study design is flexible, it is possible to execute a deductive and qualitative research (Bryman, 2008: 54-55).

Additionally, in case study analysis, as pointed out by Thomas (2011) in the quote above, there are generic features that will guide us throughout the research. Firstly there is a distinction made between the “subject”, which in our case is the construction of femininities observed in the contemporary political discourse in the *Sex and the City* movies, as explained above. The other part is the “object” which is the analytical framework, whose utilisation will be explained below. Secondly a case study can be evaluative and explanatory, meaning it is a qualitative research (Thomas, 2011). Our research will allow our case study to portray both of these dynamics because we will have to explain and set the scene of factors when the analytical tool is employed. We will also evaluate the application of the object to the subject and also evaluate whether what the movies show or conclusions that we arrive at from the movies can be a projected on the real life and wider society, that is discuss the external validity (Bryman, 2008: 55, 57).

Related to this is one of the fundamental criticisms against case study analysis, which is generalisation or external validity, in other words that the findings of a case study are limited

to the given circumstances of the case study and it will be a generalisation to both a) consider it to be an accurate portrayal of reality and b) portray the findings onto the real life (Bryman, 2008: 55, 57). We will critically address this point by considering the extent to which the movie portrays real life, real people and the respective values they hold. Movies are normally exaggerated of reality in order to make them entertaining to the viewer as well as highlight problems that the movie is trying to convey. If it is even to an extent reflective of reality it will be necessary to take into account which type of society the reflection may be applied to.

Provided that a case study analysis is “particularly appropriate for individual researchers because it gives an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth within a limited time scale” (Bell 1999: 10). In addition to that it gives us considerable freedom to structure the research and employ methodologies we consider will best facilitate our aims, we consider it to be the best approach to be used to answer the research questions in this thesis (Bryman, 2008: 54).

### **Other designs considered – Cross-sectional and comparative designs**

The case study design is sometimes difficult to distinguish from a cross-sectional design or a comparative design, which makes the two also an option for our research. The difference is that the researcher using the case study design aims to provide an in-depth analysis and explanation of the single case within a certain time. As oppose to the cross-sectional and comparative designs where at least two cases are required to fulfil the aim, which is to generate statements not considering time or place.

However, the aim of this thesis is not to compare or analyse two cases, which could for example be the construction of femininity versus the construction of masculinity. We are rather interested in a more detailed analysis of the construction of femininity only and the power relations therein, not putting the two genders in opposition to each other. The reason for this is that there is already plenty of literature and studies about the two genders as opposites, but considerably less about one gender only. We must not forget that inequality does not only exist between men and women, but also within one of the gender categories.

## Analysing data

In this qualitative research, we are to employ the discourse analysis. Originally, this analytical approach was designed to analyse texts and documents, but we are to employ it on movies, which will add another dynamic. It will not be impossible since the discourse analysis, unlike conversation analysis which only deals with conversations, deals with various types of medium. The discourse analysis can be defined as language beyond sentence, meaning there is a message or social problem that is being conveyed through communication, whereby movies are one tool of communication. In this case, we will specifically analyse instances of inequalities, in the *Sex and the City* movies, employing the intersectional perspective (Bryman, 2008: 499-501).

Each identity in the movies is conveyed via certain ways to speak (grammar and diction is important to pay attention to), mannerism, dress, act, value, feel and believe. The discourse analysis is a combination of language, actions, interactions, believing, ways of thinking, valuing, using tools, symbols and object to be able to perform a socially recognizable identity. These indicators will enable us to grasp an understanding of what the character is like and what they do. We will concentrate on the personality of the characters, their occupation, priorities and relations (Gee, 2005: 21 – 23). To clarify, we are not to analyse the movies only as a text, but also the visual aspects of it in order to be able to complete the analytical framework.

In order to collect data in a systematic and consistent manner we will divide the analytical framework into two parts, in accordance with the research questions. The first part will enable us to portray each femininity according to class considering the talk, dress, family, work and sexuality by using various characters as empiric examples. In the last part we will identify the power relationships between the femininities in the following way:

Working class women versus middle class women

Working class women versus upper class women

Middle class women versus upper class women

An analysis and discussion of the power relationships will answer the second research question. This will require explanations of certain scenes in the movie as empiric examples. Kindly note that the movies will not be to be compared to one another but rather used as one single source to be studied.



## 6. Analysis

The analysis is derivative of the analytical framework. It will portray the three different types of femininities: working, middle and upper class. Two characters from the *Sex and the City* movies will be employed and contrasted to one another in order to portray the class femininity. It will be followed by an analysis of the power struggle from an intersectional perspective.

The main plot of the *Sex and the City* movies is about the lives of the four fashionable women: Carrie Bradshaw, Charlotte York Goldenblatt, Miranda Hobbes and Samantha Jones. The audience gets acquainted with the main characters' private issues, success, vacations and delves into all the drama surrounding their lives.

The main characters are depicted as (financially) independent women, which can be classified as one of the achievements and celebrations of the feminist movement. Applying granular analysis further questions arise with respect to which of the three femininities each character belongs to and the underlying reasons. Furthermore attention will be paid to dynamic and interrelationship between the femininities and the way it is portrayed. To investigate and exemplify this, an appropriate character will be selected and viewed through the lens of the analytical tool.

### **Portrayal of working class femininity**

As the movie is premised on four successful women, the working class characters will be selected from beneath them. It is also important to keep in mind throughout the analysis that there are no strict boundaries between each of the classes and a character may exhibit traits and qualities from another class to the one it belongs to.

Carrie's assistant "Louise from St. Louis" (*Sex and the City 1*) is a relevant character to analyse because she possesses many qualities and traits belonging to both the working class femininity and middle class femininity. Furthermore the audience gets to follow her life, struggles and achievements.

Louise evolves during the movie enabling us to compare and contrast how her character and appearance changes from the beginning to the end. She is introduced when Carrie hires her as an assistant to instil order and structure in Carrie's life following betrayal of Mr. Big who did not show up on their wedding day. From the job interview between the two it is possible to get a first impression of her and her respective background. Content of interview will be analysed in further detail below and presently attention will focus on the cultural capitals, namely appearance and speech mannerism.

Louise is the oldest of six siblings which prompts Carrie to enquire how it is like to be six kids, to which Louise replies: "crowded" (*Sex and the City 1*). This is in accordance with the explanation of working class femininity that stipulates that women rather give birth to children than work on their career and have little regard for living conditions. As it was 'crowded' it could be fair to infer that Louise and her family lived in a small dwelling, which is frequent for families in the working class.

She says she moved to New York in order to get more space however ends up "in a one-bedroom apartment with three roommates" (*Sex and the City 1*). Hence, she continues to live in poor living standards due to, presumably, her restricted economic possibilities. Further factors reaffirming this are that she is unemployed before Carrie employs her and rents her handbags. The limited opportunities have proved to be a barrier and obstacle for the working class.

What else distinguishes her from the middle and upper class is her speech. She does not speak vulgarly, but her intonation, grammar and sometimes pronunciation differs from, for example, Carrie's language. An analogous example is Charlotte's nanny Erin. She has an Irish dialect differing from the main characters. We think that the difference is minor and put more weight on their choice of proper vocabulary, nevertheless we believe it is important to notice the difference assuming that the movie aims to demonstrate a difference between the employed and their employer, in other words class differences.

However, even though these factors project working class conditions and qualities, they have two sides. In the definition of working class women they are not interested in improving, changing or striving for the better. Louise shows the opposite. Despite her economical position, she moves to New York to develop and improve her lifestyle. She also shows that she does not give up when difficulties arise. This is exposed when she tells Carrie about her ex-boyfriend who broke her heart a year ago, yet she does not give up on love and explains

that she came to New York to find ‘love’. We believe that this perseverance can be applied as a trait in her personality. Regardless of the fact that she was unemployed and lived with three roommates in New York she continued to struggle and finally meets Carrie, who gives her an opportunity to develop in the big city.

A further important factor to consider, which normally is unusual in the working class is education. Louise admits having a degree in computer science whereas Carrie admits that she “can’t barely text” (*Sex and the City* 1). Having an education strongly contradicts the description of working class women and evidently shows that Louise is striving for improving and expanding her opportunities.

During the employment she continues to contradict the stereotypical image of working class femininity that is expected to behave irresponsibly. From the start she adheres to the understanding that appearance reflects behaviour and personality and therefore dresses appropriately and does not wear excessive make-up. She wears a modest orange blouse with a matching golden necklace during the first meeting with Carrie. We cannot know how much her clothes cost, however we believe that the appearance is more important than the price tag to give an impression.

Her proper appearance does reflect her mannered behaviour. Louise quickly instils organisation in Carrie’s mess and competently handles all tasks Carrie was unable to cope with. Louise organises and cleans Carrie’s apartment, sorts unread e-mails, responded to all the Christmas invitations and even reconstructs Carrie’s homepage. Her engagement in helping Carrie clearly highlights her responsibility.

On the contrary, we shortly meet a character who perfectly suits the described image of working class women. When Carrie is searching for an assistant she met a candidate who also provided an impression by judging her appearance, but negatively. She had untidy hair and just a black shirt. Her voice was masculine and the vocabulary was vulgar as well as she screamed when she was talking. Carrie suspected her being inebriated, which turns out to be true. This clearly exhibits the candidate’s irresponsibility, disrespect and lack of effort.

### **Portrayal of middle class femininity:**

Carrie:

In the very beginning of the first movie when Carrie, who is also the narrator, introduces herself and her three best-friends, she reveals that she has had access to labels from the early days she moved to New York 20 years ago. At that time, just like Louise, she was determined to find the love of her life. In our opinion, this provides an understanding that she has been gaining increasing economical freedom, during her life in New York. We can also deduce that Carrie is a writer and has written three books in the preceding three years. Becoming a writer signifies Carrie's opportunities to choose an occupation that suits her as a person and her interests, a freedom not available to the working class. However, such freedom of choice is a normal standard for the women in the middle class.

Additionally, her appearance, clothing styles and hairstyles reflect the creative person she is. In the beginning of the second movie a scene shows what Carrie looked like when she first came to New York and what she looked like 20 years later. The transformation is evident and worth highlighting. When arriving to New York, Carrie had a loose white sweater, short white trousers and black Converse shoes. She had big curly hair, typical for the 80's, acted very confused and had more bags than she could handle. 20 years later, she is a calm and elegant woman, wearing golden sunglasses, a proper white summer dress and golden, glitter high-heeled shoes. The scene clearly portrays that Carrie has established in New York and has reached the level of performing femininity. Performing femininity becomes possible for middle class women, according to the theoretical description.

Another feature characterising her performance of femininity is her manner of talking. She is the narrator throughout both the movies and formulates the tale very interestingly; she did keep our attention from the beginning to the end. She has a broad vocabulary that enables her to phrase each scene uniquely, sometimes infusing a twist of irony, sarcasm or emotion. This definitely protrudes her talent of being creative and explains why she has become a successful writer.

Hitherto, we have discussed Carrie's economical and cultural capitals, understanding that she certainly does not belong to the working class women. There are many more scenes in the movies showing her opportunities and freedom. As already understood, she can afford to employ an assistant who later receives a Louis Vuitton bag from Carrie as a Christmas gift and she is offered to be a bride model for the Vogue magazine. Hence, it becomes unclear whether Carrie possesses middle or upper class femininity. As in the theoretical description

we learn that the distinction is thin. Thus, the following discussion will outline why we believe that Carrie performs middle class femininity.

It is easier to distinguish middle class from the upper class when it is possible to compare two living standards. Carrie's standard of living differs noticeably when her boyfriend (eventually husband) Mr. Big is present in her life. He purchases a luxurious penthouse in Manhattan to be their future matrimonial house and installs a huge closet, which Carrie has dreamt about. However, Carrie's own apartment is much poorer, smaller and older and is not located in Manhattan. We want to emphasise that even though Carrie is successful and has the ability to perform femininity, there is still space for more improvement and class mobility, meaning she performs middle class femininity without Mr. Big.

As we know, each argument has two sides. In the second movie Carrie keeps her own, old and small apartment even though she is married to Mr. Big and they live in their new apartment. This is obviously an opportunity not available to all members of the society. Nevertheless, the contrast between her old and new apartment is worth noticing because despite her early access to labels and her successful career as a writer, makes us question whether Carrie is not able to afford a more exclusive apartment is a result of choices she has made freely. Can she, on her own, afford a better apartment or is she content living in a small and old apartment? We believe that her income does not allow her to upgrade her standard of living because it is clear in the first movie that she wants to live in a lavish penthouse in Manhattan with a huge closet, which her future husband Mr. Big buys for them. This clearly shows the outer lines of Carrie's opportunities.

Miranda:

Miranda Hobbes is a career-focused, Harvard-educated lawyer who struggles to balance her career and endeavour to be a caring mother to her son Brady and a good wife to Steve. Her character ought to be analysed because it is unique and distinguished from her friends. A first impression of Miranda is that she is less feminine than the other three main characters and that she does not live an exquisite high-end lifestyle. This is a peculiar observation provided that she has a traditional and prestigious occupation.

Miranda lives with her husband and son in Brooklyn, an area of New York that is considered not as elite as Manhattan. This is presumably because Miranda is the main breadwinner in her family where her husband does not hold an equally lucrative job. They ought not to be

classified as 'poor' because they employ a full-time maid, Magda, who is originally from Ukraine. This is an indicator of Miranda's family economical capital, which shows that their opportunities are not entirely limited but that they however must prioritise their priorities because their resources are not unlimited.

Requiring and employing a full-time housekeeper suggests that Miranda does not have sufficient time for the household. As we know, Miranda is a lawyer, which is a prestigious occupation that is accompanied by equivalent education. This is common amongst middle class women. Due to such, and other similar, lucrative occupations available to middle class women allows them not only to employ maids but also to perform femininity.

Appearance is a crucial point in femininity and Miranda's appearance can be analysed from multiple perspectives. Miranda is less fashion-conscious than her friends and dresses more conservatively, analogously to work-attire which normally includes: trousers, a blouse or a shirt and a coat-over. One may interpret her dress-code, which is less fashion-conscious than her friend's, to representation limited economical opportunities. This is coupled with a less exclusive living-standard in Brooklyn. However the suggested underlying reason for this is probably not a limited economic opportunity but her dedication to her job and the dress-code requirement that is associated with it. Furthermore as she is the main provider in her family, it may have a correlative effect on her less feminine appearance.

Another example portraying her lack of time is when the four friends are on vacation in Mexico. Samantha criticises Miranda for wearing a swimsuit without having a bikini wax, to which Miranda replies that she has other things on her mind and other priorities since getting married (*Sex and the City 1*). This is unusual for being middle or upper-class since their number one priorities are investing in the appearance, clothing and body. As mentioned in the theoretical explanation, time and money are necessary in order to perform femininity. When analysing Miranda, we can draw the conclusion that being a loyal worker, mother and wife leaves very little time for herself.

Knowing it is common for middle-class women to occupy positions of authority, we question if it is possible to combine and juggle a demanding job with being an available mother and wife. Throughout both the movies Miranda is consumed by her job. As a result, in the second movie makes a decision to quit her job because she realises that she does not have time to attend her son's activities at school and she feels that she is being overlooked at work because she is a woman. By resigning from the job she explicitly demonstrates against the oppression

of women. Nevertheless, at the end of the movie Miranda is employed by another firm that she is happier with and where she is appreciated. The rather quick and easy switch of law firms is an evidence of opportunities. However, such freedom is not available for everybody, meaning that Miranda belongs to the group of women who have the opportunity to choose. This is considered a common characteristic among middle-class women.

Despite being subject to fewer beauty treatments than her friends, there are factors reinforcing her to perform middle-class femininity. A further example is her oratory skills, which were probably instilled by her profession and education. Out of the four friends, she is the most reasonable one, in our opinion, which is apparent from when she gives her friends good and professional advice. Early in the first movie she counsels Carrie not to sell her old apartment as she is unlikely to have rights in the property acquired by Mr. Big before their nuptials. Throughout both movies, regardless of the situation, Miranda always maintains a quiet tone and employs properly constructed sentences and language which is usual for lawyers.

### **Portrayal of upper class femininity:**

Charlotte:

Throughout both of the *Sex and the City* movies Charlotte's main goal, besides from being one of the four friends, is to be a mother and a wife. Therefore, we shall initially analyse her family relations. She is happily married to Harry Goldenblatt and tells her girlfriends about that she is happy 'every day' in her marriage. They adopt a daughter they call Lily from China as Charlotte was unable to conceive a child. Subsequently, and surprisingly, she becomes pregnant and gives birth to Rose towards the end of the first movie. Even though she admits how difficult it is to be a good mother in the second movie, she always prioritises her two daughters, who are often present during encounters with Charlotte's girlfriends. She also admits having feelings of guilt to her daughters because of a perception of constantly failing them and at times being unable to withstand Rose's screaming. Striving to be a perfect mother suits the upper class femininity traits since they are expected to highly value their role as mothers.

Furthermore, Charlotte and Harry's luxurious home indicates two points. We do not know for sure who furnished the home, but we assume that it is Charlotte who creates the comfort in their home since Harry is occupied by his job. This also characterises Charlotte as an upper

class woman, according to the theoretical explanation. The other point suggests their economical capital. Other factors such as being able to employ a fulltime nanny and adopt a child also indicate their wealth; however these economic possibilities are available to both the middle and upper class. On the other hand, even though it is usual among upper class women to have a husband as the financial provider, it is necessary to discuss whether Charlotte married into the upper class wealth. We believe she would have similar economical opportunities even without her husband based on previous knowledge from the series. We know that she comes from a wealthy family and as a teenager she was the prom queen, cheerleader, teen model and equestrienne which is all very common for upper class teenagers. Charlotte quit her job when she married Harry and they adopted Lily, meaning Harry's income is sufficient for Charlotte to be a stay at home mother.

Other factors indicating her upper class femininity is her appearance. She is very focused on her body and figure and it surprises both her husband and Carrie when Charlotte she decides to stop running in the beginning of her pregnancy. After overcoming her fear of miscarriage, she gradually begins to run again regardless of the weather. Her dress code is expensive and elegant. It is explicitly portrayed when her daughter Lily puts her coloured hands on Charlotte's vintage Valentino skirt. There is no need to be familiar with the label to gauge the cost of the skirt as Charlotte's reaction speaks for itself. Investing in clothes, in this case expensive clothes, and the body, means to invest in cultural capital, which is important when performing upper class femininity

Charlotte's speech mannerisms provide an additional insight into her personality. She always converses in a polite manner and reacts when someone else, often Samantha, utters a vulgar expression. She is a loyal and supportive friend, which is represented by her positive and enthusiastic attitude towards everyone. Her emotions are explicit many times during the movies. One scene is in the beginning of the first movie when Carrie tells her friends that she and Mr. Big are getting married, which prompts Charlotte to stand up and scream out with joy. This shows how anxious and caring she is about her family and friends. We believe that this characterises solely Charlotte's personality, and must not mean that all upper class women are as emphatic, as the next character will show.

Samantha

Samantha is a public relations executive and lives an exclusive life in Hollywood. She is confident and not afraid to overtly express what is on her mind, irrespective whether it



conforms to the society's norms or not. She is a proud, confident and highly sexually active woman. Samantha is an interesting persona to analyse since she often contradicts what upper class femininity defines as being a lady.

According to class femininity appearance signifies behaviour. Samantha is a good representative of this correlation. Age is a very sensitive topic for Samantha because she is the oldest of the four friends. For this reason she sometimes dresses vulgar for her age having low cleavages and short dresses. A signifying scene of this is at the red carpet event in the second movie when Samantha wears the same dress as a teenager, whereby Samantha gets criticised for dressing inappropriately according to her age. Her obsession with appearing young is also evident when she demonstrates all the pills she takes to avoid menopause and prevent ageing. To be attentive with one's appearance does conform with the performance of femininity, but we shall not forget that upper class femininity is equivalent to the image of a lady. The following examples will outline Samantha's contradicting qualities to upper class femininity.

Another factor complementing her daring choice of clothing is her language. She is not afraid to hurt anyone's feelings, nor is she afraid of embarrassing herself, which is often interpreted as disrespectful behaviour by her immediate surroundings and counterparts. She is very loud and has a habit of using obscene vocabulary such as "fifty f\*\*king thousand" when she bids at an auction in front of an ensemble of wealthy upper-class audience (*Sex and the City 1*). Her way of speaking certainly distinguishes her from upper class femininity and is reminiscent of working class femininity.

Her clothes as well as manner of speech represent her behaviour well. When Samantha and her friends are in Abu Dhabi, she behaves promiscuously and ultimately disrespectfully towards the local population and customs that are different from Western moral values. On a date Samantha plays invitingly in a sexual manner with a water-pipe in a public place and subsequently engages in intercourse on the beach which leads to formal consequences (*Sex and the City 2*). Irresponsible behaviour is also a commonly occurring phenomenon amongst working class women, according to the theoretical description.

Nonetheless, when analysing her appearance, specifically her clothes, another side emerges which is a contrast to what has just been analysed. There are occasions when she dresses like an upper class lady. For example when she wears fur and leather gloves in the first movie, or brings a Hermes bag to a bazaar in Abu Dhabi in the second movie. Another protruding scene is when Samantha comes out of a boutique with an entourage of men carrying her shopping

bags for her to her brand new Mercedes (*Sex and the City 1*). The difference between the middle class women and upper class women does not differ greatly in their clothing styles except for the prices and labels. Samantha makes it clear that she does not look at the price tags nor does she limit herself when it comes to spending money on clothes. This clearly shows that her taste is expensive, despite her inappropriate look sometimes. This implies her economical freedom, a freedom not available even to middle class women.

Moreover, a very interesting point is Samantha's view about 'marriage'. She does not support marriage, which is a contradiction to upper class femininity since women normally value their family and the role of being a wife. However, one possible explanation for this may be that she does not need a man as a financial provider. Her occupation provides both economic freedom and availability of time, which is apparent because she encourages travel with her friends (*Sex and the City 1 &2*).

Thus, the fact that Samantha can provide for herself and still have available time to perform femininity and spend as much time as she pleases with her friends suggests how established upper class woman she is. We assume that it is this position in combination with her independent character that allows her to care so little about society's norms.

In conclusion, the most apparent occurrence is that there are no clear distinctions between the different class femininities. The women analysed possess characteristics and symbolic capitals belonging to more than one class of femininity. Another aspect worth noticing is that people within a single class femininity are not homogenous, as we have seen two of a common class femininity can differ and have different personal qualities. It is clearly shown in the movies that individuals can have a certain way of talk, dress, how a particular job and civil status from different classes of femininity. In other words, one can act according to one certain femininity, for instance working class femininity, and have living standards fitted to a higher class of femininity or vice versa.

Indeed, the economic capital does have a remarkable weight deciding one's opportunity to perform femininity. Performing femininity requires both money and time. As seen by the characters analysed above, the more economic capital one possesses, the greater freedom and time one is granted to dispose of. However, having restricted opportunities does not mean that femininity cannot be performed at all as it is still possible to have a representing appearance as well behaviour.

We can also conclude that there is a correlation between appearance and personality. Nevertheless, one's speech does not identify the different class femininities, vulgar vocabulary can occur in all class femininities, but the dialect can determine one's class background.

## **The portrayal of power relationship between the femininities**

### **Working class women versus middle class women:**

To be able to analyse the portrayed power relationships between the classes, we will use the women used in the three different femininities above.

Power does not necessarily have to be one direction. In the case with Carrie and her assistant Louise the power relationships will be interesting to analyse because they form a bond beyond the professional relationship.

An initial assumption about their power relationship would be that Carrie is the superior one because she is in the position of employing an assistant from a lower class. This argument is true from an economic point of view. Carrie does have more opportunities than her assistant, opportunities such as having an assistant, be a successful writer and afford labels, unlike Louise who only can afford to rent expensive handbags. However, more significant is the fact that Carrie can afford to be an employer, which elevates her superiority. Carrie has the money and possibilities however lacks time whereas Louise has lack of money and possibilities but has more time. In this meaning, it suggests that money is power.

Before analysing further power relationships, we want to discuss possible reasons why Carrie's and Louise's opportunities differ. Is it even reasonable to compare their opportunities? We are not privy to information about underlying reasons for Louise undertaking such a menial job. There could be numerous explanation ranging from her consciously choosing to do so or using it as a stepping stone to build a career in a large city or perhaps she is inadvertently forced to take such work since other opportunities are not open to her because of her African American and working class background. Age must also be accounted for since Carrie has had 20 years to become successful in New York whilst Louise is new in the city. Although these points are open to debate, it does not negate that the movies portray class differences with associated differences in opportunities and power relationships.

By employing Louise as an assistant, Carrie consciously gives her power over Carrie's life. As stated in the portrayal of working class femininity, Louise has access to Carrie's private mail. Moreover, Louise has sufficient education and knowledge to put Carrie in a submissive position. This is shown when Louise, on Carrie's demand, creates a folder for Mr. Big's e-mails and puts a password to access it. Carrie is totally helpless when she tries to enter the folder after Louise has quit the job and does not hear the phone because she is busy trying wedding dresses. From this aspect, knowledge and education exerts power. Louise was in charge of organising Carrie's life following Mr. Big's betrayal, which granted her power and control over Carrie's lifestyle and private life, allowing to facilitate a stable foundation. This is also overtly revealed when Carrie tells Louise: "You brought me back to life" (*Sex and the City 1*). Louise did actually have a choice how to use this power and she chose to help.

By employing Louise as an assistant, Carrie grants her a new opportunity. The workplace becomes the arena where two classes interact and intersect giving Louise a chance to take a step closer to the middle class. We can see a change and transform in Louise and it is apparent when she tries the wedding dress and the lady in the boutique offers various details to the dress whereby it was now Louise's turn to direct and decide. Concurrently as Carrie was providing Louise with new opportunities, Louise helped Carrie out of a difficult, miserable and depressing time in her life. A dialogue between the two when Louise quits the job to back to Saint Louis and get married reveals their mutual gratitude:

Carrie: What am I gonna do without you?

Louise: You'll find another girl, but she won't have my style.

Carrie: Saint Louise... You brought me back to life.

Louise: And you gave me... Louis Vuitton.

(*Sex and the City 1*)

Carrie calls Louise 'saint' as she helped her to survive a tough period. Louise uses symbolic language when she, once again, is thankful for the label brand bag she received as a Christmas gift. She replaces Luis with Louise, which we interpret as a metaphor for a new Louise who is going to begin a new life with new standards.

This portrays that the amount of opportunities is closely associated with financial freedom and it has particularly been a priority for the WASPy women, in this case Carrie. We cannot say

that Carrie is successful at the cost of Louise. The conclusion we can draw is that Carrie, being a middle class woman with more opportunities, can be a gateway for the working class to succeed.

### **Working class women versus upper class women:**

Charlotte and Samantha vs. Nanny Erin

Unfortunately, there are not many scenes with working class women in the two *Sex and the City* movies. Louise is the one we are acquainted with the most. In order to analyse the portrayed relationship between working class and upper class, we have chosen to contrast Charlotte's nanny Erin relationship, representing working class women, to the upper class women. Since the information about Erin and Charlotte's relationship is limited we will enrich the analysis by including Samantha, an upper class character, and contrast the differences between Samantha's and Charlotte's relation to Erin.

All four friends interact with Erin in the second *Sex and the City* movie when they are eating breakfast in a backyard, waiting for Erin to come and take care of Charlotte's daughters. Erin provides a positive impression when she arrives at the table after running through the grass. She seems very happy and enthusiastic and it is apparent that Charlotte's daughters like her. Analogous to Carrie and Louise, Charlotte seems to be very thankful to have Erin as a nanny who can unburden her sometimes. The only power relationship that can be brought up at this point is that Charlotte can afford a full-time nanny. We are not made aware of Erin's background but consider it is reasonable to assume, based on her profession, that she is a working class woman with education, reminiscent of Louise's situation. Thus far, the power relations are couched in financial possibilities. Charlotte is the superior one since she has the possibility of hiring a nanny who fulfils her duties by unburdening Charlotte.

Samantha, in her usual frank manner, has a different reaction to Erin. The reaction is triggered by Erin's appearance which proves to be a threat for Samantha which is part of cultural capital therefore making it a relevant point for analysis. Samantha reacts to Erin, a young woman, not wearing a bra. Samantha is not discreet about her thoughts and the moment Erin leaves, she asks Charlotte whether Erin wore a bra on the job interview and suggests that there should be a law against braless nannies. Although Samantha is usually nonchalant, we believe that her reaction, at this instance, is instigated by jealousy because just before they all met

Erin, she was demonstrating all the hormonal pills she is ingesting to recapture her youth at 50. The irony of this situation is that upper class femininity has resources to perform its expected function. We are not denying that Samantha performs femininity at an upper class level, but she sees a working class woman as a threat. The point of this discussion is that Erin, although being a working class woman, can have more cultural capital when it comes to appearance. On the other hand, factors such as age play a bigger role in this case. The advantage with intersectionality is that with its help it is possible to consider a range of factors creating superiority or inferiority.

Charlotte attempts to convince Samantha of Erin's credentials emphasising Erin's education and how much she is liked by Charlotte's daughters. Although Erin performs a commendable job with the daughters, Charlotte becomes insecure, fearing that her husband may cheat on her with Erin. Unlike Samantha, who radiated disapproval of Erin, Charlotte remained thankful for Erin's assistance and contained her anxiety. We understand that Charlotte values Erin because she admitted to Miranda that when Samantha said that Harry may cheat on Charlotte with Erin, her first thought was: "I can't lose the nanny!" (*Sex and the City 2*). This permits us to arrive at a conclusion that Erin does have cultural capital - an attractive appearance - that causes two upper class women become insecure. However, Charlotte chooses to withhold her perceived inferiority because she refuses to entertain the idea of losing fulltime assistance.

In conclusion, the upper class women are obviously economically superior to working class, which is particularly evident when looking at their occupation and possibilities. However, it does not oust possibilities of working class possessing capital thereby challenging the superiority of upper class women.

### **Middle class women versus upper class women:**

Miranda versus Samantha

The middle and upper class women in the *Sex and the City* movies are not always easy to differentiate because they transgress theoretical definitions the characters exhibit multiple femininities. It may prove challenging analysing the power relationship between middle and upper class women because the portrayal of the two is not always characterised by distinct differences. Thus, we have chosen to analyse the power relationships between Miranda, a

middle class woman, and Samantha, an upper class woman, because their lifestyles are contrasting.

A conflict often occurring between Miranda and Samantha stems from Samantha's limited understanding of what Miranda's job, which she is dedicated to, entails. In the first movie Samantha reorganises a vacation to Mexico (originally intended to be Carrie and Mr. Big's honeymoon vacation). Miranda does not receive this invitation with warmth and says: "I can't go to Mexico. I have a job" (*Sex and the City 1*). The difference between the two is that Samantha appears to have the latitude to plan out her life as she wishes whereas Miranda is restricted by her obligations. Charlotte, also an upper class woman, however has compassion and understanding for Miranda's situation. This may be because both of them have a family and children however Charlotte can be distinguished by her opportunity not to work. This portrays the differences in availability of freedom between the classes. Despite that Samantha is in employment, she manages her own time and Charlotte's predominant occupation is her family. Miranda, by contrast, has a very demanding job, which leaves little leeway for her family-life. The result is that the one who has the prestigious job of being a lawyer is consumed by it with little or no leisure time left over while Samantha, a public relations executive, has more freedom and time to indulge herself in lavish vacations. Carrie also has leeway to manage her individual work schedule and write books whenever she pleases. When one's opportunities are restricted, regardless whether by finances, time or commitments, it subordinates the person.

There are many examples portraying Miranda's less prestigious life in comparison to Samantha. An explicit example is their living conditions: Samantha lives in a house in Hollywood in front of the ocean whereas Miranda had to move from Manhattan to Brooklyn after starting a family with Steve. Samantha can afford to buy a ring at an auction bidding up to \$50,000 while Miranda can afford to employ a Ukrainian maid.

The point is that priorities vary depending on class and thereby affect the available opportunities. Miranda prioritises her family and job, and after she forms a familial unity with Steve with whom she has a child, her income and attention has to stretch over a more variables than previously. Therefore she descends in class and femininity in comparison to when she was only looking after herself. Samantha's sole priority is herself, which is reemphasised when she breaks up with her long-term boyfriend Smith Jerrod telling him: "I love you but I love me more" (*Sex and the City 1*). Unlike Miranda, when she was in a union

with Smith, she did not even slightly descend in class and femininity. She even facilitated Smith to become a movie superstar which reinforced her position.

On the contrary, in the end of the second movie it is shown that Miranda's education, knowledge and experience as a lawyer is beneficial. This occurs in Abu Dhabi, where Samantha gets arrested after acting unacceptably. Miranda acts as Samantha's attorney and facilitates Samantha release. Education and coupled with a prestigious occupation gave Miranda an upper hand in this situation and all Samantha's fortune became insignificant for a moment.

## **Discussion**

The main conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis of power relationships between the femininities is that power and superiority is not always necessarily exerted on lower classes by the ones above them. The power dynamic is mutually reinforcing and circumstances in which people find themselves in and the opportunities open to them may determine or alter a power dynamic. A further observation which emerges is that the line between each of the femininities is not clear cut but is blurred or overlapping.

Economic freedom provides opportunities, but it is sometimes not enough. Time and knowledge/education are sometimes equally important components and lower classes tend to have more of them than money whereas it is the other way around for the upper classes. This creates a two-way, mutually reinforcing relationship. When the upper classes have insufficient of time they can afford to purchase assistance from classes beneath them. As a result the lower classes are often infested with power because they are granted access to the to the most personal aspects of their employer's lives.

Components such as education are sometimes irreplaceable as it was exemplified when Miranda was able to bail Samantha out of jail due to her expertise. Samantha was undeniably in a submissive position while Miranda was in the position of power resulting from her knowledge.

Furthermore, femininity determines the positions of power. We understood that all classes are capable of performing femininity and upper class femininity does not necessarily have to be superior over the working and middle class femininity. The example with Samantha and



Charlotte's nanny Erin clearly portrays how Samantha's insecurity grew, putting her in an inferior position, which she showed by making a big deal out of Erin not wearing a bra.

Overall, there is no apparent feeling of "them" and "us" between the femininities in the movies. One possible reason is that most of the characters, not talking about the main ones, perform femininity in terms of talk and dress, we do not always know the family relations.

**Figure 2. Results of class-based femininities and their intersectionality**

		Class			
		Working class	Middle class	Upper Class	
<b>Femininity</b>	RQ 1	Speech	Proper but different dialect/pronunciation. Instances of profane language exist.	Proper language representing as being the standard. Language on an education level. Correctly structured sentences.	Emotional. Aggressive. profane.
		Dress (appearance)	Not expensive but representing and proper. No excess of either make-up or clothing. Instances of substandard clothing exist.	Expensive, elegant, creative, more exclusive than working class. Clothes appropriate to work.	Obsessed with health and young look. Very expensive and elegant clothes. Dressing according to own taste
		Family	Big family. Single. Married	Boyfriend/married. No children or few children. Caring mother role.	Married with rich husband.
		Work/education	Unemployment. Assistant. Education	Writer, lawyer. Career focus.	Housewife. PR executive. Job according to own will.
	RQ 2	Power relations between the class based femininities (superior/subordinated (inferior) us/them	Inferior to classes above in terms of economical opportunities. Superior to classes above in term of having time and knowledge/educated.	Superior in relation to working class by having an established life and is therefore in position of giving them chances/opportunities. Less economical freedom than upper class, however has access to education.	Most economical freedom of the three classes. Possibility of being on the same level of performing femininity as classes below. May be inferior when lacking time or knowledge.

## 7. Conclusion

A considerable proportion of studies thus far have focused on the power relations between women and men, thereby (inadvertently) assuming a degree of homogeneity within either category. However through an intersectional perspective it is possible to gauge that there could be multiple grounds, factors and contributors to oppression that often even operate simultaneously. This line of reasoning shows that oppressions may not only be present between two opposite or dichotomous variables such as men and women but may also be equally prevalent within the genders. This, relatively unexplored aspect, is the focus of this dissertation.

Due to the limited resources available to us employed the *Sex and the City* movies as the blueprint of our analysis. These movies, just like the preceding series and book, were a global phenomenon that both illustrated a snapshot of the Western society and shaped it, thereby making it an appropriate medium. To facilitate a granular analysis of the power relationship within the female gender we divided it into working, middle and upper class femininities and mapped it on a spectrum extremes at either ends.

The findings proved to be not entirely aligned or in synch with the theoretical approach therefore it was of great help to map them on a spectrum as opposed of forcing them in clearly defined categories. Since this was encountered from an analysis of the movies it would not be unreasonable to expect this to be even more prevalent in the analysis of real-life which reemphasises the importance of using a spectrum.

One of our main finding was that that the femininities are not segregated into clearly cut categories but rather overlap or have a blurred distinguishing line. An interesting contrast was that the real-life findings in Fanny Ambjörnsson's showed that among 16-18 year old girls the compartilisation is evident and there is a clear defining gap between the classes coupled with an emotional "us versus them" divide. We submit that this is more attributable to the age of the girls in the study during which they are at most impressionable and opinionated and that it is likely to fade as they grow older and become more tolerant and respectable.

We were able to identify common threads cutting through all the femininities on the spectrum such as for example an overwhelming desire and strive for a freedom to choose. Relatedly economic opportunities and the financial positioning of the characters is present throughout

the spectrum. Although it is ubiquitously present, the positioning together with its associated variables differ dramatically throughout the spectrum.

Furthermore we understood that when a character exhibits certain, or even most of, the traits of a given class, it does not necessitate or predispose them to exhibit all the prescribed traits of that class. In other words it does not preclude them to also, or in addition, exhibit other, even extreme traits, of femininity classes positioned far away on the spectrum.

The power dynamic, from a macro perspective, is reminiscent of the traditional structure of the superior femininity classes exerting influence and in extreme cases even oppressing the classes below them. On a micro, or granular view, we discover that this is not always necessarily true and that there are instances where it can be the other way around or mutually interdependent. The dynamic varies and transforms in accordance with changing circumstances and times. This brings us back to the two fundamental points and driving forces of this thesis:

(i) The importance of regarding the femininity on a spectrum because barriers between the classes are corroding and together with it the orthodox perception of a power dynamic solely exerting pressure top-down ; and

(ii) That this movie not only documents this social phenomenon but also perpetuates and by doing so it alters the power interrelationship further not only within the femininity spectrum, but the entire female gender with its counterpart.

Popular culture, particularly movies, have dual, mutually reinforcing function with society. This proverbial dialogue is important for political science and research. For a movie to become popular and achieve box office success it needs to be relatable to its target audience. Therefore the *Sex and the City* movies, certainly triumphant at the box office, were structured reflect contemporary society and the values it holds. Simultaneously, acknowledging that the audience will emulate what they observed, it will seek to influence it and society by influencing current trends and introducing and setting new ones. This dual function of representing society whilst simultaneously influencing it, is acutely present in the *Sex and City* movies. Therefore it is a critical point of study in political and social science because it is the pinnacle of the two way interaction between the real world audience and fictional lives and characters in the movies.

The research, the results and findings can certainly be applied to any other group or association. Race is an obvious one and is present at multiple instances throughout the thesis but it is not pursued in depth in order to maintain a consistent focus throughout the thesis. It bears many similarities to the task at hand because, just like gender and class, it is a factor of oppression from the point of view of an intersectional analysis. A particular race can similarly be fragmented by different levels of socioeconomic statuses affecting the power dynamic within. The power struggle may however be exacerbated by that there will be more categorisations than in a gender that will be in a struggle with one another. Inevitably this will complicate the research however intersectionality will discipline the analysis ensuring the relevant factors are considered and accounted. And this thesis will be a demonstration and inspiration to undertake such a task on a grander scale.

## 8. Reference list

### Literature

Akass Kim & McCabe Janet. 2004. *Reading Sex and the City*. Bodmin: MPG Books.

Ambjörnsson Fanny. 2004. "I en Klass för sig. Genus, Klass och Sexualitet bland Gymnasietjejer". Ordfront förlag, Stockholm.

Bell, Judith. 1999. *Doing Your Research Project - A guide for first-time researchers in education and social science*. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Benshoff Harry M & Sean Griffin. 2004. *America on Film. Representing Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality at the Movies*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Bryman Alan, 2008. *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford Press.

Dines Gail & Humez Jean M. 1995. *Gender, Race and Class in Media. A Text Reader*. California: Sage Publications Inc.

Gee James Paul. 2005. *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis. Theory and method*. New York: Routledge.

Harzewski, Stephanie. 2011. *Chicklit and Postfeminism*. Virginia: University of Virginia Press.

Hollows, Joanne. 2000. *Feminism, femininity and popular culture*. Oxford: Manchester University Press.

Marsh David & Stoker Gerry, 2010. *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ryan Michael & Kellner Douglas. 1990. *Camera Politica. The Politics and Ideology of Contemporary Hollywood Film*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Skeggs Beverley, 1997. *Formation of Class and Gender: Becoming Respectable*. London: Sage.

## Articles

Crenshaw Kimberlé, (1994), 'Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color' *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6): 1241-1299

Gerhard Jane, (2005), 'Sex and the City: Carrie Bradshaw's queer postfeminism' *Feminist Media Studies*, 5(1): 37-49.

Ostrander Susan A. 1980. *Qualitative Sociology*. Volume 3:1. Pages. 23-44. "Upper Class Women: The Feminine Side of Privilege".

Risman B. J., (2004). 'Gender as a Social Structure: Theory Wrestling with Activism' *Gender & Society* 18: 429 – 450,

Scott Joan W., (1986), 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis' *The American Historical Review*, 91(5): 1053-1075.

Shields Stephanie A., (2008), 'Gender: An Intersectionality Perspective' *Sex Roles*, 59:301-311.

Skeggs Beverley, (2001), 'The Toilet Paper: Femininity, Class and Mis-Recognition' *Women's Studies International Forum*, 24(3/4): 295-307.

Skeggs Beverley, (2005), 'The Making of Class and Gender through Visualizing Moral Subject Formation' *Sociology*, 39(5): 965-982.

Thomas Gary, (2011), 'A typology for the case study in social science following a review of definition, discourse and structure.' *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6): 511-521

## Internet sources

Macmillandictionary (online). Available from

<http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/patriarchy> (Accessed 12/04 /2013 14:30)

## **Primary sources**

*Sex and the City*, Movie 1. 2008. New Line Cinema. A Time Warner Company. HBO.  
Michael Patrick King.

*Sex and the City*, Movie 2. 2010. New Line Cinema. A Time Warner Company. HBO.  
Michael Patrick King.