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## The Role of Submission and Dominance in A Streetcar Named Desire

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## Abstract

This study examines the relationships between the main characters of the play *A Streetcar Named Desire* in order to first, evince dominance within both female characters, and second, disapprove the thesis statement "*A Streetcar Named Desire is a play depicting stereotypical relationships between men and women, therefore men being the dominant ones and women their inferiors*", therefore deny Stanley's superiority over Blanche and Stella.

Set goals were achieved through a textual analysis and an observation of dominant and submissive cues in two movie adaptations, one from the year 1951, the other from the year 1984. The three platforms were compared through a prism of the theory of verbal and nonverbal dominance and submission, visualized in a table summarizing the detected features and thus giving clear results.

Obtained results disapproved the hypothesis that the play portrays stereotypical relationships between men and women. It was detected that both female characters demonstrated a form of superiority whilst interacting with the dominant male protagonist.

The male protagonist, however, did not subordinate himself due to the perceived threat of certain female superior power, which only incited the need to suppress it in his realm of alpha dominance. Therefore, it was not an example of an inverted stereotypical relationship, having a superior woman and an inferior man, but, a dynamic wave of exchange of dominance.

The relationship of Stanley and the two female characters was an interaction between dominant figures with fluctuating energy and strength. At the end, the alpha male wins and subjects Blanche, but Stella remains powerful in her feminine control.

Key words: Submission, dominance, nonverbal language, Freud's defense mechanisms, vulnerability

## Abstrakt

Tato studie zkoumá vztahy mezi hlavními postavami hry *Tramvaj do stanice Touha*, za účelem prokázat přítomnost dominance u obou hlavních ženských postav a vyvrátit tvrzení: „*Tramvaj do stanice Touha je hra zobrazující stereotypické vztahy mezi muži a ženy, tudíž znázorňuje muže jako ty dominantní a ženy jim podřadné.*“

Stanovených cílů bylo dosaženo pomocí textové analýzy a pozorování dominantních a submisivních znaků ve dvou filmových adaptacích (Jedna z roku 1951, druhá z roku 1984). Tyto tři způsoby rozboru byly srovnány skrze prizma teorie o verbální a nonverbální dominanci a submisivitě a vizualizované v tabulce shrnující zjištěné vlastnosti a z toho byl vyvozen výsledek.

Výsledky, které byly získány, nepotvrzují hypotézu, že hra představuje stereotypní vztahy mezi muži a ženami.

V kontaktu s dominantním protagonistou obě ženy působí jako submisivní, ale občas je zřejmá i jejich nadřazenost. Stanley se ovšem nenechá podrobit ženskou dominancí, jak by se předpokládalo. Proto se nejedná o příklad převráceného stereotypního vztahu (dominantní žena-submisivní muž), ale o vztah dominance a souboj o moc mezi hlavními postavami.

Na konci dramatu sice protagonistovi Blanche podléhá, avšak Stella jako silná „ženská“ figura zůstává v nadřazeném postavení.

Klíčová slova: Submisivita, dominance, nonverbální komunikace, Freudovy obranné mechanismy, zranitelnost

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## Introduction

A *Streetcar Named Desire* is a play written in 1947 by an American playwright Tennessee Williams that takes place in the United States of America, specifically in New Orleans in the late 1940s. It portrays vigorous relationships between three main characters: Blanche DuBois, her sister Stella DuBois-Kowalski, and Stella's husband Stanley Kowalski.

General audience, when reading this play, tends to interpret the text with a surface level point of view, taking it as a play depicting a relationship between a dominant male and two women inferior to him. The goal of this seminar paper is to substantiate the existence of subsurface dominance of both female characters and disapprove the thesis statement which states: "*A Streetcar Named Desire is a play depicting stereotypical relationships between men and women, therefore men being the dominant ones and women their inferiors.*"

In order to accomplish the set goal, it will be essential to analyze the text by scrutinizing sections of the book and both movie adaptations (1951, 1984) with given criteria in the theoretical framework, namely submissive-dominant cues and positions in relationships and Freudian Defense Mechanism psychological theory.

Selected criteria that will be observed and analyzed in both movie adaptations and subsequently compared, will be transformed into quantitative tables with selected features determining dominant or submissive behavior, as a result either proving or disproving the set thesis statement.

## 1 Newly Acquired Position of Women in 1940s in the United States of America

It is essential to enlighten this period of time in the United States of America in order to comprehend Stanley's unwillingness to acknowledge the new role of women and the disputes in the relationship between him and Stella.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 7, 1941, the United States of America officially entered the World War II. Within a few months of Pearl Harbor, a national policy, greatly focusing on women, to completely mobilize the civilian population in the war effort was established. Despite employers being at first reluctant to hire women and not regarding them as an essential particle in the production industry, within a few months after the attack women were acknowledged as a vital working force. [1, p. 123]

As a result of the changing society and new possibilities, women became very ambitious, and in fact this ambition remained within the majority of women until today. With the immediate recognition of their self-containment and work capability, “disputes” between the sexes came as a consequence as the men started returning to the United States, willing to take back their jobs.

Not all women were demobilized, but a majority returned to their households. Men expected the life they had before entering the WWII, but women underwent a mentality changing for four years, and were not quick to give up the life they were having. Having discovered a new sense of independence and the value and vitalness of their workforce, they no longer thought of themselves as the male dominated society's inferiors, taking care of the household and bearing children, but as the self-sufficient equals.

## 1.1 Feminism

Feminism is a scope of movements and ideologies that share a common aim: Institute, establish, and delineate equal political, economic, social, and cultural rights for women. Most Western feminist historians define “feminist movement” as any movement seeking acquisition of women's rights. Other historians limit this label to the three-wave modern feminist movements. [2]

The First-wave feminism, which occurred within the time span of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, was generally propelled by white women striving for their right to vote. The Second-wave feminism first began in the early 1960s and lasted until the 1980s. Whereas the first-wave focused on women's suffrage, second-wave feminism drew attention to a variety of issues e.g. sexuality, domestic violence, inequality in the workplace, and so on. Lastly, the third-wave emphasizes on feminism including diverse minority groups, and in general is associated with intersectionality. [3, p. 18-20]

Some feminist historians mention the Fourth-wave of feminism, starting from the year 2008, but it is generally thought that there are three waves with the third one continuing to the present. [4]

## 2 Psychological Background to Interpersonal Relationships

It is very important to be cognizant of the fact that our treatment reflects others' perception of our outwardly exhibited self-respect. Self-respect is an indispensable part of us and everyone ought to develop and cherish it. The lack of it is frequently observable in relationships, where one party becomes dependent and the other becomes aware of it and subsequently benefits from it. Possessing the role of a superior is a part of the human nature among a large number of individuals, therefore when one shows signs of vulnerability, the other does not hesitate to take control. This psychological background is essential in order to comprehend the dynamics in the relationship between the main characters in *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

### 2.1 Submission

Submission is an action of acknowledging the legitimacy of a superior force and yielding to it, as a result of low self-esteem, fear of command, insecurity, adoration of the other party, and so on. It can take a form of either passivity, or compliance in connection with any aspect of conduct or demeanor, and can be found in all types of interpersonal relationships, such as family or kinship relations, friendships, professional relationships, clearly and frequently detectable in intimate relationships. It is commonly thought of submission in association to women, which is due to the long-lasting subordination of women throughout the history. However, after the World War II, gender equality movement sprang from strong feminist movements, resulting in today's women's demand for equality in relationships.

#### 2.1.1 Nonverbal and Verbal Submission

Nonverbal communication is a term describing the act of sending and receiving wordless cues. Nonverbal submission is a significant cluster of body movements and gestures, reflecting defensive, solitary, or irresolute behavior. Submissive characters usually strive to become as "small" and imperceptible as possible. The body of such individual is generally in the state of closure, with body movements such as arms across, legs across, looking downward or away (see table below). The way a submissive individual moves his head is another defining aspect.

As an example, with lowering the chin down, the submissive protects the vulnerable neck as well as avoids the look of the other party in order to not appear belligerent. Widening the eyes is another way of not portraying negative, hostile attitude. Also, subordinates overall smile more than their dominant opposites. Their smiles are, nevertheless, primarily perceivable only on the mouth, not the eyes. [5]

As opposed to nonverbal submission, verbal submission has noticeably smaller number of projections. In general, subordinates tend to let their dominant opposites speak and answer their questions, inclining to the use of floppy language and stuttering.

TABLE OF NONVERBAL SUBMISSIVE CUES	
Excessive smiling	Legs across
No eye-contact	Head shrug
Head downwards	Picking an imaginary lint
Head tilt	Hands in lap
Eyes wide open	Playing with jewelry or clothes
Arms across	Fixing the hair

*Table 1*

## 2.1.2 Freud's Defense Mechanisms

An Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud noted a number of defenses of the human Ego, as it is commonly under the weight of demands of both the Id and the Superego. In order to cope with emerging problems, Freud stated that the Ego employs a variety of unconscious defense mechanisms that help us avoid unpleasant feelings.

MECHANISM	DESCRIPTION
Repression	Unconscious mechanism that keeps disturbing thoughts from becoming conscious
Projection	Involves individuals ascribing their own feelings to others
Displacement	Redirection of compulsions onto a substitute, powerless target
Regression	Movement back to the earlier stage of development owing to a stressful situation
Denial	Refusal of acknowledgement of external events
Sublimation	Satisfaction of compulsions in a socially acceptable way

*Table 2*

## 2.2 Dominance

Dominance, as opposed to submission, is a state of having power and influence over one or more individuals. It can be found in all of the interpersonal relationships as an opposite to submission. Dominance is frequently attributed to men and is in a close-knit relation to masculinity and its features, such as courage, independence, and or leadership. Overemphasizing masculinity is known as machismo.

### 2.2.1 Nonverbal and Verbal Dominance

Nonverbal dominance, in contrast with nonverbal submission, is a set of movements reflecting one's superiority. As the body of submissive individuals is in the state of closure, the body of a dominant person is in exposure. A dominant person will most likely stand straight with hands on the hips, or lean backwards with the

hands behind the back, not afraid to expose vulnerable areas. Hands tucked in the belt or pockets is another common pose (see table below). There is a broad spectrum of facial expressions among dominants, for instance, frowns, smiles, and smirks. Eyes are an important determinant of dominant behavior. The superior can either stare for a long period of time, squint as an act of suspicion or dislike, or not look at all. [6]

Dominant individuals have a broad spectrum of both nonverbal and verbal projections of their superiority. Superiors seek to be the loudest in the room. They speak very clearly, in order to be comprehended, interrupt speaking individuals inferior to them, and interrogate by asking a number of questions to be well informed.

TABLE OF NONVERBAL DOMINANT CUES	
Hands on the hips	Pursed lips & sneers
Hands behind the back	Hands in pockets or behind a belt
Straight posture	Stroking the chin
Head facing upwards	Body exposure/bareness
Hands behind the head whilst sitting	Handshake - palm facing downwards

*Table 3*

### 3 Characters and their Interpersonal Relationships

Blanche DuBois, as she enters the scene, is described as “*daintily dressed woman in white, appearing moth-like, with a rather shocked expression*” [7, p. 3]. As Blanche discovers where her sister Stella resides, she is quite distressed. Sitting on one of the chairs in the apartment, with her shoulders slightly hunched, legs pressed close together, suggests her fright and uncertainty of the place.

With the arrival of Stella, the audience forms an idea of the dynamics in the relationship between her and Blanche. Blanche is older than Stella appears to be quite superior to her. Throughout the play, this dynamic between Blanche and Stella doesn't change. This is due to the fact that this superior-inferior relationship is based on admiration. Therefore, Stella is not forced into subordination, she purely admires and loves Blanche and is willing to take this position. Blanche's outward superiority is perceptible in many forms. Not only does she openly criticize and lecture Stella, she also addresses her by names usually associated with submission (“*Precious lamb, you haven't said a word to me*” [7, p. 6]).

Blanche, on the other hand, takes her position (of a superior) differently. She is in search of a husband and presumably of having children as well. However, the presence of pregnant Stella and her loving husband is an abiding reminder of Blanche's failure to fulfil both of her aspirations which, as a result, leaves her jealous. With the successful concealment of her envy, she outwardly projects arrogance and treats Stella quite condescendingly.

As opposed to Blanche's evident perception of her dominance over Stella, she is brought back by Stanley Kowalski, as he enters the scene. Stanley is described as “*Strongly, compactly built, with the inner animal joy of pleasure with women, the giving and taking of it, not with weak indulgence, but with the power and pride of a richly feathered male bird among hens*” [7, p. 13].

The first conversation between Blanche and him is quite significant. Blanche has always counted on her looks, and Stanley's total ignorance of her appearance, as

one of many things that he does, brings her to unease, mostly because she is quite attracted to him. Not only does he appear dominant and animal-like, but also acts and sounds like it (“*In Laurel, huh? Oh, yeah, in Laurel, that’s right. Not in my territory*” [7, p. 14]). In this scene, Stanley questions Blanche on variety of subject, ending with asking about her husband, bringing Blanche into an anxious and nauseous state. “*The boy-the boy died. [She sinks back down] I’m afraid I’m- Going to be sick!*” [7, p. 15]. Since this scene, the relationship between her and Stanley is obviously determined to be a very dynamic, vigorous, and most importantly a feudal relationship.

Stanley, throughout the play, suspects her not being honest and indulges in background checks on her. Blanche escaped Laurel, in search of a new life with people having no idea of her indecent past. She tries to cover her impurity by wearing white, frequent bathing, drinking alcohol, and so on. With Stanley’s background checks, she’s constantly reminded of her past, slowly developing psychological problems, resulting in her “decay” and her departure to a lunatic asylum.

Not only is Blanche reminded of her past, which brings her to an anxious state, but she’s also struggling to overcome her fading beauty. Blanche deals with this reality in many ways. Some of the ways can be associated with Sigmund Freud’s defense mechanisms. For instance, while talking to Mitch, we can observe “denial”, as Blanche says: “*I’ll tell you what I want. Magic. Yes, yes, magic. I try to give that to people. I misinterpret things to them. I don’t tell the truth. I tell what ought to be truth. And if that is sinful, then let me be damned for it!*” [7, p. 86]. Another example of a defense mechanism is “projection” that can be seen in all the scenes where Blanche tries to convince Stella that she lives with a “beast” and ought to leave him.

Although Stanley appears to be very dominant, this dominance shifts in relation to Stella. We can assume that before Blanche arrives in New Orleans, the relationship between Stanley and Stella is of a lesser dynamics. However, when Blanche comes into the frame, Stanley feels like his territory has been invaded by a potentially dangerous element. With Stella being affected both by the changing position of women in the society and also by Blanche, she doesn’t hold back on the

“coarseness” when addressing Stanley. This attitude makes him undoubtedly uncomfortable and easily irritated, such as in the scene three during a poker night when Blanche and Stella disobey to turn off the radio “*She turns the knobs on the radio and it begins to play ‘Wien, Wien, nur du allein’.* Blanche waltzes to the music with romantic gestures. Mitch is delighted and moves in awkward imitation like a dancing bear. Stanley stalks fiercely through the portieres into the bedroom. He crosses to the small white radio and snatches it off the table. With a shouted oath, he tosses the instrument out of the window.” [7, p. 35] or in the scene eight, where Stanley hurls a plate on the floor, after being called a pig and asked to clear the table by Stella “*That's how I'll clear the table! Don't ever talk that way to me! Pig-Polack-disgusting-vulgar-greasy! - Them kind of words have been on your tongue and your sister's too much around here! What do you two think you are? A pair of queens? Remember what Huey Long said – 'Every Man is a King' and I am the king around here, so don't forget it!* [7, p. 77-78]

Even though Stanley appears to be the superior in both scenes, the “propellant” of the dominance is different. During the scene three, he needs to keep a certain macho-pose in front of his male friends, in order to remain ahold of his dominion over that group. To the contrary, his outburst in the scene eight is purely a reaction to Stella's attack of his principles concerning a relationship between a man and a woman.

## 4 Visual Analysis of the Streetcar Named Desire

Movie adaptations of the Streetcar Named Desire give the play a slightly different dynamic. The book itself has an almost tangible energy between the main characters, however, with a visual form the superior and inferior positions in the relationships among the characters become clearer. In the visual adaptations it is easier to detect dominance and submission through the observation of nonverbal cues. The detected features of either dominance or subordination will be placed in a quantitative table, as a result being the determiners of either approval or disapproval of the thesis statement.

### 4.1 1951 Movie Adaptation

The Streetcar Named Desire movie adaptation from the year 1951, directed by Elia Kazan, received a large amount of positive reviews. Vivien Leigh created a completely "new" Blanche DuBois, with the media questioning whether it wasn't better than the character in the actual play. Her astounding performance did in fact bring far more dynamics to the play. Marlon Brando and Kim Hunter, portraying Stanley and Stella Kowalski put up an amazing performance as well.

The movie is almost entirely truthful to the book, nevertheless, with the visual portrayal the scenes get a far greater vigorousness and general passion among the characters. This is clearly observable in the relationship between Stanley and Blanche. Stanley is a very loud, rowdy, vibrant macho, and Blanche on the other hand a hysterical Southern belle. Blanche in relation to Stella is quite similar to the relationship in the book. Therefore, Blanche is the dominant one and Stella appears to be her inferior who through admiration subordinates herself.

However, Stella in relation to Stanley, for example in the scene three, where Stanley numerously hits Stella and she as a consequence escapes along with Blanche to Eunice's apartment in search of a safe environment, is quite different. This is a scene where Stanley, as opposed to the whole story, is a clear inferior to Stella. Not only does she project nonverbal dominant cues, such as staring, but she's

symbolically situated above Stanley, looking superiorly down at him. As she slowly approaches him, descending the staircase, he falls down on his knees and starts bawling, showing complete vulnerability. Kim Hunter and Marlon Brando succeeded to display an astonishing scene with terror, passion, vulnerability, aggression, and sexual desire, creating it a memorable scene. [8]

## 4.2 1984 Movie Adaptation

Right from the first few scenes it is apparent that the 1984 movie adaptation, directed by John Erman, is far less energetic than the one from the year 1951. In the movie adaptation from 1951, the main trio is quite passionate in all forms, mainly Stanley and Blanche portraying their powerful dynamics. In the second adaptation, Blanche is somewhat lesser of a superior and handles Stanley's efforts to destroy her poorly.

Stella, played by Beverly D'Angelo, is dissimilar to the older version. Taking the scene three, mentioned in the chapter above, we can observe a number of dissimilarities. For instance, descending, whilst crying, Stella does not appear dominant at all. She has a rather shocked and frightened look on her face. And as she approaches Stanley, he does drop down on his knees, but it is not as vulnerable looking as in Brando's inscenation, presumably owing to Stella's seeming immediate subordination. In the movie adaptation of the year 1984, the relationship between Stella and Stanley appears to be less dynamic. This is due to Stella's rather passive reaction towards Stanley's superior behavior. She is not as affected by Blanche's constant nagging, and simply lives her life with a dominant alpha-male.

On the other hand, the relationship between Stanley and Blanche is very energetic. That is due to the portrayal of Stanley Kowalski. The greatest difference between the first and the second adaptation is in fact the portrayal of Stanley. The younger version of Stanley, therefore the version of the year 1984, is seemingly more brutal, animal-like, and coarser, generally projecting more dominance than Marlon Brando's version. [9]

## 5 Quantitative Tables

Submissive (SUB) and dominant (DOM) nonverbal and verbal cues in  
Streetcar Named Desire – movie adaptation 1951

	NONVERBAL CUES									VERBAL CUES				
	SUB					DOM				SUB		DOM		
	Excessive smiling	No eye-contact	Head downwards	Playing with jewelry or clothes	Hands in lap	Stroking the chin	Body exposure/Bareness	Staring into eyes	Hands in pockets/Behind the belt	Pursed lips/sneers	Obediently answers questions	Stuttering	Loudness/Coarseness	Clear speech
Stanley		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Stella		X	X					X		X	X		X	
Blanche	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X	X

Submissive (SUB) and dominant (DOM) nonverbal and verbal cues in  
Streetcar Named Desire – movie adaptation 1984

	NONVERBAL CUES									VERBAL CUES				
	SUB					DOM				SUB		DOM		
	Excessive smiling	No eye-contact	Head downwards	Playing with jewelry or clothes	Hands in lap	Stroking the chin	Body exposure/Bareness	Staring into eyes	Hands in pockets/Behind the belt	Pursed lips/sneers	Obediently answers questions	Stuttering	Loudness/Coarseness	Clear speech
Stanley		X	X				X	X	X	X			X	X
Stella		X	X					X		X	X		X	
Blanche	X	X	X	X	X			X			X	X	X	X

## 6 Conclusion

This seminar paper sought to disapprove the general idea of the play *Streetcar Named Desire* portraying relationships between a superior man and two inferior women. The scrutinization of the book and two movie adaptations, and subsequent comparison in quantitative tables, gave results of either superiority or subordination.

Quantitative tables containing observed cues of both nonverbal and verbal dominance and submission gave however only a general idea of the dynamics in the relationships.

As of the two tables, with only slight differences between them, both versions of Stanley appear to be undoubtedly superior throughout the storyline, except for the scene three where Stanley “slips” into an inferior position. The differences between the two tables are on account of actor’s incensation of a particular scene. Stanley portrayed by Marlon Brando manifested more dominant cues than Stanley portrayed by Treat Williams, as well as more submissive cues, not because of a lesser extent of superiority, but due to the greater dynamics among the characters in the 1951 movie adaptation.

The scene three is the most important one of all the scenes, as it completely shatters the general idea of Stanley Kowalski and his relation to Stella.

Up to this staircase scene, both versions of Stanley appear to be very dominant, straightforward, and animal-like. However, this viewpoint reshapes with the discovery of Stanley's weak point, being the potential loss of Stella. This scene enables the emergence of Stella's up to now unrecognized power over Stanley. Against his generically undeviating hold of control and dominion over Stella, she has the ability of bringing him into a state of vulnerability. It could be reasonably contended that one scene can exhibit a simple deviation from the general norm, taking into consideration both physical and verbal abuse done by Stanley throughout the play. The capability of sending an individual to a state of complete susceptibility can be taken as a clear sign of supremacy. However, this depends on the relationship

and the connection between the two individuals. Vulnerability is generally associated with submission, but that's not always the case. The allowance of recognition of one's vulnerabilities reveals the true side of a person, which takes a lot of courage and strength. Stanley's status, as a result of this fact, becomes more complex and disputable. By exhibiting his fear of losing Stella in the scene three, he allowed her identify her power over him. This act could be perceived as a courageous act, suggesting his general power and supremacy. Nevertheless, scenes leading up to the scene three and the scene three itself, leave us with the impression of Stanley being in fact vulnerable in a non-courageous way. He seems to carry a "mask" concealing his fears throughout the play, never letting anyone see his Achilles' heel, thus appearing quite dominant in comparison to Stella. As he gets into the situation of distress, recognizing the sudden fragility of the relationship, he drops the mask and reveals his true vulnerable self.

Stella, as mentioned above, is in relation to Stanley quite superiorly positioned, despite the dominance being subsurface and uncovered in only one scene. As opposed to the superiority in her relationship with Stanley, she appears to be inferior in relation to her sister Blanche. However, this prevailing impression is questionable.

Stella is a clear arbiter between Stanley and Blanche, trying to circumvent or regulate any given conflict. She handles her conflicts with Blanche in a withdrawal-like way, attempting to evade them, coming off as an inferior. The question is whether her retreat is a form of submission or dominance. Whether she is purely in search of a safe, calm environment, avoiding a potential dispute, or solely putting herself aside, in order to keep her beloved Blanche and or Stanley satisfied. However, due to the lack of sources regarding this uncertainty of Stella's character, it is arduous and problematic to determine her intentions and furthermore her position in the relationship between her and Blanche. As a result, with the absence of the essential information to evince the superiority, it is only possible to consider Stella as the inferior in comparison to Blanche, as she outwardly presents herself that way.

Additionally, Blanche herself acts from a superior position, presumably just masking her jealousy and fears.

Examining the quantitative tables only showed that Stella is an unclassifiable character in terms of the general, "black and white" dominance and submission, due to her manifestation of an equal number of dominant and submissive cues in both movie adaptations.

Blanche on the other hand manifested a far greater number of both nonverbal and verbal cues of submission. In fact, all of the selected ones. Most of those cues were exhibited when interacting with Stanley. Therefore, as of the table, Blanche appears to be an evident subordinate to Stanley. As of the play itself, she is in fact a quite powerful character. She does not hold back on addressing Stanley in a vulgar, condescending, or a rude way (*"But I have been foolish, casting my pearls before swine! Yes, swine! Swine! I'm thinking not only of you but of your friend, Mr. Mitchell."* [7, p. 93]). With Blanche verbally counter-attacking Stanley, appearing as a quite dominant character, he is set to "defeat" her. However, as the play continues, Blanche's superiority deteriorates and is completely destroyed at the end.

Another determiner of her initial dominance is connected to her rape scene. Stanley sees her as an attraction, as she is in fact his powerful enemy. With raping her, he takes pleasure from the situation that was predetermined and clearly in his interest from the very beginning (*"Tiger, tiger! Drop the bottle-top! Drop it! We've had this date with each other from the beginning"* [7, p. 97]). However, most importantly, Stanley triumphs in this scene, as he violently subordinates and subjects Blanche.

Conclusively, each character has a quite complex personality. Stella came out to be a superior in relation to Stanley, as a result of the recognition of Stanley's masked fear and vulnerability described above. Blanche's position in her relationship with Stella is quite unclear, due to the lack of the essential psychoanalytical sources. However, Blanche outwardly presents herself as a superior, masking envy and her own vulnerabilities. The relationship between Blanche and Stanley is the most

significant one. At the beginning, it is a relationship between two superior individuals, fighting to remain ahold of their supremacy. This battle, however, ends with Stanley as the victor.

The first goal of this paper was fulfilled, as it was to "*substantiate the existence of subsurface dominance of both female characters.*" As described and explained above, within both Stella and Blanche is a form of dominance.

The second goal was to disapprove the thesis statement. As stated above, both female characters are ahold of a form of dominance. Stanley's character is the most complex one, as he is of a different position in both relationships. He appears to be Stella's superior throughout the play. Nevertheless, with the detection of his fears that he managed to hide, Stella has a clear power over him. On the other hand, in relation to Blanche, he is in fact a superior, but so is she. However, due to Stanley's persistent destruction of Blanche and her initial dominance, she comes out as his subordinate at the end. It is complicated to determine whether the second goal was achieved or not, due to Blanche's character. Throughout the play, she portrays a quite dominant character, but the degree of superiority deteriorates towards the end, resulting in her inferiority in relation to Stanley.

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