

*Michael Corleone's Hegemonic Masculinity  
in Mario Puzo's The Godfather Part II: Movie Script*

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Abstract

The research focuses on Michael Corleone's Hegemonic Masculinity as seen in Mario Puzo's *The Godfather Part II: Movie Script*. The researcher conducts a qualitative research using the movie script of the movie *The Godfather Part II* as source of data. The finding shows that all of hegemonic masculinity characters are portrayed by Michael Corleone, which are heterosexuality, power, authority, aggression, and technical competence. The portrayal of power is the most found in the script, followed by authority, aggression, technical competence, and his heterosexuality as the least talked about.

**A. INTRODUCTION**

History has shown us that men have been holding positions of power ever since the dawn of civilization. Men have competed with each other to attain such positions; they used everything in their arsenal to gain advantage over their adversaries. This practice persists well even in the modern world.

The movie *Godfather Part II* is one of the most celebrated movies of all time, winning numerous awards as well as propelling its casts to stardom. Its movie script is written by Mario Puzo, partially based on Puzo's 1969 novel *The Godfather*. It is both a sequel and a prequel to *The Godfather*, presenting parallel dramas: one picks up the 1958 story of Michael Corleone (Pacino), the new Don of the Corleone family, protecting the family business in the aftermath of an attempt on his life; the prequel covers the journey of his father, Vito Corleone (De Niro), from his Sicilian childhood to the founding of his family enterprise in New York City.

In the movie script of *The Godfather Part II*, Michael Corleone is the patriarch of the organized crime family, The Corleone Family. He is well respected by everyone around him as he holds great power and influence. The researchers feel that the content of the movie has captured the very essence of hegemonic masculinity, embodied by its titular character Michael Corleone.

Masculinity is a concept of social roles, behavior, and meanings attached explicitly to men at certain times (Kimmel and Aronson, 2003). Meanwhile, hegemony is the political, economic, or military predominance or control of one state over others (Schenoni, 2019). Hegemony can

also be interpreted as the dominance of one group over another, often supported by legitimating norms and ideas. The term hegemony is today often used as shorthand to describe the relatively dominant position of a particular set of ideas and their associated tendency to become commonsensical and intuitive, thereby inhibiting the dissemination or even the articulation of alternative ideas.

There are many theories regarding to hegemonic masculinity. In this research, the researchers use certain theory that is proposed by R.W. Connell. Connell explained that hegemonic masculinity is a practice that legitimizes men's dominant position in society and justifies the subordination of the common male population and women, and other marginalized ways of being a man. (Connell, R. W.,2005). One of the examples of hegemonic masculinity is white men popularized their supremacy by defining themselves a superior race.

The objectives of this research are to find out the portrayal of hegemonic masculinity by Michael Corleone presented in the movie script.

The results of this study will help the readers to understand the concept of hegemonic masculinity and how it is portrayed by Michael Corleone in the Godfather Part II: movie script.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

The researchers conduct qualitative research in which the research does not give priority to hypothesis and statistical testing . The approach that was used in this research was objective approach, in which this research is not dealing with the literary writer, the audience, or even the envioning world of the author of the movie script and the movie script: such as whom, where, when, and how the movie script was written. In this research, otherwise, the researchers only focused on the movie script itself rather than its envioning world or even the audience of the literary work. The researchers use The Godfather Part II: movie script as the main source of data, downloaded from the internet. <https://www.scriptslug.com/script/the-godfather-part-ii-1974>.

## **C. ANALYSIS**

The hegemonic masculinity form is characterized by heterosexuality, power, authority, aggression, and technical competence. And all of them are portrayed by Michael Corleone, explanation as follows:

### 1) Heterosexuality

Heterosexuality is the state of being sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex. The portrayal of heterosexual in Michael Corleone cannot be described in the movie script but

the researchers wanted to put a note on the fact that Michael Corleone has a wife, and from his wife he has two children. In the movie script, there is no indication or portrayal of Michael Corleone being homosexuality nor bisexuality.

## 2) Power

Power is the ability to control people or things. In *the Godfather Part II*: movie script, Michael Corleone is the Godfather, which means he is the head of the illegal crime organization. And such, he owns all of the power on his mafia family. One of the powers that he portrayed is when Michael needs a gambling license for a Casino he is planning to buy. To get this license, he needs Senator Geary to give him the greenlight. When Senator Geary come to visits Michael, he found out that they were not alone instead he found Neri, Rocco, and Hagen in the room with them, as found in the script:

**SENATOR GEARY**

I thought we would meet alone.

**MICHAEL**

I trust these men with my life.  
They are my right arms; I cannot  
insult them by sending them away.

(Puzo, 1974. Act 1, scene 32, page 28)

Michael Corleone can control the Senator Geary into agreeing the meeting with his underlings, even though Senator Geary wants them to be alone.

In the meeting, Senator Geary attempted to extort Michael Corleone, knowing that The Corleone Family is a crime family. Instead of succumbing to the Senator's demands, Michael blatantly rejects them, meaning he does not want to be controlled. As shown in the script:

**MICHAEL (CONT'D)**

My offer is this. Nothing...not  
even the thousand dollars for the  
Gaming Commission, which I'd  
appreciate if you would put up  
personally.

(Puzo, 1974. Act 1, scene 32, page 30)

Michael possessed the power to reject someone, even the Senator. He does not want to be controlled instead he wants the Senator to listen to his request.

At later time, Senator Geary is made to accept Michael's request for the gambling license

using concealed threats. He manages to get Senator Geary's weakness using his many informants and connections. Michael found out that Senator does gambles and have some debt. The quotation can be found in the script:

**HAGEN**

The Corleone family has paid them  
off for you...  
as an expression of our esteem.

(Puzo, 1974. Act 2, scene 2, page 75)

Michael Corleone paid the thirty grand debt that the Senator had, even though Senator Geary actually does not owe that much. The threat here is that if the Senate Investigating Committee found out that Senator Geary has the debt that much, even though it is not true, it will ruin his name. Michael Corleone paid thirty grand worth of paid markers that Senator Geary did not own. This makes Senator Geary has to succumb to Michael wants. Michael controls Senator Geary by making Senator Geary have no choice other than agree to what Michael propose, not even an agreement made.

Another power that Michael Corleone portrayed in the movie script is when Frank Pentangeli, a subordinate of Peter Clemenza, who in turn was a Caporegime (boss) under Michael's father, Vito Corleone, is dissatisfied by Michael's way of doing business. Frank's family in New York is having a territory disagreement with another gangster group called The Rosato Brothers. Frank's family still belongs to the larger Corleone family, so Michael orders him to take a step back and let The Rosato Brothers claim the disputed territory. He does this because The Rosato Brother is connected to Hyman Roth, whose trust and confidence Michael needs to further expand his empire. The quotation can be found in the script as Michael told Frank Pentangeli:

**MICHAEL**

(suddenly in Sicilian)

Your family still carries the name  
Corleone, and you will run it like a Corleone!

(Puzo, 1974. Act 1, scene 34, page 33)

Michael has the power to make Frank Pentageli listen to him, even though Frank is left dissatisfied.

Another power portrayed in Michael Corleone is when he found out that his brother, Fredo, betrayed him by giving information of him to the Hyman Roth, Michael's enemy. Even though Fredo indicated that he does not know about the planning attack, he is still guilty in

Michael Corleone's eyes. As the script quote:

**MICHAEL**

You're nothing to me now, Fredo;  
not a brother, not a friend,  
I don't want to know you, or what  
happens to you. I don't want to see  
you at the hotels, or near my home.  
When you visit our Mother, I want  
to know a day in advance,  
so I won't be there. Do you understand?  
(Puzo, 1974. Act 2, scene 11, page 164)

Michael has the power, even to his older brother, where he says that he does not want to know or meet Fredo anymore. By the words he said in the script quoted before, it indicates that Michael held the control over his family.

At the end of the script, the readers are shown a scene from years ago, when Michael had yet started his service in the military. It is his father Vito Corleone's birthday today. The family is preparing for the party. Though his father wants him to go to college and work in the government sector someday, Michael doesn't want to have any part in it. He is scolded by his eldest brother Sonny Corleone, but he pays him no mind. This shows that Michael has been his own person since he is very young. Intelligent, headstrong, idealistic, and has the power to do anything he wants. The quotation can be found in the script where he said to his father that he wanted to go to the army:

**MICHAEL**

Pop, I've decided I'm going to enlist.  
Puzo, 1974. Act 3, scene 22, page 194)

Being the youngest son, Michael Corleone still can decide what he wants, even though Hagen tried to reason with Michael by saying what his father, Vito Corleone, had do to make sure the future of Michael Corleone is brighter than his father, he still wants to pursue what he wants. He portrayed the power when he decides the path that he wanted to take even though it was not the path that his father wants, as the script quote:

**DON CORLEONE**

Now what is this talk about joining  
the army? Eh?

**MICHAEL**

It's not talk; I'm doing it.

(Puzo, 1974. Act 3, scene 23, page 195)

Michael does not even want to debate with his father, he just said that he wanted to join the army and he does not care about what his father might want to say. He possessed the power to control his own father.

### 3) Authority

Authority is the power to give orders to people or do something. Michael, being the head of the mafia family, has the authority to give orders to his underlings. Such authority also means he can delegate the task to the people he trusts. The context can be found in the script where Michael said to Tom Hagen that he delegates Tom as the head of the family, as quoted:

**MICHAEL (CONT'D)**

I am trusting you with the lives of  
my wife and children, and the future  
of this family, solely resting on  
your judgment and talent.

(Puzo, 1974. Act 1, scene 99, page 72)

Based on the movie script, at some point on the dead of the night, some gunmen attack Michael in his own home in Lake Tahoe, Nevada. Being the head of the most powerful crime family in the United States at the time, this comes as no surprise. Michael survives the attack and promptly makes some decisions. One of which is having him temporarily replaced by Tom Hagen as the head of the family. This is a very bold decision, one that can only be taken when one fully trusts the other party, and Michael has the authority to delegate Tom Hagen. Another authority that he portrayed is when Michael visits Frank Pentangeli's house in New York without the latter knowing about it after the attack in Lake Tahoe. This is to ensure that Frank follows Michael's order. His visit also to thoroughly convinces old Frank to obey Michael. This can be found in the script;

**MICHAEL (CONT'D)**

I want you to help me take  
my revenge.

**PENTANGELI**

Michael, anything. What is it  
I can do for you?

(Puzo, 1974. Act 2, scene 18, page 90)

Michael has the authority to order Frank Pentangeli to do the revenge, even when it would do harm to Pentangeli's family. Pentangeli of course at that point would reject and do reasoning with Michael. But Michael still hold the authority and control Pentangeli, as found in the script:

**MICHAEL**

Trust me; do as I ask.

**PENTANGELI**

It would be the beginning of the end for my family. How can I keep all my other territories in like if I let two wise-guys stand up and demand this and that, and then give it to them?

**MICHAEL**

Frankie...do you respect me?

Do I have your loyalty?

(Puzo, 1974. Act 2, scene 18, page 90)

At this point, Michael tried to remind Frank Pentangeli that he is the one in charge and no question should not be asked. Even though it means that Pentangeli's family is on the line. Michael seems do not care of Pentangeli's situation as he indicates if Pentangeli is still loyal to Michael. And in the end, Frank Pentangeli can only agree and do what Michael Corleone said.

Another authority that Michael Corleone portrayed is when he told one of his underlings, Neri, to still protect Fredo even though he betrayed Michael, as the script quote:

**MICHAEL**

I don't want anything to happen to him while my Mother's alive.

(Puzo, 1974. Act 2, scene 111, page 165)

Michael has the authority to order everyone in his power to protect someone, in this case, his own brother that betrayed him. As the script above quotes, he wants his brother to be protected by his underlings while his mother is alive.

#### 4) Aggression

Aggression is feelings of anger and hate that may result in threatening or violent behavior. In the movie script of *The Godfather Part II*, Michael Corleone shown aggression by doing revenge, even though he does not dirty his hands. With his power and authority, he made other people do the revenge. His aggression can be found in the script when he hits his wife, Kay, when he found out that Kay aborted their third child. At first, Michael thought that Kay had a miscarriage with his son. As events unfold, Kay tells Michael that it was actually an abortion and not a miscarriage. She reveals to him that the child was a son and she had it killed because she no longer wishes to bring another son of Michael into this world, presumably because she knows the true nature of Michael and his businesses. In light of this, Michael grows extremely upset and hits Kay to the ground. This scene can be found in the script:

He is silent, though raging -- then, with all his passion,  
and his strength, he raises his arms, and strikes her  
across her neck, literally knocking her down to the floor,  
and hurting her badly.

(Puzo, 1974. Act 2, scene 117, page 174)

Another aggression that Michael Corleone portrayed is when he killed his older brother, Fredo. After Michael found out that Fredo betrayed him, he still took care of his brother while their mother is alive. Sometime after Michael and Fredo's last meeting, Mama Corleone passes away. Her funeral gives the two a chance to mend their broken relationship. Michael hugs Fredo as if he has forgiven him. But as stated before, a sinister event has yet to occur. Michael deems Fredo too dangerous to be let alive, yet doesn't want him killed while their mother is alive. Now nothing is stopping him to finally take Fredo out. The shootings happen when Fredo was out fishing with Neri. The killing scene of Fredo can be found in the script:

We hear a quiet, echoing GUNSHOT; and then silence.

(Puzo, 1974. Act 3, scene 15, page 186)

Even though Michael is not the one that pulls the trigger, still he is the one that ordered Neri the killings of his own brother.

## 5) Technical Competence

Technical competence is knowledge of and skill in the exercise of practices required for the successful accomplishment of a business, job, or task. In their customs, Mafias has a principle called 'Omerta' or roughly translated 'an oath of silence'. It basically states that

no mafia member should ever rat to the government, the Mafia is sacred and only its members are privileged to know what's going on inside the organization. Should one violate this, a grim repercussion will be done. Michael clearly knows this and takes advantage of this fact by bringing Pentangeli's brother from Italy to indicate that he would kill Pentangeli's brother if he ratted Michael out. This indicates that Michael possessed the knowledge and skill in running his mafia family. This can be found in the script when Frank takes back all the accusations he has directed at Michael, as the Senator said in the script:

**SENATOR KANE**

Mr. Pentangeli, you are  
contradicting your confessions to  
our investigators; I ask you again,  
were you a member of a crime  
organization headed by Michael Corleone?  
(Puzo, 1974. Act 2, scene 115, page 167)

In the end, Frank Pentangeli revokes all of his accusations to Michael Corleone and leaves the Senator stunned. Another portrayal of Michael Corleone's technical competence is when he contributes some of his wealth into one of the Universities in the state of Nevada, the city he lives. As the script quoted:

**SENATOR GEARY**

...my thanks, and the thanks of the  
young people of the State of  
Nevada, for this most impressive  
endowment...  
(he holds a check in his  
hand)  
...made to the University in the  
name of Anthony Vito Corleone.  
Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Corleone.  
(Puzo, 1974. Act 1, scene 31, page 27)

This indicates that Michael knows exactly how to gain respect from people and the political figures. He also uses his son's name, Anthony Vito Corleone, as the donor instead of his name to assimilate his family's name more profoundly. This way, his son will also gain respect from people from the next generation.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

In *The Godfather Part II*: movie script, the analysis found the characterization of hegemonic masculinity form are portrayed by Michael Corleone. There are: Heterosexuality, Power, Authority, Aggression, and Technical Competence

Michael Corleone has shown to possess the aforementioned characteristics. He is heterosexual in the movie script and has never shown any hint of homosexuality or bisexuality. He also shows the power and authority whereas he as the Godfather, the leader of the crime family. Michael Corleone also shown the aggression by killing people even though he is not the one that got his hand dirtied. And last, Michael Corleone has the technical competence to rule his crime organization.

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