

THE REPRODUCTION OF PATRIARCHAL IDEOLOGICAL HEGEMONY IN SOAP  
OPERA: A CASE STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

This research analyzes the reproduction of patriarchal ideological hegemony in the soap opera Another World using Stuart Hall's theory of the mass media and his conceptualization of ideology. A structural analysis of five one hour video-taped episodes of Another World reveals how the soap opera text constructs meaning fulfilling the three functions of the mass media, and thus, reproducing patriarchy's hegemony. This research confirms Hall's theory of the mass media and the propositions which flow from his conceptualization of ideology. Moreover, this research is the first attempt to systematically apply Hall's theory to the study of soap opera. It goes beyond the generalizations of his theory to look at the particularities of soap opera which contribute to the reproduction of patriarchal ideological hegemony. However, it is seen that what is problematic to this research, and all research on soap opera, is a lack of a theory of the reader.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One:	Introduction	1
	What is Soap Opera?	1
	A Brief History of Soap Opera	3
	The Trivialization of Soap Opera	5
	Soap Opera as a Cultural Product	7
	The Soap Opera Viewer	8
Chapter Two:	Theory	10
	Introduction	10
	Marx and Ideology	11
	Critical Theorists and Ideology	16
	Althusser and Ideology	17
	Gramsci and Hegemony	21
	Stuart Hall and Ideology	23
	Stuart Hall 's Theory of The Mass Media	30
	Patriarchy and Ideology	33
	Television and Ideology	37
	Soap Opera and Ideology	43
	Conclusion	51
Chapter Three:	Methodology	54
	Structuralism Versus Content Analysis	54

	Structuralist Methodology and Soap Opera	59
	The Reflexive Researcher	64
Chapter Four:	Another World: The Construction of a Social Imagery	66
	Introduction	66
	The Process of Personalization on Another World	67
	The Process of Personalization and the Representation of Class on Another World	76
	The Process of Personalization and the Representation of the Public/Private Spheres on Another World	87
	The Process of Personalization and the Representation of Social Problems on Another World	92
	The Construction of the Social Imagery of Another World	95
	Conclusion	101
Chapter Five:	Another World: The Ranking of Ideologies	104
	Introduction	104
	Another World: Nicole's Storyline	105
	Analysis of Nicole's Storyline	106
	Conclusion	129
Chapter Six:	Another World: The Production of Consensus	131

	Introduction	131
	Soap Opera and Realism	132
	The First Level of Realism and Another World	133
	The Second Level of Realism and Another World	141
	The Production of Consensus and Nicole's Storyline: An Analysis	144
	Conclusion	151
Chapter Seven:	Conclusion	153
Appendix:	Scene Map of One Episode of Another World	158
Footnotes		161
Bibliography		163

## Chapter One

### Introduction

#### What is Soap Opera?

Soap opera is daytime television serial drama. In the United States, it is a form of television that appears continually throughout the year, five days a week without reruns (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 19). As opposed to an episodic dramatic series, each soap opera episode does not contain a complete story. The series form of television presents a different story each week to be resolved by the few central characters around which it revolves. The stories of soap opera continue across episodes, and there are numerous stories occurring simultaneously involving many characters.

Soap opera has its own specific characteristics that make it distinct from other television forms. Its most distinct characteristic is that it "never begin[s] and never end[s]" (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 22). The multiple plot lines continue for weeks, and the closure of one plot line always leaves room for the opening of another. Plot lines are interwoven developing in different stages keeping resolutions uneven. Even with the weekend breaks, there is no final closure in soap opera.

Soap opera has a relatively slow pace when compared to prime-time television (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 23). This slow pace is due to its other characteristics. Repetition is the main delaying device. Plot lines are repeated daily by the use of character flashbacks and especially by character dialogue. Characters continually talk and re-talk plot lines. Moreover, this excessive reliance on dialogue causes soap opera to lack action. "What happens of [sic] soaps is usually told through conversation and not through the portrayal of events. There is little of the action-oriented, fast-moving violence so common in prime-time television" (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 24).

However, not all dramatic serials are soap operas. The so-called 'nighttime soaps' of prime-time television are not soap operas (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 25). They have specific characteristics that differentiate them from daytime dramatic serials. Daytime soap opera is directed toward an audience of women, thus its content reflects the concerns of women (e.g., romance, health, and children). The 'nighttime soaps' are directed toward a "more sexually heterogeneous audience" (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 28). Therefore, they will reflect the concerns of both women and men. This results in prime-time serial drama going beyond domestic concerns and dealing with power, money, and big business (e.g., Dallas and Dynasty). Moreover, there is more action on 'nighttime soaps'

which makes their storylines move faster than that of daytime soap opera. "[E]very prime-time episode is packed with many crises and resolutions" (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 27). Although the 'nighttime soaps' are derivatives of daytime soap opera, it can be seen that labelling them soap opera is a misnomer.

### A Brief History of Soap Opera

The history of soap opera is enmeshed with the history of American network radio and the demands of a capitalist economy. With the creation of network radio in 1923, for the purpose of selling advertising time to national corporations, the search began for a form of entertainment programming conducive to selling products (Allen, 1985: 101, 103). By 1931, experience had shown that serial radio was an effective way of drawing and maintaining an audience both loyal to the serial and its advertised products. (Allen, 1985: 105). Even more significant to the history of soap opera was the discovery in 1932 of women consumers. They made the majority of family purchases, and they spent most of their time at home with the radio (Allen, 1985: 107).

The use of daytime radio then became popular with corporations whose products were geared towards use in the household. Moreover, the 1930's were the Depression era and companies like Procter and Gamble were dependent on volume

sales to maintain profits. "Given the fact that Procter and Gamble's customers were overwhelmingly female, daytime radio seemed a logical and cost-effective advertising venue" (Allen, 1985: 108). Radio soap opera began to thrive between 1933 and 1937 as more corporations recognized its advertising potential (e.g., Pillsbury and General Foods). And the writers of radio soap opera "kept uppermost in their minds the function of their stories as advertising vehicles" (Allen, 1985: 118). Radio soap opera continued to thrive well into the late 1950's until the advent of network television.

The corporations who sponsored daytime radio soap opera did not turn immediately to television, waiting for proof of its ability to draw daytime audiences. However, the proof was there by 1960 and "television serials completely supplanted their radio antecedents" (Allen, 1985: 125). Today television soap opera still is a popular advertising vehicle that reaches millions of women, and it remains a popular form of entertainment for those women. Its longevity is due to its continuing ability to fulfill its economic function. Furthermore, soap opera's relative obscurity can also account for its longevity.

Part of the soap opera's success on television can be attributed to its "invisibility" to male opinion leaders, legislators, and regulators....[U]ntil the 1970s few academics bothered studying them, few commentators wrote about them, and the trade press found the seasonal prime-time network crapshoot more

exciting to cover than the much more static (albeit profitable) world of daytime programming" (Allen, 1985: 126).

Soap opera's relative obscurity and its failure to gain respect in the circles of respectability can be directly connected to its status as women's fiction.

### The Trivialization of Soap Opera

Women's fiction has never received the respect that men's fiction unquestionably receives. The celebration of men's fiction, while women's fiction is ignored or disparaged, can be seen within the general context of the trivialization of women's culture. "Speaking crudely, football and sport are 'important'; the worship of fashion, the buying of clothes 'trivial.' And these values are inevitably transferred from life to fiction" (Woolf, 1927: 128).

Soap opera as women's fiction has a long history of being categorized as 'trivial.' With its narrative roots in the domestic novel of the nineteenth century, the soap opera, from its beginnings in radio to its successful transition to television, has been marginal to the dominant male narrative forms. "[T]he soap opera was [and is] regarded as a form marked by its difference from normative (read, "male") categories of art and narrative, as something apart from, not

a part of, traditional narrative genres" (Allen, 1985: 138). The subject matter of soap opera's fictional discourse (i.e., women's concerns) is often excluded or trivialized in dominant fictional discourses (i.e., men's genres: the western, the spy thriller, the private eye) (Weibel, 1977: xx; Allen, 1985: 149). Moreover, the labels attached to feminine narratives (e.g., soap opera, romance stories, domestic novel) carry with them a notion of triviality issuing from "the masculine contempt for sentimental (feminine) 'drivel'" (Modleski, 1982: 14).

It is contended that this so-called 'sentimental (feminine) drivel' re-presents<sup>1</sup> women's culture; furthermore, soap opera re-presents a female **subculture** amid the dominant male culture. Allen (1985: 148) observes

women have in some sense formed a subculture in American society, a subculture defined by sex and in relation to the dominant male culture and united by a common set of experiences and imposed values. The domestic novel represents the emergence of a vehicle of public literary expression for the American female subculture...continued in later fiction, women's magazines, and soap operas.

All soap operas "qualify as manifestations of women's culture" (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 27). Soap opera as a women's genre re-presents women's culture, the private sphere. The private sphere (as opposed to the public sphere of the dominant male culture) is the female subculture. This

subculture is the sphere of women's concerns: family, romance, health, the personal. It is these cultural values that soap opera speaks (Hobson, 1982: 32). Soap opera is the re-presentation of the world from a female perspective, and this is why the dominant male culture trivializes the genre. In 1940, one male critic equated soap opera with children's programming.

Through the long mid-afternoon, while I itched to listen in on Rep. Die's denunciations or Mr. Damrosch, Swansdown Flour, Bisquik, Dr. Lyon's Tooth Powder, Mazola...and Procter and Gamble kept me drugged with the insidious fascinations of "Valiant Lady," "My Son and I"... "Orphans of Divorce"...and "Backstage Wife"...Then suddenly "Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy," "Little Orphan Annie," and "Tom Mix" were upon me, and I realized it was the children's hour. Children's hour indeed! Hadn't the whole day been one long children's hour (Cook in Allen, 1985: 11)!

However, once soap opera is analyzed within its wider context, it is not so easily dismissed as trivial.

### Soap Opera as a Cultural Product

Soap opera is a cultural product of the mass medium of television, and as such, it will re-present the meanings inherent in its culture (Fiske and Hartley, 1978: 17). As a cultural product, soap opera will respond to the conditions of its culture, reproducing those conditions through the representations in its text. The culture which surrounds the

soap opera is patriarchal; furthermore, patriarchal culture is the hegemonic culture (English Studies Group, 1980: 262-263). It will be argued in this work that soap opera, as a cultural text, will function to symbolically reproduce patriarchal ideological hegemony. "[T]he basic thesis that popular fiction has a particular work to do in the maintenance and struggle for hegemony is important. Gramsci insists that hegemony is struggled for in every sphere of society, even in those areas which seem most private and removed from the incursions of politics or the state" (English Studies Group, 1980: 265).

To dismiss soap opera as trivial is to view the genre in a narrow focus. The broader context of the genre must be recognized; that is, the conditions of its existence must be understood. By viewing soaps in this wider context, the genre's so-called triviality is brought into question.

### The Soap Opera Viewer

Viewer's of soap opera are predominantly women (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 118). It is often said of this particular audience that soap opera provides an avenue of escape from their daily lives (Hobson, 1982: 119). This negative assessment of the soap opera viewer follows from the trivialization of the genre and from its location within mass culture. "Women are therefore seen as the passive victims of

the deceptive message of the soap operas, just as the ideology of mass culture sees the audience as unwitting and pathetic victims of the commercial culture industry" (Ang, 1982: 119). However, this assessment of the soap opera viewer is too simplistic. How can soap opera with its intense melodramatic portrayal of life's problems be an avenue of escape? More significantly, the reduction of this viewer to a 'passive victim' ignores the interaction the viewer has with the soap opera text.

Viewers do not passively watch soap opera. As Hobson (1982: 135) found in her study of soap opera viewers, they "contribute to their own understanding of the programme and make their own readings of what the production sets out to communicate. They work with the text and add their own experiences and opinions to the stories in the programme." Viewers do not necessarily accept dominant messages in the text in an unquestioning way. The message in the text "can be changed or 'worked on' by the audience as they make their own interpretation of a programme" (Hobson, 1982: 106). Although this analysis is not concerned with a theory of the reader, it does assume an active reader unlike the one proposed in the mass culture perspective. However, as will be seen in this research, the text's openness is limited, structuring the viewing experience towards the dominant point of view.

## Chapter Two

### Theory

#### Introduction

The theoretical orientation which informs this analysis of soap opera derives from the Cultural Studies approach. This approach places the mass media in their cultural context, arguing that the mass media reproduce the meanings of their culture. Stuart Hall's (1977) theory of the mass media explicates how the mass media reproduce the ideological structures of their culture, and thus, ideological hegemony.

The following will situate Hall in a broader tradition discussing key theorists of ideology: Marx, the Critical Theorists, and Althusser. Gramsci's conceptualization of hegemony will then be discussed as an alternative to domination theory. This is followed by discussion of Hall's particular conceptualization of ideology, indicating the influences of Althusser and Gramsci. Furthermore, Hall's theory of the mass media will be presented, revealing the additional influence of Gramsci.

Becoming more specific, patriarchy and ideology will be discussed in the context of hegemony. Then attention will turn to television and ideology. The circumstances and

conventions of television facilitate ideology; moreover, television is seen to reproduce ideological hegemony.

Given the above discussion, it is suggested that soap opera (as a product of television) will also reproduce ideological hegemony. Specifically, soap opera as a women's genre re-presenting women's culture will reproduce patriarchal ideological hegemony. It is shown that the soap opera text contains patriarchal ideology, and a brief review of the literature reveals that patriarchal ideology does struggle with an alternative ideology of liberal feminism to construct meaning within the soap opera text.

The hypothesis that soap opera will reproduce patriarchal ideological hegemony will be tested using Hall's theory of the mass media which necessitates analyzing how soap opera constructs meaning.

### Marx and Ideology

Marx's theory of ideology can be divided into three aspects: the conception of a dominant ideology, ideology as a distortion of reality, and the relationship between phenomenal forms and reality. The first aspect of Marx's theory of ideology is the conception of a dominant ideology. Marx states:

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the

ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling **material** force of society, is at the same time its ruling **intellectual** force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production...the ideas of those who lack the means of production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance (Marx and Engels, 1972: 136-137; emphasis in original).

Ideology is placed within the context of power and domination. Those with material power have the power to control representations<sup>2</sup> of reality. They use this form of power to legitimize the continuance of their dominant position in society and the subordinate position of others. Through its ideology, the dominant class represents its particular interests as the universal interests of all classes. This dominant ideology supports the class system of domination (Giddens, 1983: 19). However, the dominant ideology, as an expression of a class system of domination, must also express class struggle. By necessity, it must be contradictory expressing differing interests (Hall, 1977: 317).

Moreover, this ruling class/ruling ideas model of ideology posits ideology as a reflection of the material conditions of existence determined by the mode of production. Ideology comes to be determined by the economic, denying it autonomy.

The second aspect of Marx's theory of ideology poses ideology as a distortion of reality. "Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process. If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-down as in a **camera obscura**, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process" (Marx and Engels, 1972: 118; emphasis in original). The 'camera obscura' metaphor suggests ideology is a distorted representation of reality inverting real relations. Similar to the ruling class/ruling ideas model, the distorted representation is directly translatable to concrete reality implying that ideas are only epiphenomena dependent on the economic for their existence (Mepham, 1974: 101). Moreover, the people whose consciousness is produced through the material relations of their existence have a false understanding of their circumstances; they possess false consciousness, for they live in distortion. The result of false consciousness is the dehistoricizing of the social, as it is presented as natural and universal (Ramirez, 1986: 98). Within ideology, and thus false consciousness, society is presented as an ahistorical entity hiding the precariousness of the social structure as a product of human construction.

The third aspect of Marx's theory of ideology is the

relationship between phenomenal forms and reality. Phenomenal forms are the categories which compose ideology. They arise from real relations, and at the same time, they conceal the real relations of people to their conditions of existence. Phenomenal forms are appearances, and as such, they only present a partial reality. For example, the phenomenal form 'wages' is an ideological category which makes invisible the basis of the real relation between capital and labour which is exploitation based on surplus value. The exploitative production process as the necessary real relation of capitalism is hidden. Instead, only the exchange of labour is visible in an apparently free market of free individuals exchanging a 'fair day's wage for a fair day's work' (Mepham, 1974: 103, 109; Hall, 1977: 323). Phenomenal forms conceal the contradictions of a capitalist social formation.

Phenomenal forms as ideological categories perform the "structural dislocation" or the "decentering of material practice" of the real relations of capitalism from the ideological discourses that re-present them. These phenomenal forms are not illusions, for they are materialized in social practice (Hall, 1977: 323-324). Individuals do act in a labour market exchanging their work for wages. Moreover, unlike the 'camera obscura' conception of ideology, phenomenal forms cannot be traced directly back to reality independently of one another. Phenomenal forms are

interdependent. Real relations are hidden in a "structure of appearances" or in the interconnections of phenomenal forms. The wage as a phenomenal form is not independent of other phenomenal forms. Once this ideological category is identified, it necessitates the analysis of other phenomenal forms to which it is inextricably connected. For example, the wage necessitates an analysis of the phenomenal form money. Money hides the real source of the wage from the labourer. It appears as if the capitalist's wealth does not derive from surplus value. And money necessitates the analysis of the phenomenal form commodity, whose exchange through the money form, hides the human labour inherent in the production of that commodity. Consequently, the real relations of production (i.e., labour exploitation) are hidden in the equivalent exchange of commodities for money in the market place (Mepham, 1974: 111).

Within Marx's theory of ideology, there are two conceptions of ideology. Ideology is viewed as a distortion of reality merely reflecting reality upside-down in an illusion. Ideology is equated with false consciousness. Then, ideology is viewed as a structure of appearances partially representing reality. Moreover, Marx reduces ideology to the economic. It can be seen in the work of later ideology theorists that two aspects of these particular conceptualizations of ideology have become problematic. The

critical theorists take up false consciousness with Althusser later arguing against both false consciousness and economic reductionism.

### Critical Theorists and Ideology

The critical theorists of the Frankfurt school (i.e., Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse) represented a shift from the economism of Marxism to the concern with ideology and culture. They were influenced by the mass society critique which concerned itself with "the decline of the 'organic community', the rise of mass culture, [and] the social atomization of 'mass man'" (Bennett, 1982: 32). Placing these concerns of the mass society critique within a Marxist framework, the critical theorists developed a critique of modern culture and the media.

This critique focused on the media's role in preventing the working class from developing a revolutionary consciousness (Bennett, 1982: 42). For the critical theorists, the working class consciousness has been thwarted by 'the culture industry' which constantly provides categories of thought (i.e., ideologies) for them to think reality. This prevents alternative categories of thought from occurring and threatening the status quo. Furthermore, high culture has lost its critical potential, for it has been reduced to low culture through the massified commodities of

the media which reproduce capitalism.

The products indoctrinate and manipulate; they promote a false consciousness which is immune against its falsehood....Thus emerges a pattern of **one-dimensional thought and behavior** in which ideas, aspirations, and objectives that, by their content, transcend the established universe of discourse and action are either repelled or reduced to the terms of this universe (Marcuse, 1964: 12; emphasis in original).

The critical theorists contend that mass culture creates a working class with a false consciousness through the dominant ideology of capitalism, disseminated by 'the culture industry.' However, the critical theorists, as intellectuals, did not possess this false consciousness. Despite this elitism, they did put forth ideology and the media as important vehicles in managing the contradictions of capitalism. And they did relegate Marxist economism to the background (Bennett, 1982: 46; McQuail, 1984: 63). Yet, they retained the notion of a dominant ideology creating false consciousness in the subordinate classes.

It is Althusser who argues against false consciousness while retaining the notion of a dominant ideology. And it is Althusser who places Marxist economism in the foreground arguing against it.

### Althusser and Ideology

Althusser's theory of ideology is part of an attempt

to rework classical Marxism (Grossberg and Slack, 1985: 88). He argues against the economic reductionism of classical Marxism contending that society is a structured totality not reducible to one single element, the economic (Hall, 1985: 91). The economic is not the essential center, the essential determinate, of the social formation, so the superstructures are relatively autonomous of it. In relation to ideology, this autonomy of the superstructures means that ideology has an existence of its own relatively independent of the economic. It does not merely reflect material relations.

Althusser conceptualizes ideology as a

system of representations...[which] have nothing to do with 'consciousness': they are usually images and occasionally concepts, but it is above all as **structures** that they impose on the vast majority of [people], not via their 'consciousness'....In ideology [people]...express, not the relation between them and their conditions of existence, but **the way** they live the relation between them and their conditions of existence: this presupposes both a real relation and an '**imaginary**', '**lived**' relation (1969: 233; emphasis in original).

This conceptualization makes an important distinction between real relations and imaginary relations. People's relationships to reality are imaginary, for there is no correspondence between the real relations of the social and how they are lived by people. As previously discussed in relation to Marx, the real relation in the capitalist social formation between employer and employee is exploitative.

However, people do not live the real relation. Instead, they experience reality through phenomenal forms. Phenomenal forms can be seen as the imaginary. A fair day's wage for a fair day's work is an imaginary relationship of people to their real conditions of existence, exploitation. People do not experience the real relation but rather live in the imaginary relation of phenomenal forms (i.e., ideology).

However, imaginary relations are not false consciousness. Althusser argues that ideology has 'nothing to do with consciousness', for it is as structures that ideology exists. "[People] 'live' their ideologies...**not at all as a form of consciousness, but as an object of their 'world'** -as their '**world'** itself" (Althusser, 1969: 233; emphasis in original). Ideology represents and structures people's lived experience. It is real. Ideology, as lived experience, is material and has effects because it becomes inscribed in social practices.

Althusser (1971: 166) contends that ideology exists within social practices, specifically within the practices of the "ideological state apparatuses." ISA's are social institutions which reproduce the ideological structures of society. They include the educational system, the family, the church, and the mass media (Althusser, 1971: 143). The social practices of these ISA's are organized in rituals (e.g., marriage, a Sunday service, a school day) where people's

actions, predicated by their imaginary lived experience, are placed. Thus, ideology assumes a material existence within the ISA's as it is manifest in concrete practice (Althusser, 1971: 168-169). Since ideology has material effects, it cannot be false.

The mechanism through which ideology works is the subject for Althusser. Ideology only exists through its creation of subjects (Althusser, 1971: 170-171). Ideology produces experience for individuals creating places or subject positions for them within that experience. Individuals become subjects when they recognize their experience within ideology. This recognition invites or "hails" these individuals to occupy the subject positions created in the ideological structure. This creation of subjects is also called "interpellation." Moreover, individuals are "**always already** subjects" unable to escape ideology (Althusser, 1971: 172-174; emphasis in original).

However, Althusser's theory of ideology can only account for the reproduction of a dominant ideology. He places ideology at the center of capitalism functioning to reproduce its social relations of production. It is by "the massive inculcation of the ideology of the ruling class that the **relations of production** in a capitalist social formation, i.e., the relations of exploited to exploiters and exploiters to exploited, are largely reproduced" (Althusser, 1971: 156;

emphasis in original). Althusser does not account for the reproduction of ideologies other than the dominant one.

It is Gramsci who provides an alternative to the notion of a dominant ideology which pervades the work of the previous theorists.

### Gramsci and Hegemony

Gramsci's analysis of society is a project intended to discover how consensus is produced in a class society where power and dominance characterize class relations. His key concept, hegemony, provides the answer to the problem of the production of consensus. It runs counter to the ruling class/ruling ideas explanation for social consensus which posits a static dominant ideology legitimating the domination of one class by another. Rather, the structure of dominance of class society is achieved by cultural leadership not ideological domination. This is the central theme of hegemony (Mouffe, 1979: 193).

The nature of this cultural leadership is the ability of the dominant class, amid ideological struggle with subordinate classes, to establish an equilibrium where it successfully articulates the ideological elements of the subordinate classes to its value system. This articulation<sup>3</sup> creates a "successful hegemony" where a collective will is constructed among all classes so that the dominant class

"appears as representative of the general interest" acting on its behalf (Mouffe, 1979: 194). The antagonisms that exist between classes are transformed into mere differences which appear to be equally represented in a pluralist society. This is how consensus is produced. The subordinate classes consent to their own subordination, for their interests appear to be the same as the dominant class, displacing inequalities in power.<sup>4</sup> The power of the dominant class lies in its ability to win consent for its dominance through ideological struggle, through its power to construct hegemonic ideology. Power becomes inscribed in ideology.

However, the very nature of this cultural leadership predisposes it to a constant struggle to maintain power and dominance. Cultural leadership involves directing the collective will towards the interest of that leadership, the dominant class. Thus, it is a constant struggle to maintain the particular structure of the ideological elements that make up the collective will. For, there are other classes in society whose interests are in opposition to the dominant class', and they engage in a struggle to rearticulate the structure of ideological elements (Mouffe, 1979: 183, 192). The dominant class, in order to maintain its hegemonic position, must constantly modify the collective will as new interests are expressed by rival classes for cultural leadership. Hegemonic ideology is necessarily dynamic and

fluid, for it must readjust its elements to maintain the delicate equilibrium of hegemony and the production of consensus.

Gramsci's formulation of hegemony recognizes the diversity of ideologies that exist within any society. The differing conditions of existence (both social and material) of particular classes in society give way to differing definitions of reality -a multiplicity of ideologies. Hegemonic ideology is a dynamic and fluid structure of unequal, contradictory, and competing ideologies organized within the framework of the dominant class' definitions of reality. It is on the terms of the dominant class that subordinate realities are expressed. Ideology becomes central to the exercise of power and the production of consent.

It is Stuart Hall who blends the theorizing of Althusser and Gramsci to produce his own theory of ideology and the mass media.

### Stuart Hall and Ideology

The emergence of the Cultural Studies approach brought to the fore the concept of ideology in relation to the analysis of the mass media (Hall, 1980a: 117). "This approach begins with the assumption that all cultural items, in the form of media content and cultural artifacts, contain elements of the processes and ideologies inherent in their

creation" (Belkaoui, 1979: 104). The mass media are analyzed in the context of their surrounding culture, for it is culture which contains the meanings that the mass media re-presents. Here culture is conceptualized as a form which structures meanings into definite relationships or ideological configurations. Therefore, culture can be said to embody the meanings which reproduce ideology. Culture is a "signifying practice" with "its own determinate product: meaning" (Hall, 1980b: 30; emphasis in original). As cultural products, the mass media come to embody the particular ideological configuration of that culture. Moreover, the mass media are seen as sites of ideological struggle where the production of meaning becomes an area of contention.

The key proponent of the Cultural Studies approach to the mass media is Stuart Hall. His theory of the mass media views the mass media as social institutions with central roles in the reproduction of ideology. Hall's view of the mass media derives from Althusser's conceptualization of them as 'ideological state apparatuses.' It is with this influence from Althusser that Hall (1977: 343) conceptualizes the mass media as "socially, economically and technically organized apparatuses, for the production of messages, signs arranged in complex discourses: 'symbolic goods'."<sup>5</sup>

The 'symbolic' dimensions of the mass media are their ideological dimensions, and Hall also draws on Althusser for

his conceptualization of ideology. Hall agrees with Althusser on many of the key notions involved in his conceptualization of ideology as discussed previously. Specifically, Hall (1985: 91, 99-100) concurs with Althusser that ideology is not reducible to the material relations of society. Ideology is a relatively autonomous level of the social formation. As clarified in the earlier discussion, ideology has material effects, for it is inscribed in social practices. Thus, following the logic of Althusser's argument, Hall agrees ideology cannot be false consciousness. Furthermore, Hall concurs that ideology imposes itself as a structure. "Ideologies are the frameworks of thinking and calculation about the world -the 'ideas' which people use to figure out how the social world works, what their place is in it and what they **ought** to do" (Hall, 1985: 99; emphasis in original). And as for Althusser, Hall (1985: 102), too, concurs that individuals are subjects created by ideology.

However, Hall eventually breaks with Althusser's conceptualization of ideology contending it is too functionalist (Hall, 1977: 337; Hall, 1982: 78; Hall 1985: 99). Althusser contends that the ideological state apparatuses only function to reproduce the dominant ideology without addressing the reproduction of ideologies which counter the dominant one. As Hall (1985: 99) observes, "[w]hen you ask about the contradictory field of ideology,

about how the ideology of the dominated classes gets produced and reproduced, about the ideologies of resistance, of exclusion, of deviation, etc., there are no answers [from Althusser]."

It is now that Hall turns to Gramsci's concept of hegemony to further develop his conceptualization of ideology, and thus, his theory of the mass media in society. Ideology, through Gramsci's concept of hegemony, becomes a "complex field (not a single, univocal structure)" (Hall, 1977: 333; emphasis in original). Moreover, ideology becomes for Hall "one of the key forms of contestation over the dispositions and struggles for power at different sites in society" (Grossberg and Slack, 1985: 90). Power becomes contested through a struggle over meaning, a struggle to signify reality in a particular way. This struggle over meaning emerges as the "politics of signification" (Hall, 1982: 78). Ideologies "contest one another, often drawing on a common, shared repertoire of concepts, rearticulating them within different systems of difference or equivalence" (Hall, 1985: 104). This is an active process where definitions of reality are constructed and reconstructed. The struggle is a social practice.

Refining his conceptualization of ideology under Gramsci's notion of hegemony, Hall is able to go beyond the 'dominant ideology' of Althusser. He retains the progressive

elements in Althusser's conceptualization of ideology blending them with the influences of Gramsci. He develops his conceptualization of ideology as a fluid structure of many competing ideologies struggling for preference to define reality. "Ideology is, for Hall, the web of meanings and discourses, the strings of connotation and their means of representation, within which social practices, consciousness, identities, and subjectivities are placed" (Grossberg and Slack, 1985: 89). It is Hall's conceptualization of ideology which will inform this analysis.

In summary, it is Marx's work on ideology which began the development of this important concept. Marx located his two conceptualizations of ideology within the context of power, domination, and class struggle. He conceived of a dominant ideology which served the interests of the dominant class by maintaining their dominant position in society. Moreover, Marx viewed ideology as an effect of the material relations of society totally reducible to the economic. In his 'camera obscura' metaphor, ideology became false consciousness. Yet, in his discussion of phenomenal forms, ideology became a partial representation of reality materialized in social practice, and thus, not false consciousness. From Marx's work on ideology, the notions of a dominant ideology, economic reductionism, false consciousness, and phenomenal forms became central concerns

of later theorists.

The critical theorists, in their critique of mass culture and its deleterious effect on revolutionary potential of the working class, conceptualized ideology following Marx's 'camera obscura' metaphor. Ideology for the critical theorists is false consciousness. The concern here is with the dominant ideology and its creation of false consciousness in the working class. This particular conceptualization of ideology does not go beyond Marx, and thus, it does not offer any critical insights or developments concerning the conceptualization of ideology.

With the advent of Althusser, the conceptualization of ideology does develop beyond Marx. There is a movement away from false consciousness and a treatment of the problem of economism. Althusser, in his critique, denied the reducibility of ideology to the material relations of society. He developed the conceptualization of ideology by arguing that ideology was relatively free of the economic. Furthermore, ideology was not false consciousness. It had real material effects as the lived experience of individuals. Here Althusser is seen to draw near to Marx's phenomenal forms, for imaginary relations can be equated with the partial representations of reality represented in phenomenal forms as the building blocks of ideology. And Althusser's introduction of the subject as the vehicle for ideology is a

further advancement in the conceptualization of ideology.

Despite the progressive elements in Althusser's work, he retained the notion of a dominant ideology. His concern was how, through the ISA'S, the dominant ideology was reproduced, and in turn, reproduced the status quo (i.e., the social relations of production).

Gramsci's development of the concept of ideology takes place within his conceptualization of hegemony. Ideology is no longer the static dominant ideology of the previous theorists. Rather, it becomes fluid and dynamic facilitating the hegemonic process. Ideology becomes the site of struggle for differing class interests. It becomes the locus of power, for whoever controls representations has the power to construct hegemonic ideology. This retains Marx's original placement of ideology in the context of power, but it goes beyond Marx's notion of a dominant ideology in the ruling class/ruling ideas model. Ideology, in Gramsci, is a delicate balance of conflicting interests directing the collective will toward the interests of the dominant class.

Stuart Hall combines the key conceptions of Althusser and Gramsci to develop his conceptualization of ideology. Ideology now is a structure or system of representations that creates subjects materializing itself in their social practices. Ideology is not static but ever changing. It is the site of power struggles among differing interests which

vie for the power to shape representations of reality. Hall locates this notion of ideology within the material site of Althusser's ISA's or specifically the mass media.

As previously noted, it is Hall's conceptualization of ideology that informs this research. And it is the position of the Cultural Studies approach that the mass media, as cultural products, embody the ideologies of culture which is the basis for this study. The above statements demand certain approaches to the topic at hand. Firstly, it is proposed that ideology will be found in the products of the mass media. Secondly, if ideology is not false consciousness but material, it is again proposed that ideology can be found within the material sites of the mass media. Thirdly, since ideology is a structure, it is proposed that it will be uncovered within the media in that form. This directs the research towards a particular methodology as will be seen in the following chapter. Fourthly, if ideology is an ever changing site of struggle, it should be found as such in the texts of the mass media.

### Stuart Hall's Theory of the Mass Media

With Gramsci's conceptualization of the hegemonic process, Hall is able to take his theory of the mass media beyond their being sites and transmitters of ideology. Appropriating Gramsci's notion of hegemony, Hall (1977:

340-342) explicates how the mass media organize contradictory and competing discourses within the hegemonic ideology to produce, from a fragmented and plural reality, the sense of a social totality and social consensus, that is, ideological hegemony. This is Hall's theory of the mass media.

Hall (1977: 340-342) distinguishes three functions of the mass media which give them roles in the reproduction of the hegemonic process.<sup>6</sup> The first function of the mass media is to construct an imaginary social totality which is a ready-made whole free from fragmentation. The realities of disparate groups are homogenized, so the cleavages of society are masked as compatible differences. The 'ideological effect' of this imaginary social totality is the unifying of pluralities, so that they appear to coexist without antagonisms. All groups appear to have the same interests, for particular interests (i.e., those of the dominant group) are universalized. The construction of this social imagery presents a "world-of-the whole" (Hall, 1977: 341). A plurality of realities is made intelligible, so they can be apprehended as a coherent social whole.

The second function of the mass media in their reproduction of ideological hegemony is to articulate the diverse ideologies of a plural society. "Here the social knowledge which the media selectively circulate is ranked and arranged within the great normative and evaluative

classifications, within the **preferred** meanings and interpretations" (Hall, 1977: 341; emphasis in original). The management of alternative ideologies takes place in this ranking arena. They are contained or incorporated by the preferred ideologies. It is here the struggle over meaning takes place, for this is where it is 'decided' what ideologies will be allowed to define reality and how.

The third function of the mass media is the production of consensus. Consensus must be produced for the preferred rankings of ideologies within the hegemonic ideologies. The production of consensus is secured as "contrary views" are included within the preferred definitions of reality which allow disparate groups to "attach themselves" to this particular ranking of ideologies (Hall, 1977: 342). They recognize their own subordinated definitions of reality within the hegemonic discourse. This recognition produces consent to the preferred ranking, for their views appear to be equally represented. Thus, they consent to their own subordination effecting the reproduction of ideological hegemony.

However, the securing of ideological hegemony is not guaranteed. Given the nature of hegemonic ideology as a delicate balance of ideological elements constantly in struggle to establish meaning, subordinate groups will not necessarily decode ideological meaning as the dominant group

has encoded it. Hall (1980c: 135) states that "there is no necessary correspondence between encoding and decoding, the former can attempt to 'pre-fer' but cannot prescribe or guarantee the latter, which has its own conditions of existence." Hall (1980c: 136-138) establishes three positions a subject may assume from which to decode meanings: dominant hegemonic, negotiated, or oppositional. A dominant hegemonic decoding preserves the dominant or preferred encoded meaning. A negotiated decoding preserves generally the dominant meaning while decoding oppositional meaning at the situational level.<sup>7</sup> Finally, oppositional decoding preserves nothing of the original dominant encoded meaning.

Thus, the mass media as ideological state apparatuses do not necessarily succeed in the absolute reproduction of ideological hegemony. Reproduction is loose, leaving room for change, for the hegemonic process is a tenuous process of managing conflicting and changing interests. It is Hall's theory of the mass media which will be used as a framework within which to analyze how soap opera reproduces patriarchal ideological hegemony.

### Patriarchy and Ideology

The discussion will now turn its attention away from ideology and class domination to ideology and gender domination. This, of course, necessitates a discussion of

patriarchy. Patriarchy is "the omnipresent system of male [dominance] and female subjugation...achieved through socializing, perpetuated through ideological means, and maintained by institutional methods" (Mitchell, 1971: 65). Patriarchy is a gender hierarchy of male dominance and female subordination. The ideological separation of the public and private spheres in patriarchal ideology is a legitimating device for this hierarchy (Jaggar, 1983: 241). It normatively constructs women in the private sphere of the family, the center of patriarchy's gender hierarchy (Mitchell, 1971: 99).

The ideologies of romance, femininity, domesticity, and motherhood "compose the matrix of patriarchal ideology" (Harrison, 1978: 192). The ideology of romance associates love with marriage. Marrying for love is the basis on which the roles of women in the private sphere are legitimated (Bland et al., 1978: 43). Moreover, the ideology of romance hides the economic aspect of the relationship where the man establishes dominance over the woman, instead presenting marriage as an "affective" relationship (Jaggar, 1983: 199). The ideology of femininity concerns female sexuality. It defines women as the sources of pleasure for men always being "attractive" and "available" (Winship, 1978: 136).

The ideology of domesticity posits women's place as in the home, establishing her central role within the family. Her role there is not only as a domestic labourer, but she

also must "[ensure] the sanctity of the home" (cited in Bland et al., 1978: 47). She is responsible for the emotional well being of all family members. Domestic ideology legitimates the private sphere as the 'natural' place for women.

The ideology of motherhood, in tandem with the ideology of domesticity, further places women 'naturally' within the private sphere. This ideology defines women as nurturers who are the virtuous protectors of the family. Female sexuality is denied in the ideology of motherhood. In this ideology, women are "sexually unavailable" (Winship, 1978:138).

Conceptualizing patriarchal ideology as a 'matrix' is to view it as a container of its composing ideologies which, by necessity, are fluid within it. The ideologies of romance, femininity, domesticity, and motherhood move in and out of preferred positions. There is no rank order among them. The ideology of romance moves into a preferred position within the matrix to legitimate the ideologies of domesticity and motherhood (Harrison, 1978: 192). For, the organization of women into the private sphere is predicated on their acceptance of the ideology of romance. Romantic love is the basis for women's dedication to the family and her domestic roles. Furthermore, the ideology of romance and the ideology of femininity are interdependent. In order to attain

romantic love, women must make themselves pleasing to men. It is only by defining women as pleasure givers, through the ideology of femininity, that the ideology of romance can work. Moreover, it is women's role in the family to please men because of romantic love.

Contradictions arise from this fluidity. The ideologies of motherhood and femininity are contradictions within the matrix of patriarchal ideology (Winship, 1978: 136, 148). The ideology of femininity demands that women be sexually available for men's pleasure. The ideology of motherhood demands that women be maternal and deny sexuality. These two demands for women are contradictory, establishing a binary opposition: the whore versus the mother (Jaggar, 1983: 260).

The hegemonic position of patriarchal ideology in our society is predicated on its ability to maintain these composing ideologies as the preferred meanings of women's subordinate position. As a hegemonic ideology, it has successfully incorporated and contained alternative meanings of women's conditions put forth by feminism in general (Jaddou and Williams, 1981: 109). The particular struggle over meaning which has taken place since the advent of feminism necessitates patriarchal ideology's incorporation of meanings in opposition to its definition of reality. Moreover, it necessitates a movement of the hegemonic

equilibrium allowing for change (i.e., not only allowing the interests of women greater voice but their actualization). Women's rights have been strengthened within patriarchy from women attaining the right to vote to their entitlement of an equal share of marital property. Only through careful management of the equilibrium can patriarchy retain its dominance. It has managed a delicate balance of conflicting interests.

### Television and Ideology

Television is a medium of the mass media. Given Hall's theory of the mass media, television should reproduce ideological hegemony. Television is a social institution which produces 'symbolic goods' in the form of television programmes which cover a wide variety of genres. Television is a cultural artifact, and as such, it comes to re-present cultural meanings -ideological discourses. "Television, as one of the major mass media, is part of the communications apparatus whose primary thrust is ideological; that is to say, it constructs social reality and reproduces social relations" (deLauretis, 1979: 115). Television is a site for the struggle over and production of meaning.

The 'symbolic goods' which television offers can be seen as texts or messages which re-present cultural meanings. The text can only produce meaning through interaction with

the television viewer, and this interaction allows ideology to work (Fiske, 1982: 143-144). However, the interaction between the television text and the viewer takes place under particular circumstances and through particular conventions which facilitate the work of ideology. The television medium has particular characteristics which position the viewer to read meaning from the text unaware of the ideology at work. The "television medium presents us with a continuous stream of images almost all of which are deeply familiar in structure and form....It uses codes which are closely related to those by which we perceive reality itself. It appears to be the natural way of seeing the world" (Fiske and Hartley, 1978: 17; emphasis in original). It is the particular structure of television viewing and presentation which facilitates it as an ideological apparatus.

John Ellis (1982) looks at these particular circumstances of viewing television and the particular conventions of television to show how the work of ideology is facilitated through the structure of the medium. The viewing of television takes place mainly in the home. The domestic setting for television makes viewing an intimate activity done in the privacy of the living room (Ellis, 1982: 113). Furthermore, "the stripped-down image" of television, where details are absent, leads to the conventional close-up camera shots of the medium. This emphasis on the face in close-up

creates a sense of intimacy for the viewer (Ellis, 1982: 131). And it positions the viewer in an intimate relation to the television. The intimate positioning of the viewer is further established through the content of television. The focus on the family form<sup>8</sup> in television's variety of genres "produces a sense of intimacy, a bond between the viewers' conception of themselves (or how they ought to be) and the programme's central concerns" (Ellis, 1982: 136). Moreover, television's sense of being "live" enhanced by its conventions (i.e., segments following real time, self-contained segments, close-ups, sound continuity, and direct address) "gives the impression that these events are...co-present with the viewer, shared rather than witnessed from outside" (Ellis, 1982: 136-137). The televisual representation of reality appears to be that of the viewer; consequently, the fact that the viewer has been positioned in relation to the television from a point of view of intimacy is lost. The conventions which construct this viewing position appear natural, for they are how the viewer naturally perceives reality. The obviousness of perception allows socially produced meaning within the text to appear as the viewer's own, facilitating the work of ideology. Thus, it is not apparent that it is the television that produces the meaning for the viewer and not vice versa.

Television, being a domestic medium, must compete

with the domestic surroundings of viewers which may draw their attention away. The viewer is a casual viewer who 'delegates' his/her glance to television. Therefore, the particular mode of representation for television's meanings must attempt to keep the attention of the viewer (Ellis, 1982: 128). The use of sound (e.g., music and laughter) returns the viewer's attention to the television image. It signifies the important times to look, so the meaning of the text is not lost (Ellis, 1982: 162). The television must keep the attention of viewers in order to "recruit the interests of its viewers by creating a complicity of viewing: the TV look at the world becomes a surrogate look for the viewers" (Ellis, 1982: 163). Yet, this 'surrogate look' appears to be the viewers own natural way of seeing the world. It is not evident that this way of viewing the world is through the socially produced conventions of television based on the codes of realism. "The camera, like a magician, appears to read our mind, and our own act of reading, our necessary act of collaboration in this deceit, goes unnoticed and unnoted" (Nichols, 1981: 35). This, too, facilitates the work of ideology.

Television, as an element of the mass media system, can be looked at specifically in its role as reproducer of ideological hegemony. "Television is a human construct, and the job that it does is the result of human choice, cultural

decisions and social pressures. The medium responds to the conditions within which it exists" (Fiske and Hartley, 1978: 17). If television responds to the conditions within which it exists, it will most likely symbolically reproduce those conditions (i.e., the characteristics of its culture).

Todd Gitlin (1979) looks at the structure of prime time television to see how it expresses and supports ideological hegemony. Looking at the format and formula of prime time television, Gitlin (1979: 254) argues that the regularity of television programmes in terms of time, characters, and narrative form "convey images of social steadiness." This regularity "express[es] and cement[s] the obduracy of a social world impervious to substantial change." The 'ideological effect' is the naturalizing of the social so that it does not appear as a human construct, an historical structure.

The coming and going of television programmes fits into a consumer society where the audience has the illusion of choice in the programs that are produced for consumption. "In this way, the regular changes in TV programs, like the regular elections of public officials, seem to affirm the sovereignty of the audience while keeping deep alternatives off the agenda. Elite authority and consumer choice are affirmed at once -this is one of the central operations of the hegemonic liberal . capitalist ideology" (Gitlin, 1979:

254-255). Moreover, commercials constitute the viewer as a consumer rather than a citizen. "Public problems (like air pollution) are propounded as susceptible to private commodity solutions (like eyedrops)" (Gitlin, 1979: 255). Television privatizes the public.

Gitlin (1979: 256; emphasis in original) argues that "hegemonic ideology is maintained in the Seventies by **domesticating** divisive issues." On prime time television social conflict and social problems are dealt with by a few persons, and the solutions to these problems no matter how "deeply...located within society...will be solved among a few persons" (Gitlin, 1979: 262). The slants of programs are either "a legitimation of depoliticized forms of deviance, usually ethnic or sexual", or "a delegitimation of the dangerous, the violent, the out-of-bounds" (Gitlin, 1979: 261). Social conflict is "transported **into** the cultural system, where the hegemonic process frames them, form and content both, into compatibility with dominant systems of meaning" (Gitlin, 1979: 264; emphasis in original).

Hegemonic ideology is reproduced through these conventions of prime time television. The social world is presented as an unchanging nonconflictive whole. Viewers are constituted as private, non-political consumers. Social conflict and alternative social arrangements are contained in, or excluded from, the television message reduced to micro

level situations that can be dealt with outside of the political arena. "[H]egemonic ideology is extremely complex and absorptive; it is only by absorbing and domesticating conflicting definitions of reality and demands on it, in fact, that it remains hegemonic" (Gitlin, 1979: 264).

### Soap Opera and Ideology

It has been argued that television, as a mass medium, is an apparatus reproducing hegemonic ideology. Given that soap opera is one of the 'symbolic goods' produced by the social institution of television, it will be argued that soap opera will also reproduce ideological hegemony (i.e., patriarchal ideological hegemony).

As a form of television, soap opera, too, is a product of its conditions of existence. Soap opera exists on television among the myriad of commodities produced by television for mass consumption (Allen, 1985: 45). Soap opera is located in a capitalist society. Indeed, soap opera only exists because it draws an audience for advertisers. Soap opera serves an economic function (Intintoli, 1984: 73; Allen, 1985: 45). However, not only does soap opera exist because of capitalism's logic, its very form and content are shaped by this logic (i.e., profit over aesthetics, and don't offend the viewer/consumer).

The form of soap opera (i.e., narrative form and

visual form) is largely the result of its economic function. From soap opera's origins in radio to its transition to television, it has primarily been seen by its creators as an economic vehicle.

[I]t is clear that the idea of presenting continuing stories focusing upon domestic concerns of daytime radio was the result of the conjunction of corporate desire to reach a particular audience (women eighteen to forty-nine) and broadcaster's need to fit the daytime hours with revenue-generating programming. The soap opera represents a form of cultural production that has been fully penetrated by capital since the moment of its conception, a form driven and sustained by corporate imperatives (Allen, 1985: 128-129).

As an economic vehicle, soap opera was created for a specific category of women -housewives (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 150). Soap opera, now conveyed by television, is viewed in a domestic setting during a particular time of the day when housewives most likely compose the majority of viewers. In 1981, seventy percent of the daytime audience were women eighteen years and older (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 118). The form of the soap opera has emerged from these conditions of existence.

Soap opera has a fragmented narrative structure. The narrative structure of soap opera is characteristically segmented and repetitive with multiple plots. The segmentation of the narrative is accomplished by the constant switching from one plot line to another only giving short

segments of any one plot during the course of the soap opera's narrative. Repetition of the various plots takes place daily on soap opera. Repetition always occurs within episodes and across episodes. Characters constantly talk and re-talk plots. And if this repetition is not enough, some soap operas provide the viewer with a summary of events from previous episodes at the beginning of each new episode.

As noted previously by Ellis (1982), television as a domestic medium must compete with domestic surroundings for the viewer's attention. Moreover, the soap opera assumes a particular viewer -the housewife- whose domestic tasks cause her to view in a "distracted state" while she tends to her family's needs and household duties (Modleski, 1983: 70-71, 73). It is within this context that soap opera creators assume women to be viewing, thus the form of soap opera accommodates such a viewer. The 'distracted state' caused by the housewife's daily routine is accommodated by such narrative form. She can watch her favorite soap opera amid the many tasks which interrupt her viewing as the segmentation accommodates short viewing spans; moreover, the repetition of plots allows her to miss some segments without losing the storyline. And just as important, the use of excessive dialogue in soap opera instead of action to move the narrative allows the housewife to follow storylines by listening rather than viewing. This further accommodates her

distracted viewing state.

The fragmented structure of soap opera's narrative accommodates the viewing housewife in order to maintain her interest in the soap opera, so she is available to watch commercials. Commercials increase the segmentation of the narrative structure with their constant interruption. Soap opera is "crafted to fit commercials" (Intintoli, 1984: 76). Moreover, the continuousness of the narrative is an attempt to create a continuous viewer whose loyalty to a particular soap opera may translate into loyalty for the products advertised during that soap opera (Intintoli, 1984: 66).

The excessive use of close-up camera shots result from their quickness compared to complex time consuming long-shots; therefore, close-up camera shots increase production speed and reduce costs (Intintoli, 1984: 141). The use of location shots is kept to a minimum not because they are more expensive than the construction of exterior sets in the studio, but they interfere with the over-all production schedule of the soap opera. The less time used in production the more money that is saved (Intintoli, 1984: 137-138). Thus, soap opera becomes largely a world of interiors filled with talking faces.

The form of soap opera is determined by its economic function; however, as a residual effect, the soap opera's form facilitates the work of ideology. The fragmented

narrative structure accommodates the viewing conditions of the woman, and thus, it constructs a position for her in the soap opera text, a position of interaction with the text and its 'web' of ideology. The use of excessive close-ups and the continuous nature of the narrative construct a type of realism for the viewer where points of recognition can be established. This positions the viewer to construct meaning from the representations within the soap opera text which connote ideological structures.

The content of soap opera is also shaped by the logic of capitalism. Generally, content must be safe, yet it must attract an audience. Consequently, the narrative content must be contemporary but not offensive. The producers of soap opera are very aware of their audience. They have to tell stories that "**minimize risk**" (Intintoli, 1984: 102; emphasis in original). The stories presented in soap opera are within what the producers perceive to be the majority's view. They must keep within the perceived consensus. Dominant ideologies become encoded in the soap opera text only allowing subordinate ideologies to enter when social pressure is exerted by outside forces struggling over meanings (e.g., pressure groups, audiences). High ratings must be kept so profit is not threatened. Social and economic pressures 'decide' what ideologies are to be included in, or excluded from, the soap opera text.

Since producers of soap opera are very aware of their audiences and since that audience is primarily women, the content of the soap opera must sustain an audience of women in order for its economic function to be fulfilled. "The content of soap opera reflects its intended audience. The stories are women's stories, focusing on love, romance, childbearing, health and illness, manners and morals" (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 28). Thus, soap opera is a women's genre which re-presents women's culture (Hobson, 1982: 32; Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 27). It is the 'symbolic' dimension of soap opera as meaning producer that incorporates the cultural sphere of women into its content. These 'stories' are the ideological discourses that construct the culture of women's daily lives; moreover, they are the composing ideologies of patriarchal ideology. As a genre that represents women's subculture amid a dominant men's culture, soap opera can be said to exist within the conditions of patriarchal culture. Thus, it can be asked to what extent does soap opera, as a cultural text, contain the ideological discourses of patriarchy.

In this research, it is argued that patriarchal ideology will be one of the ideologies struggling to make meaning within the soap opera text. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that the soap opera text will reproduce symbolically patriarchal ideological hegemony. This is

possible since the soap opera text, as a cultural product, will respond to its conditions of existence -patriarchy-reproducing its hegemonic ideology.

Although there is no research specifically focusing on soap opera and the hegemony of patriarchy's ideology, undertaking a brief review of the literature of studies focusing on the portrayal of women in soap opera indicates the existence of patriarchal ideology in the soap opera text. Moreover, it indicates that the hegemonic process is occurring in the soap opera text as an alternative ideology to patriarchy (i.e., liberal feminist ideology) is contesting the patriarchal definition of women, however limited. This liberal feminist ideology does not seek to destroy patriarchal ideology but rather works to redefine women within hegemonic patriarchy (Jaggar, 1985: 181).

Recently, there has been an increase in the number of female characters occupying positions of power (i.e., high ranking occupations) in soap opera. However, closer inspection shows that this inclusion is on patriarchal terms. Arliss et al. (1983: 148-150) investigated the occupational roles of women characters on soap opera. They found 64% of male characters occupy positions of power in contrast to only 34% of the female characters. Therefore, female characters tend to occupy mostly subordinate positions despite their numerical balance with male characters (Rondina et al., 1980:

9).

Research has shown that female characters portraying traditional women in the domestic, familial, romantic context are approved while non-traditional (i.e., non-domestic) female characters are condemned (Tuchman, 1978: 13; Meehan, 1983: 124-5). Weibel (1977: 59) observed that female characters on soap operas who neglected their families in favour of the work world were punished in their personal lives (e.g., spouse's infidelity). Cantor and Pingree (1983: 90-91) found that on soap operas "[c]onservative, nurturing women tended to be good characters, while evil women were career-oriented and nontraditional in their behavior."

In these studies, inclusion of the alternative view of women's roles is included on patriarchal terms. It is framed in the dominant value system of patriarchal culture. At the same time that women in powerful positions are accepted, they are rejected. Traditional domestic roles for women are condoned while non-traditional roles are condemned. The age old dichotomization of women's roles into good and evil is drawn on to show that women belong in the private sphere. Entrance into the public sphere of men is to be evil and unwomanly. Weibel (1977: 60-1) states

'Good'...is associated with traits traditionally stereotyped as female, such as love, compassion, family, loyalty, and the willingness to sacrifice and suffer; 'evil', on the other hand, is associated with

traits long stereotyped as masculine -including cutthroat professional ethics, excessive involvement in work, neglect of family, infidelity, and so on.

While an alternative view of women's roles is included in the soap opera text, it is articulated to patriarchal ideology showing the correctness of the separation of the public and private spheres. It delegitimizes and depoliticizes the call for more powerful roles for women in society. Liberal feminist ideology is contained limiting its circulation in patriarchal ideology's matrix. It would appear patriarchal ideology is given preference to construct meaning within the soap opera text. The alternative ideology of liberal feminism is expressed only on the terms of patriarchal ideology. This reveals the hegemonic process at work within the soap opera text.

The research in this brief review of the literature does not explicitly address the issue of patriarchal hegemony. These findings can only tentatively point to the indication of the hegemonic process at work establishing a basis for the stated hypothesis. Therefore, it is the purpose of this research to explicitly address the issue of patriarchal hegemony in relation to soap opera.

### Conclusion

It is the reproduction of patriarchal ideological

hegemony within the soap opera text that is of concern. The interest is on the soap opera as a cultural text and how it re-presents cultural meanings. As a product of its conditions of existence, it is not the 'effects' that the soap opera has on its viewer that are of concern, but rather how the text constructs meaning to be 'read' by the viewer. Much literature on soap opera does not recognize the important 'symbolic' dimension of soap opera and is satisfied to look for the deleterious 'effects' of soap opera viewing. The 'effects' on the viewer include dissatisfaction with life (Kinzer, 1973); the harmful effect on children (Goldsen, 1975); and the distortion of reality (Buerkel-Rothfuss and Mayes, 1981). The soap opera as a cultural text which constructs meaning is ignored; therefore, these researchers do not address the issue of how soap opera constructs and re-presents cultural meanings. They are satisfied to quantify soap opera content analyzing the frequency of particular occupations (Gade, 1981); the types of sex roles portrayed (Turow, 1974; Hodges et al., 1981); the frequency of sexual behavior (Greenberg et al., 1981; Lowry et al., 1981); and the types of conversations found in soap opera dialogue (Fine, 1981). Quantifying the content of soap opera abstracts it from its structural relation to other elements of the soap opera, and thus, there is no possibility of discovering how the soap opera text constructs meaning. Recent research

influenced by the Cultural Studies approach and semiology has begun to delve into the soap opera text exploring its ways of constructing meaning (Hobson, 1982; Brunsdon, 1983; Modleski, 1983; Allen, 1985).

Using Stuart Hall's theory of the mass media and his conceptualization of ideology, it is the purpose of this research to examine how the soap opera text reproduces the hegemony of patriarchal ideology. This can only be accomplished through discovering how the soap opera text constructs meaning, for ideological hegemony is reproduced primarily through a struggle over meaning. The soap opera's construction of meaning will be examined in terms of how the soap opera (as a 'symbolic good' of the mass medium of television) fulfills the functions of the mass media in its reproduction of patriarchal ideological hegemony.

## Chapter Three

### Methodology

#### Structuralism Versus Content Analysis

The purpose of this analysis is to examine the ways in which the soap opera text reproduces patriarchal ideological hegemony. This necessitates the discovery of how the soap opera text constructs meaning, for this is to discover how ideology works. The analysis must make visible the ideological meanings that appear natural or taken for granted. It must reveal the ideological structures which are encoded in the soap opera text; therefore, a structuralist methodology must be used.

The use of this methodology in the analysis of soap opera texts has not traditionally been the predominant methodology used. Content analysis has been the popular choice as a methodology for the analysis of soap opera texts (Allen, 1985: 35). However, with the positing of the concern of ideology in the mass media, structuralist analysis must replace content analysis as a methodology if ideological structures are to be revealed.

Content analysis is quantitative. It approaches any text with the intention of quantifying items within that text. Thus, the analysis of soap opera using this methodology

quantifies occurrences within the soap opera text often as a basis for comparison with the socio-demographics of the real world. (Allen, 1985: 36). Content analysis studies have looked at the socio-demographic characteristics of soap opera characters comparing them to socio-demographic characteristics of the real world's population to ascertain the degree of realism of the soap opera text (e.g., Katzman, 1972; Cantor and Pingree, 1983; Rondina et al., 1983). Similarly, for the purpose of comparison with the real world, they have looked at the incidence of illness and its cause (Cassata et al., 1983); the incidence and types of violence and crime (Cantor and Pingree, 1983); the incidence and types of social issues presented (Downing, 1974; Greenberg et al., 1982); and the incidence of alcohol use (Lowery, 1980) in the soap opera text.

These types of analyses assume that the soap opera text should represent the real world, and if it doesn't, it distorts reality. The major problem with this assumption is that the fictional status of the soap opera text is ignored. "In the case of content analysis of soap operas, as in other texts...what is being observed for its regularities is not some aspect of a real-life society but a fictional construction" (Allen, 1985: 36). The soap opera text as a fictional construction should not be expected to mimic the real world. As a fictional construction, the soap opera text

selectively extracts aspects of the real world reorganizing them to construct its fictional reality. Allen (1985: 37) calls this "not a process of transplantation but of transmutation." The aspects of reality that are included in the soap opera text do not fully function as in the real world. They are changed when made to conform to the fictive world of the soap opera text.

The world of television is clearly different from our real social world....television does not represent the manifest actuality of our society, but rather reflects, **symbolically**, the structure of values and relationships beneath the surface (Fiske and Hartley, 1978: 24; *emphasis added*).

It is this 'symbolic' dimension of television and the texts that it produces which are lost in content analysis. For content analysis, by ignoring the fictive status of the soap opera text, confuses reality and fiction assuming the meanings of its quantified items are "derived entirely from their function in the real world and not necessarily from their functions in the texts which they are parts" (Allen, 1985: 38). Thus, the 'symbolic' or ideological dimension of the soap opera text is ignored favoring quantifiable manifest contents. The soap opera text is reduced to isolated items abstracted from their context. This is done in error, for "a text, clearly is a **structured** whole, and the place occupied by the different elements is more important than the number

of times they recur" (Burgelin, 1972: 319; emphasis in original). Content analysis quantifies the signifiers<sup>9</sup> of the text without thought to what they signify; consequently, the systems of signifiers in the text are not analyzed to make visible ideological structures. Content analysis denies the 'symbolic' dimension of the text never moving beyond the manifest content. Of course, content analysis should not be totally disregarded. It is a methodology useful for mapping out the contents of a text. It can be used to identify signifiers in the text.

On the contrary, structuralist analysis does what content analysis cannot. It does make visible the structure of ideology by going beyond the manifest content of the text to reveal the latent content. Structuralism views the text as a 'structured whole' which can be dissected into its constitutive elements to discover how the text makes meaning. The elements are not seen as isolated items to be tabulated, rather they are seen in sets of relations to one another, as systems of differences, and as structures which produce meaning through that difference. Therefore, it is the form of the message not the raw content that is important. It is how the content is organized into various systems of signifiers that reveals how the text means, and thus, reveals ideological structures (Burgelin, 1972: 313-320).

From this perspective meaning is produced through

difference. Signifiers are organized into systems which produce meaning through the differential relationships between each signifier in that system. Each signifier is defined in relation to its difference from the signifiers that precede and follow it. Therefore, the relationship between signifiers is more important than the signifiers as abstractions from the system of differences. For example, a set of traffic lights can be seen as a system of differences. The colours red, yellow, and green compose a structural relationship producing meaning through their difference from one another. Red comes to mean 'stop' set in a differential relationship to green which can only mean 'go' through its difference from red. The colour red abstracted from this system of differences loses its meaning, for without the colour green, it has nothing to define itself against (Fiske, 1982: 63-64).

Furthermore, structural analysis cannot isolate itself from the cultural context of the text, and this holds in the analysis of the mass media. "[T]he mass media clearly do not form a complete culture on their own: in other words, they do not form an entirely closed system, like a language, but simply a fraction of such a system, which is, of necessity, the culture to which they belong" (Burgelin, 1972: 317). The text is a cultural product embodying cultural meanings. It is only through interaction with the culture

surrounding the text, by way of the 'reader' of that text, that meaning is produced and ideology can work. As clarified previously, this analysis concerns itself with how the soap opera text constructs meaning as a cultural product to be 'read' by the viewer. It is concerned with the text itself not a theory of the reader.

Structuralism can reveal how a text constructs meaning; therefore, it makes visible the ideological structures. If the purpose of this analysis is to be realized, it is evident that a structuralist methodology is required.

### Structuralist Methodology and Soap Opera

This analysis involves the case study of the soap opera Another World. This particular soap opera was chosen from among the many soap operas available because it was familiar to the researcher. This familiarity allowed the researcher knowledge of characters' pasts, knowledge of past and present storylines, and knowledge of the settings which proved valuable to the accuracy and proficiency of the analysis.

Another World is one of the long-lived soap operas of television spanning twenty-four years (Allen, 1985: 127). This researcher's knowledge of Another World is limited to approximately ten years of that span. In that time,

characters and settings have changed, yet some have remained the same. This soap opera is set in Bay City located somewhere in the north eastern United States. The main families currently inhabiting Bay City are the upper class Cory's and Love's along with the working class McKinnon's. Class distinction is based here on occupation, status, and property.

The Cory's are the most established family providing two of the soap opera's central characters, Mac and Rachel Cory. Their estate and Mac's publishing company have been two of the staple settings of the soap opera. Rachel's son Jamie Frame, by a previous marriage, is one of the last remaining members of a once established family on Another World.

The younger of the two upper class families, the Love's, provide a host of familiar characters. The most established being Donna, Peter, and Reginald. They represent old money with Peter having the only discernible occupation as a lawyer. Their mansion and the Love Tower (the location of the restaurant 'Tops') are settings for the unfolding of many plots.

The upper-class families have been the most enduring on Another World with the working class families changing over time. The Perrini's gave way to the Ewing's who are now replaced by the McKinnon's. This family provides four main characters: Vince, Mary, MJ, and Cheryl. Their home and

Vince's restaurant (Mary's Place) are now familiar settings on the soap opera. As families and individual characters leave and enter Bay City, the settings change. However, the staple settings include those associated with the established families, the police station, and Bay City General Hospital.

A week's worth of Another World was video-taped for slow motion analysis. This amounted to five one hour episodes. Within one week of the soap opera, it can be estimated that there were 150 scenes. For, it was calculated that 35 scenes occurred in just one of the episodes taped (see Appendix). Thus, the sample size is extended within each episode of Another World since scenes were often the unit of analysis.

Within these five episodes, eight storylines were in progress and three of these were major storylines. Of these three major storylines, one was chosen to be analyzed. The storyline chosen was distinct from the other two in that it had as its central figure an independent woman attempting to take charge of her life amid many oppositional men. It was the most appropriate storyline for structural analysis given the purpose of the research.

The analysis of this storyline began by systematically identifying all of the relevant scenes within the five video-taped episodes of Another World which were important to the chosen storyline's narrative's progression.

This meant choosing only those scenes where the major characters appeared in the midst of dialogue and action that were a part of the narrative's progression. Scenes were eliminated where the major characters were only in subsidiary roles to other storylines, for these storylines did not relate to the narrative being analyzed. In turn, each of these relevant scenes were summarized for their contribution to the narrative's progression giving the over-all structure of the narrative.

The structural analysis then began by dissecting each scene of the storyline into their various possible elements or signifiers: characters, blocking (i.e., character positions in relation to objects or other characters), dialogue, physical action, clothing, props, settings, camera shots, music etc. The purpose of identifying the signifiers within each scene was to discover how they combined to construct the meaning of each scene. The signifiers within each scene were reassembled into a 'structured whole' revealing how each scene constructed meaning. The structure of each scene was seen to be a complex chain of signifiers activating meaning. The chain of signifiers was predominantly set off by characters, for they were the carriers of many of the signifiers (e.g., dialogue, blocking, physical action, clothing, props). Thus, the relations between characters within each scene became important to how meaning was

constructed in that scene, for the signifiers that they carried attempted to construct meaning often in opposition to another character's. These relations between characters were seen as systems of differences constructing meaning through opposition. Emerging from this analysis was the obvious fact that the characters were the circulators of ideology, embodying many signifiers. Moreover, their circulation of ideologies became a contest to produce meaning among the ideologies that competed for preference.

With the ideological structures of each scene made visible, the structure or sequence of the scenes themselves was analyzed. This gave more depth to the structural analysis. Each scene was seen as a self-contained signifier linked in a chain of signification by their real sequence. The sequence of scenes became a system of signifiers often related in a system of difference, for the over-all meaning of a scene that preceded or followed another scene was frequently in opposition. The relationships of scenes constructed further meaning in the soap opera text.

The structural analysis was concerned not only with what happened within scenes in terms of meaning construction, but also what happened across scenes which signified opposed meanings. Thus, the structural analysis exhausted the possibilities for how the text constructed meaning. Finally, the results of this structural analysis are generalizable to

other soap opera texts in as much as they adhere to the particular characteristics of the genre (i.e., form and content) as does Another World.

### The Reflexive Researcher

The position of this researcher in relation to the structural analysis of the soap opera text is informed by both hegemonic patriarchal culture and the feminist subculture. As a member of the hegemonic culture, this researcher is implicated in the hegemonic process, and, as a member of the feminist subculture, this researcher engages in an oppositional reading of the soap opera text. The researcher's use of her placement in such a cultural context is useful to the methodological strategy of structuralism. It is not just the purpose of this research to reveal what the soap opera text means, but also how dominant meanings operate through the structures of the text. Thus, membership in the hegemonic culture allows structural analysis to take place (the how of meaning) as such an analysis cannot isolate itself from the cultural context. Moreover, the feminist subculture allows an oppositional reading further revealing the how of meaning.

As will be seen in Chapter Six, a dominant reading by the female viewer is concluded. However, no single female reader may make a complete dominant reading. Yet, even

negotiated and oppositional decodings presume a dominant reading. In order for a reader to position herself in such relations to the soap opera text, she must 'get' the dominant decoding. The dominant reading is a basis against which to construct negotiated and oppositional decodings. Thus, the dominant ideologies are always reproduced but not always with acceptance.

## Chapter Four

### Another World: The Construction of a Social Imagery

#### Introduction

The first function of the mass media in their reproduction of ideological hegemony is the construction of an imaginary social totality that appears whole, not fragmented (Hall, 1977). Social cleavages that would point out antagonisms between disparate groups are masked. The construction of this social imagery is related to the theoretical interest in patriarchal ideology, for the social imagery provides a site for the hegemonic process.

In this chapter, it will be shown how the soap opera Another World fulfills this function of the mass media. A social imagery is created through the process of personalization which, in turn, creates an intersubjective view of the social world. This particular view of the world equalizes characters at the personal level masking differences. The importance of the 'talk' of soap opera to the personalization process will be discussed. Attention will then turn to three major threats of fragmentation to the intersubjective social of Another World: class, the public/private spheres, and social problems. Each will be discussed showing how their threat of fragmentation is

alleviated. Finally, an analysis of a major scene will be undertaken to support the contentions concerning the process of personalization.

### The Process of Personalization on Another World

The process of personalization creates a social imagery for Another World that is intimate, internal, and interior. It is thus an intersubjective social world where characters and their relationships are extremely personalized. All characters are ready-made subjectivities emanating their essential characteristics through talk. As Newcomb (1974: 169) says, the soap opera "is a world of words....Dialogue is all-important." In the process of personalization, talk is used to establish intersubjectivity.

Relationships between characters are intersubjective. They are not institutional, structural, or objective. Relationships are emotional investments established through talk. They are the encounters necessary for ready-made characters to talk, expressing ready-made subjectivities. The emphasis on intersubjectivity creates a psychological world where inner emotions are revealed through talk and signified through close-up camera shots of emoting faces. All are equalized at the intersubjective emotional level.

Talk is the main currency for exchange on soap opera. The exchange of talk on soap opera is the means by which

characters weave interrelationships into a social imagery. It is primarily through talk that a community of characters is established. A disruption in one character's life is felt as a disruption to the whole soap opera community, for talk spreads the disruption to all characters. Through talk, a "personal and caring universe is repeatedly affirmed with expressions of concern and offerings of love" (Intintoli, 1984: 57).

On Another World a community of caring characters is established through talk. Vicki Love is a young woman who is having family problems surrounding the unfaithfulness of her mother, Donna, to her father Michael Hudson. When Vicki is arrested for speeding, talk spreads the mishap to other characters who express concern. Vicki is brought into the Bay City Police Department at the same time two of her friends are there. Jamie Frame expresses concern.

Jamie: I'll walk you out.

Vicki: No, I want to be alone.

(Vicki exits with Jamie following.)

Jamie: Wait a minute.

Vicki: I don't want to talk Jamie.

Jamie: Where are you going and what's bothering you?

Vicki: Nothing.

Jamie: You don't drive like that when you feel good. Now something happened at home, didn't it? Is it

Michael?

The immediate concern of Jamie, expressed in his dialogue of questions, establishes a caring relationship. And in a later scene, when Jamie and his girlfriend Lisa enter 'Tops', they communicate the disruption in Vicki's life to her family.

Lisa: In fact, we just saw Vicki.

Michael: Where?

Jamie: I'm sorry. It was at the police station.

Donna: What?

Jamie: Well nothing serious, just a minor speeding violation.

Michael: But you don't get thrown in jail for going just a little over the speed limit.

Jamie: Well, it was more than a little over.

Michael: How much?

Jamie: Eighty in a thirty.

Donna: She could have been killed!

Jamie: Well, she's okay now. Appears she's at home.

Donna: Jamie, why was she going so fast?

Nicole: Well Cass and I saw her before she left and she seemed a little wired.

(Michael and Donna exit for home.)

Jamie and Lisa's talk spreads the disruption in Vicki's life to the other characters. All express personal

concern creating a community of caring characters. Later, Jamie and Lisa worry about Vicki as the caring dialogue continues.

Lisa: I hope I didn't cause more problems for Vicki.

Jamie: Oh, I'm sure you didn't.

Lisa: I sort of know what she's going through.

Jamie: You mean the trouble with her family.

Lisa: Yeah, especially with Donna.

Finally, the disruption comes back to Vicki as her parents express their concern.

Michael: Now, what's all this about a speeding ticket?

Vicki: My life is an open book around here.

Donna: Victoria, Jamie said that you were arrested.

Vicki: Jamie should have minded his own business.

Michael: Young lady I would like to know what was going through your mind. What were you thinking?

Vicki: I wasn't thinking about anything.

Michael: Why don't you tell me what happened?

Vicki: Michael, I just got a speeding ticket. You know the cop made a big deal out of it just like you're doing.

Donna: You could have had an accident. You could have been seriously hurt or even killed.

Talk is bounded and expanded on Another World in a

number of material ways: through the overuse of first names, the use of the telephone, and the use of doors. The repetitive use of first names by interacting characters further personalizes the social imagery of Another World. This overuse of the first name is an inscription device where ready-made characters become personalized. This can be illustrated in an argument Michael Hudson has with his wife Donna.

Michael: **Donna** you were awfully upset when I came home last night.

Donna: No I wasn't.

Michael: What happened?

Donna: **Michael** nothing happened.

Michael: Then why did John move out?

Donna: I told you I'm really not sure.

Michael: **Donna** there's gotta be a reason.

Donna: **Michael** think about it. This isn't the first time he's moved out. In fact, he's practically made a career out of it.

Michael: Uh Uh. You haven't answered my questions.

A further illustration is an exchange between Donna and her brother Peter Love.

Peter: I am appalled.

Donna: What?

Peter: At **Michael**. He's got no right to treat you like that **Donna**.

Donna: You heard?

Peter: Yes. You know its obvious that **Michael** is not the sensitive, caring individual we all thought he was.

Donna: **Peter** please don't say that.

Peter: Well **Donna**, I'm sorry but you know I just wish **Michael** treated his wife as well as he treats his own brother.

(Michael enters hearing Peter.)

Michael: Get out **Peter**.

Peter: What?

Michael: Get out!

Peter: Why? So you can be even more abusive to my sister.

Michael: Out!

Donna: **Peter** please. Its alright, really. I would like to talk to **Michael** alone.

The importance of talk in the creation of the particular social of soap opera can be seen in the use of the telephone as a social link between characters and settings. It is another means by which talk establishes an intersubjective social. The telephone is very crucial in soap opera as a means of linking characters in an intersubjective reality. The telephone signifies talk, and it provides a means by which fragmented scenes are brought into a social whole as characters can talk on the phone to someone in

another setting. Settings are not isolated places for characters to interact, for the ever present telephone symbolically and in use provides the possibility of connection between disparate settings linking characters in a social imagery.

The telephone is a symbol of communication, of talk...talk is still what soap operas are all about. The telephone is used for a special kind of talk -communication with someone who is not there in one sense, present and close in another. (Timberg, 1982: 146).

The telephone on Another World expands the possibilities for talk and thus expands the intersubjective social. Sam Fowler can cross class lines by calling Cheryl McKinnon at 'Mary's Place' from Cory Publishing. The two disparate settings are linked and difference is made commonality as talk places them in the same intersubjective social. Peter Love can call his father Reginald at 'Tops' informing him of the events occurring at the Love Mansion. The telephone provides connections between characters and events constructing a network of talk and interrelationships. Michael Hudson can call the Love Mansion from his car to check on his wife Donna. The isolation of the car is made unproblematic, for it is connected to the intersubjective social through the telephone which makes soap talk possible. The telephone on Another World removes limitations on talk.

Characters are not isolated as they can join the intersubjective social by picking up the phone.

All settings have doors through which characters can leave one setting and enter another. They allow talk to become continuous, creating a continuous community of characters. For, doors provide the flow between the segmented scenes of talking characters. The constant movement or flow of characters in and out of doors brings the social imagery to life as characters come and go. Often on Another World, one scene ends with a character exiting through a door, and the next scene begins with a character entering through a door.

This flow of characters facilitates talk, for doors symbolize the opening and closing of talk on soap opera. Doors provide the entrances into talk, and they provide the exits from talk. "Doors signify communication, interrelatedness, a network of lives in a non-problematic world. Yet the function of soap opera's doors is finally to close, since that makes possible the retreat into the private sphere of intimate relations" (Porter, 1977: 786). Doors on Another World allow characters to step in and out of its ready-made intersubjective social. The closing of doors contain talk in personal spaces. The closing door shuts out the public allowing the private to take precedence. Characters entering doors on Another World enter to talk

while exiting characters are ending talk. Elevator doors open at 'Tops' and Nicole enters eager to talk to Cass. John enters the doors of his houseboat to find Vicki there. They immediately begin to argue, and Vicki quickly exits the houseboat's doors when she no longer wants to talk to John.

Once a character enters a door, they must talk, for entering doors signifies communication. Vicki Love wants to tell her father Michael of Donna's unfaithfulness. Michael and Donna are behind the closed door of their bedroom. Vicki stands outside their door about to enter with the fatal communication, but she is stopped by Clara. Vicki's talk is stopped, for she is not allowed to open the door. However, in a later scene Vicki again approaches the closed bedroom door. The door knob is shown in a close-up camera shot. Will Vicki open the door and talk? The next shot has Vicki knocking on the door and gaining entrance. With the opening of the door Vicki says, "I have to talk to you." Doors open and characters must talk.

The problem of the fragmented nature of soap opera's narrative structure is overcome as scenes are linked by telephones and familiar characters enter and exit through a network of doors creating a social imagery that is whole. The fragmented scenes become woven together by the use of telephones and doors. Characters are constantly being set up to talk, creating and recreating an intersubjective social

imagery that is domestic and personal. This is all accomplished through the process of personalization. Macro-sociological reality is reduced to the personal. The social created as a result of this process is intersubjective. This intersubjective social relies on the use of talk as its foundation.

#### The Process of Personalization and The Representation of Class on Another World

The presence of class difference on Another World makes suspect the universal reality of its social imagery and the threat of fragmentation exists. However, the process of personalization makes class position irrelevant, alleviating the threat of fragmentation.

The representation of class on Another World is typical of soap opera in general. It is predominantly a world of the upper and upper-middle classes (Wander, 1979: 87; Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 90; Neumann et al., 1983: 129). The inhabitants of this world are usually doctors, lawyers, corporate owners, executives, business people. And of course, there are always the independently wealthy who have no discernible occupations. As Wander (1979: 87) observes

There are no linemen for the county, no bus drivers, no farmers, no mechanics to speak of, none of the people who talk about the exhaustion and frustration

of work. The problems which face the soap opera characters -possessiveness, lust- are not those of working-class people, but those of people with a great deal of time and money; they are the perils of the Country Club Place.

Of course, soap opera has its share of lower-middle and working classes. Nurses, police officers, waitresses, and secretaries also inhabit this world. The occupations of soap opera facilitate the process of personalization. They are service sector jobs concerned with people processing; consequently, these jobs are concerned also with talk. These people talk for a living, or appear to do so, as real labour is rarely seen. Hospitals, police stations, offices, and restaurants become settings for talk. The difference between the upper and lower classes (i.e., economic) is masked, as they all become bearers of talk.

The structure of character interrelationships in the soap opera presents a world where class fragmentation does not exist. "The boundaries between classes are blurred...by a number of factors. Class positions are changed through marriage....social and financial success....members of various classes interact constantly and are tied together by kinship, friendship, or romance" (Intintoli, 1984: 47). The process of personalization becomes a social leveller.

The relationships in the soap opera world are of three types: romantic, kinship, and friendship. Economic relations are not of concern. While the soap opera world is

inhabited by both producers and consumers, these economic relations are suppressed. The economic basis of the soap opera world is not seen; the mode of production is absent. Although money is talked about, the exchange of goods and services through the money medium is absent (Allen, 1985: 74). The major source of social fragmentation is dismissed by the form of the soap opera where interpersonal relations are preferred over economic relations. Consequently, when economic difficulties are dealt with in the soap opera, they are "treated as extensions of personal problems" (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 80). In the world of soap opera, the structural is reduced to the personal.

Power and wealth are personalized and related to psychological motivations of individual characters....Corporate power is presented largely as an arena in which individuals compete with each other. The elite are also seen as mixing freely with individuals lower in the class hierarchy, linking all the participants in the same symbolic community (Intintoli, 1984: 41).

On Another World, the occupations held by the majority of characters both male and female are professional. We have McKenzie Cory, Michael Hudson, and Reginald Love as independently wealthy businessmen. Cass Winthrop, Peter Love, and Zak Edwards are all powerful lawyers working in corporations. Scott Love is a law student. Jamie Frame is a medical doctor. Sam Fowler is a corporate employee running a

layout department for a prominent magazine. Mitch Blake is a professional photographer.

Although females on Another World do not occupy as many powerful professional positions as do the males, they too are predominantly in the upper classes, if not by occupation, then by marriage or birth. Rachel Cory is married to wealthy McKenzie Cory. Her interests are upper class for she is an artist and sculptor. Donna Love Hudson, Vicki Love, Nicole Love, and Amanda Cory are upper class by birth. Nicole Love is a fashion designer while the other two Love women have no discernible occupations. Amanda Cory is working for her father McKenzie Cory at his publishing empire learning the publishing trade. Felicia Gallant is an independently wealthy romance novelist who also manages an elite restaurant called 'Tops'. Barbara Van Arkdale is a business woman fashion designer. Females on Another World tend to be upper class more through association with males than through their own occupational positions.

The upper classes on Another World are represented by two main families: the Love's and the Cory's. The settings within which these two families live provide a system of symbols which indicate their power and status. For example, the Love's reside at the 'Love Mansion' whose interior design is indicative of the upper classes. The front double doors lead into a spacious interior with a large foyer, staircase

to one side, and a large doorway leading into a pastel living room complete with antique furniture. Vases of flowers, elaborate light fixtures, glass tables, art work fill the living room with the symbols of the upper class. The setting's decor is soft, refined and detailed, indicative of the mental labour of this class. There are no rough hands in this world.

Although, Another World is predominantly a world of the upper and upper-middle classes, it does have some representation of the working class in the McKinnon family, and subsidiary characters. The McKinnon's have an Irish working class family background. Vince, the father of the family and former mine labourer, now owns a small restaurant in partnership with Ada Hobson also of working class origins. The home setting for the McKinnon family is their kitchen. Entering the kitchen through the back door, the setting is typical of any working class kitchen. There is the counter top space, small fridge and stove, wooden table and chairs placed in the center of a small plain room. A door leads into the living room which is never seen. In contrast to the upper class setting, the working class setting is hard and plain. It symbolizes the manual labour of the working class where hands are rough.

These distinct settings which represent two disparate classes are potential threats of fragmentation to the social

imagery of Another World. However, these distinct class boundaries are blurred as upper class settings have working class characters and working class settings have upper class characters. The two restaurants on Another World provide major settings for interaction. 'Tops' is the elite restaurant atop the 'Love Tower'. Its counterpart is Vince McKinnon and Ada Hobson's lower-middle class restaurant called 'Mary's Place'. Both settings are distinguished through the systems of symbols that indicate class difference. 'Tops' is characterized by its plush pastel blue interior, blue marble walls, brass railings, vases of flowers, and elegant elevators as entrances and exits. Dinner music is always playing in the background as well dressed male waiters serve well dressed people at small tables with cushioned chairs. 'Tops' has a patio and ladies powder room as additional places for interaction. It is symbolically bourgeois in its softness and detail. On the other hand, 'Mary's Place' is characterized by dark heavy wooden walls, black and white tile floor, wooden chairs, and an open bar. There are daisies on tables and sport pictures on the walls. Female waitresses dressed informally wait on casually dressed people. 'Mary's Place' has the kitchen behind swinging doors as an additional place for interaction. Unlike the bourgeois 'Tops', the location of labour is seen at 'Mary's Place'.

Class distinction is clearly evident in these two

settings; however, the characters who walk in and out of these settings are not necessarily of the same class as the setting. The best example of this occurs when Vince McKinnon goes to 'Tops' to meet with his wife and lawyer to discuss their divorce. Vince signifies the working class in both his dress and manner. He wears untailored jacket and pants which do not match as a suit. His shirt is open with no tie. Vince enters 'Tops' with his hands in his pants pockets. His demeanor is casual. In contrast, his lawyer Zak Edwards is dressed in a tailored suit, briefcase in hand. The visual contrast between Vince and the setting of 'Tops', and between Vince and Zak is noticeable. However, it is because the difference is noticeable that it can be made incidental to the scene. In a sense, the difference only exists in order to be overcome. Despite Vince's working class background, he is comfortable at 'Tops'. He fits in because people he knows are there. Zak is a corporate lawyer and friend working on behalf of working class Vince. Class distinctions become incidental as it is the personal that takes precedence. It is obvious that Vince is working class, yet he is as comfortable at 'Tops' with his upper class friends as he is at 'Mary's Place' with his working class friends. Class becomes irrelevant in the face of the personal.

Similarly, the characters who enter 'Mary's Place' also blur class lines. Rachel Cory visits her mother Ada at

the restaurant. Cass Winthrop drops by to talk to Ada, for they are good friends. The upper class mingles with the working class, and the distinctions between the classes are lost as the personal takes precedence. They are all just 'folks' equalized at the level of the personal.

Subsidiary characters such as Wallingford, John Hudson, Chad Rollo, Clara Hudson, and Bridgette Cornell represent the working class and the lower-middle class. Wallingford is the maitre d at 'Tops'. John Hudson is an unmarried Vietnam veteran who jumps from job to job. He temporarily worked as a bar tender at 'Tops'. Chad Rollo is a former pimp turned modeling agent. His sister Dawn is a student. Clara Hudson is the working class mother of John and Michael Hudson. Bridgette Cornell is a servant to the Love family. These subsidiary characters represent a working class and lower-middle class that are not unified, unlike the upper classes who are depicted in groups whether family or business. And despite the McKinnon family's working class background, they have become petit bourgeois.

These subsidiary characters are either connected to a familial setting that is not their own, or they are connected to a setting that is not familial (i.e., a home set). For example, Wallingford is never seen at home. 'Tops' becomes his setting. He is individualized in the sense of not having a lower class home setting, instead being surrounded by the

upper classes. Chad and Dawn Rollo do not have a home setting. They are seen predominantly at 'Mary's Place'. Thus, they are not unified as a working class family proper who have a kitchen to occupy. Bridgette Cornell is connected to a familial setting; however, it is the setting of the upper class Loves. She has no grounding in a lower class setting being overwhelmed in the elaborate setting of the Love Mansion. Similarly, lower class Clara Hudson, despite her residence at the Love Mansion with her son Michael, does not have her own lower class setting being absorbed by upper class setting. John Hudson does not live with his mother and brother. He is not associated with any particular setting. John is the most individualized of the lower class characters, for he is marginal to both setting and family. This points to how the problem of class as a threat to the universal reality of Another World is defused.

Power and wealth are personalized as attributes of individuals. Power and wealth are not exercised in a capitalist economic context, rather they are exercised in the personal context. This is illustrated on Another World with the rivalry between Reginald Love and Michael Hudson. They are both corporate owners, yet they compete as individuals each with personal motives. Reginald sabotages Michael's oil fields, manipulates his stocks, and causes labour unrest at his oil fields. This exercise of power by Reginald is not

placed within a corporate power play, but it is placed within the personal motivations of Reginald. As Michael says to Reginald, "It was all part of your plan....to break me and get your family back....Excuse me, I gotta go back to your house and get in bed with your daughter." The rivalry between two corporate owners is reduced to the level of the personal. They are competing over the loyalty of a family. Power and wealth are internalized as the process of personalization constructs a social imagery where class is incidental.

Class boundaries are further blurred by romance and friendship. Upper class Scott Love dates working class Dawn Rollo. Vince McKinnon's daughter, Cheryl, dates corporate employee Sam Fowler. Upper class Felicia Gallant dates Mitch Blake, a convict turned professional photographer. Vicki Love dates reporter Tony Carlisle. Amanda Cory is best friends with Julie-Ann Edwards a secretary at Cory publishing. Wallingford is best friends with his employer Felicia Gallant and Cass Winthrop.

Intermarriage on Another World is an important equalizer of the classes. Rachel Cory was originally of working class origins. Her marriage to publishing magnate McKenzie Cory allowed her to crossover to the upper class taking her son from a previous marriage (i.e, Jamie Frame) and her working class mother (i.e., Ada Hobson) with her. Cass Winthrop, a jet setting corporate lawyer, married

Kathleen McKinnon daughter of working class Vince McKinnon. Marriage makes class position irrelevant as personal relationships take precedence over economic relations. The personal world of romance and sexuality (i.e., the feminine) is preferred over the masculine world of economic relations.

Class is also made incidental by quick successes as characters are highly socially mobile. Michael Hudson once worked for the Love family as a stable boy. Years later he returns as a successful corporate owner reclaiming upper class Donna Love along with their illegitimate twin daughters. He moves into the 'Love Mansion' as head of the household bringing with him his brother John and mother Clara. In this scenario, the working class takes over the domain of the upper class effectively blurring class lines. Moreover, one of the twin daughters, Vicki, did not grow up on the Love estate. She was raised by a working class woman Bridgette Cornell. With Donna finding out about her long lost daughter, Vicki moves into the 'Love Mansion' quickly losing her working class background. Meanwhile, Bridgette had become the Love's maid. Her subordinate working class position in the household is not evident, for she is a loyal and trusted friend. The economic distinction between employer and employee is lost. Individual members of the working class and lower-middle class become absorbed into the upper class.

The Process of Personalization and the Representation of the Public/Private Spheres on Another World

The separation of the public and private spheres of life is another potential source of fragmentation for the social imagery of Another World. The public sphere of life is primarily the work place where traditionally males have had privileged access; the private sphere is domestic -the home-occupied traditionally by females. This dichotomy which reflects real inequalities between the sexes in capitalist patriarchal society is masked in the social imagery of the soap opera by the process of personalization which denies the public sphere. The private becomes preferred over the public.

The process of personalization takes place as both the public and private spheres become settings for the domestic 'talk' of soap opera (i.e, romance, family, marriage, and health). Private settings (e.g., living rooms and bedrooms) are the sphere of the personal where domestic 'talk' is expected to occur. However, public settings such as restaurants, bars, hospitals, the work place are all convenient areas for interaction. The talk of this interaction surrounds the concerns of the private domestic sphere, and public settings as opportunities for 'talk' become personalized in the process.

Talk is not the only vehicle by which public settings dissolve into the private. The particular use of the camera

in the soap opera effectively denies public settings by framing 'talk'. The public setting, as the larger context of interaction, is quickly established in a fleeting long shot while talking faces are soon framed in numerous close-up shots. "Public and private realms...merge because they are people with familiar faces" (Intintoli, 1984: 38). The public becomes the personal.

This process of personalization masks the differential work worlds of men and women. The home is no longer a place of work, for domestic labour is replaced by talk. The work place is no longer a place of work, for it "becomes an extension of domestic and personal relationships and conflicts" (Intintoli, 1984: 49). The spheres are leveled as they become the settings of domestic talk. Talk becomes the occupation of both men and women; consequently, men become domesticized. Inequality is masked. As the public sphere becomes the private, fragmentation is denied. The social imagery constructed is domestic and personal.

Public settings on Another World become the location for the domestic talk of soap opera ridding them of their public character. Moreover, the particular use of the camera on Another World does not focus long on the public setting as it frames talking faces making the setting secondary. Public settings on Another World include the two restaurants (Tops and Mary's Place), Bay City General Hospital, and Cory

Publishing. Outdoor settings are used infrequently, and they are predominantly mock outdoor settings where the sense of a public is not evident.

The public setting of Cory Publishing provides an illustration of how the public is dissolved into the private on Another World. The plot that occurs in this public setting concerns two main characters, Sam Fowler and Amanda Cory. Amanda, posing as Mandy Ashton to hide the fact that she is McKenzie Cory's daughter, is working at her father's publishing company to learn the trade. She has placed herself in the layout department working as a runner for Sam Fowler. Amanda has a hidden motive for working in the layout department: she is infatuated with Sam. This plot provides the initial means by which a public setting, in this case the work place, becomes an arena for the personal.

The public work place becomes the arena for developing the personal. Work in the layout department is constantly interrupted by 'talk'. It becomes a place for Amanda to argue with her mother and father (Rachel and Mac) over her reasons for working in the layout department. Her parents are suspicious of her motivation, and she attempts to reassure them that it is a good experience in relation to her career.

Visually and verbally Cory publishing is personalized. Visually Cory publishing is represented by the

layout office and a hallway where extras walk by giving the illusion of a busy complex. The view of the hallway is limited as it is never seen in a long shot. Characters walk into the hallway in medium shots which become medium close-ups to close-ups as they interact. A scene at Cory publishing is shot in a manner of containment. Space and characters are contained by camera framing. Extras walking by are soon dismissed by the camera's medium close-ups of the talking characters. For example, a medium shot of the hallway sees one extra walk by as Rachel and Julie-Ann meet in a medium close-up. The hallway is lost in the camera framing as the two characters have only a wall as a backdrop. Verbally they deny the public setting by discussing Julie-Ann's friendship with Amanda. Rachel is upset with Julie-Ann for condoning Amanda's job in layout. There is a cut to the next scene where Mac and Sam are walking down the hallway in a medium shot. In the background four extras are quickly lost to medium close-ups and close-ups of Mac and Sam arguing in front of the door to the layout department. Sam soon exits and Rachel enters in a medium close-up. The hallway is not visible. Mac and Rachel briefly discuss their daughter. Rachel exits and Mac enters the layout office to talk to Amanda. They have a father to daughter talk about Amanda's hidden motives.

In these scenes at Cory publishing, the public work

place becomes a setting for personal interaction. File folders and papers are paid little attention, as they only become props giving the characters something to do with their hands while they talk. The camera contains characters in private conversation. Characters interact in dyads or temporary triads shot in medium close-ups or close-ups which emphasize the personal and deny a public setting. Conversations allude to work only because the work place is the means by which the personal can be introduced. Cory publishing becomes an opportunity for talk. It is not the talk of business, but the talk of the domestic and private. This process of personalization reduces the public to the personal, denying a separation of spheres.

Furthermore, the representation of the private sphere on Another World is limited to living rooms, bedrooms, and kitchens. The private too is a place to talk. Domestic labour is incidental to talk. It is never preferred over talk. The differential work of men and women is not apparent as the private sphere is absent of significant domestic labour, and the public sphere is domesticated and personalized in a manner resembling the private sphere. The public becomes the private, and inequality between the spheres is denied. A universal social imagery is constructed where difference becomes similarity.

The Process of Personalization and the Representation of Social Problems on Another World

Social problems also undergo the process of personalization removing them as a source of fragmentation in the social imagery of Another World. The social problems dealt with by soap opera are of the type that are easily personalized: infidelity, infertility, alcoholism, abortion, drug abuse (Cantor and Pingree, 1983: 82). "The soaps rarely lead us into more baffling social problems, the sort which cannot be corrected by a few hours of surgery, a visit to a psychiatrist or a lawyer, or a brilliant marriage" (Wander, 1979: 87). Moreover, "[p]roblems are rooted in personalities, sometimes in the victim, sometimes in the evil inclinations of the other" (Wander, 1979: 87). Therefore, any indication that a fragmented social structure is the source of social problems is masked. The existence of social problems beyond the personal is denied. As Intintoli (1984: 32) observes, social problems in the social imagery of the soap opera are "handled in the most ahistorical and personalized individual manner." The process of personalization domesticates and privatizes social problems; they become depoliticized, no longer indicative of fragmentation.

On Another World, John Hudson is a maladjusted Vietnam veteran. The problems that he encounters because of his experiences in Vietnam are personalized through the talk

of soap opera; consequently, the placing of John and his problems in any larger political context is denied. The social problem becomes John's psychological state which must be remedied through personal means.

In one scene, John and Wallingford discuss John's problem.

John: You know I told my mother that I was through running (...) When you're running for so long, you know how hard it is to break bad habits.

Wally: Why?

John: I don't know Wally. It seems like a lot of Vets stay on the move and just don't fit into the real world.

Wally: I'm sorry your so unhappy John (...) I mean was it just what happened in Vietnam? John?

John: It was a lot of things.

Wally: Well it must have been pretty powerful.

John: Real powerful.

John's experience in Vietnam has given him a "bad habit" of running and made him "unhappy." He doesn't "fit into the real world." John and Wally's discussion of Vietnam is couched in vague terms which turn the focus from Vietnam itself to John's unhappiness. His experience of Vietnam was "powerful," yet his unhappiness in the end comes to be caused by "a lot of things." The talk does not focus on Vietnam and its political context, but the talk focuses on John's

psychological state. A social problem becomes personalized through the domestic talk of soap opera.

The remedy for John's problem is sought through personal means. Michael and Donna discuss John's problem in the Love's living room.

Michael: John is not ready to be on his own.

Donna: Michael, he is a grown man.

(...)

Michael: Donna, I want him close by me. He needs love. He needs time.

Donna: We've given him love, and we've given him time and it didn't work.

Michael: Fine, then we keep trying.

(...)

Donna: We have given him months and its not gotten any better.

Michael: Donna, he has problems adjusting. All right. I mean the war...

The solution to John's problem is dealt with in the private sphere through the talk of soap opera. "Love" and "time" are presented by Michael as the cure-all to John's problem. The problem is no longer Vietnam but John's problem of adjusting which is dealt with in the family. Moreover, the failure of the family to help John adjust does not turn the focus back to Vietnam in a larger macro-sociological context. John's mother, Clara, poses the next solution. "[T]here are

things John has to work out by himself.... We've done all we can for John. The rest is up to him." If the family can't help, then John must help himself. The social problem of Vietnam is reduced to the individual. It is John's psychological state that becomes the problem. It is at the level of the personal that the solution is sought.

Social problems are embodied in individuals thus being reduced to the personal. They are not linked to a larger social structure where fragmentation is the cause of social problems. Social problems on soap opera are subjected to the talk of the private sphere becoming personalized in the process.

#### The Construction of the Social Imagery of Another World

A scene at 'Tops' will serve to close off this analysis of how a social imagery is constructed on Another World which is whole not fragmented. It gives illustration to the process of personalization and the construction of an intersubjective social.

This particular scene at 'Tops' includes many of the inhabitants of Bay City. Sam Fowler and Cheryl McKinnon come to 'Tops' on a dinner date. Amanda Cory, infatuated with Sam, follows them there. Peter and Reginald Love are there plotting the destruction of Michael Hudson. Vicki Love and Tony Carlisle are at 'Tops' dancing. Cass Winthrop and Nicole

Love are there. Michael Hudson and Donna Love Hudson arrive for dinner. John Hudson is tending bar.

The scene opens with a medium close-up of Cheryl McKinnon looking towards the elevator almost catching Amanda watching her and Sam. Amanda dashes to hide in the ladies' powder room in a medium shot. The camera shot switches to frame Peter and John at the bar in a side on medium shot. In the background, Amanda is seen finishing her dash to the ladies' powder room. Peter and John continue their conversation in close-up shots. The public setting of 'Tops' is lost momentarily as the camera dismisses it. As Peter and John continue to talk, the camera changes the direction of its shot. Peter and John are now shot from behind the bar in medium close-up. In the background, Cheryl and Sam are talking at their table, and a waiter walks past. The conversation between Peter and John becomes framed in close-ups once again, and as the conversation ends, the camera returns to its medium close-up shot from behind the bar showing Cheryl and Sam in the background.

The beginning of this scene at the elite restaurant finds characters sharing the same social space who are of differing class backgrounds. Working-class Cheryl McKinnon dines with corporate employee Sam Fowler. Upper class Peter Love talks personal business with the bartender John Hudson. As Peter talks at the bar, the viewer sees Cheryl and Sam in

the background. Upper class Amanda Cory is also seen in the background. Characters from disparate realities share the same social space. Moreover, the camera's particular framing of these characters (e.g., Peter and John talking in the foreground with Cheryl and Sam seen in the background) gives the appearance of a community of characters. However, this type of framing is limited, for the public setting of 'Tops' is often lost in medium close-ups and close-up shots of talking characters. The larger context of their talk is given limited camera attention serving to make the public setting private and personal.

The scene continues as Peter walks away from the bar to talk to Reginald. They move off to a corner framed in a medium close-up shot. They have a conversation in close-up shot/reverse shots which lose the public setting. Midway into the conversation, Reginald sees Vicki dancing with Tony Carlisle. The camera frames the couple in a medium shot, showing other couples dancing. The camera quickly returns to close-up shots of Peter and Reginald discussing Vicki's role in their plan to get Michael Hudson. The camera returns once more to a quick medium shot of the dancing couple as Peter and Reginald continue to discuss Vicki. The conversation between Peter and Reginald ends in close-up shots.

This scene continues the process of personalization as Peter and Reginald are removed from the public setting of

'Tops' by the close-up shots of their talking faces. They talk of family problems domesticating themselves and the public setting. However, the viewer does see the larger context of their talk, but it is seen through Reginald's eyes as he gazes at Vicki and Tony dancing. The view of the public is from a personal point of view. It serves to illustrate the personal; the talk of Peter and Reginald.

The camera then changes its subject with a medium shot of Cass and Nicole entering 'Tops' through the patio doors. They see Vicki and Tony dancing framed in a medium shot. The camera returns to frame Cass and Nicole in close-ups commenting on Vicki. They walk over to Vicki and Tony. All four are framed in a medium shot. The conversation takes place in a combination of medium shots, medium close-ups, and close-ups. The interaction ends with Cass and Nicole walking out of the camera frame. Vicki and Tony begin to leave 'Tops' in a medium shot. The camera then frames Nicole and Cass in medium close-ups as Nicole worries about Vicki. The camera's attention moves to the exiting couple at the elevator. The elevator opens and Donna and Michael enter in a medium shot, surprised to see Vicki. Vicki and Tony pass through the elevator doors ending their talk. Donna and Michael, having just entered through the elevator doors, begin their talk in medium close-ups.

In this scene, the door is used to allow characters

to enter a ready-made social world and talk. Cass and Nicole enter watching Vicki and Tony dancing revealing the public setting. Yet, it is seen through the personal gazes of Cass and Nicole, and it is used as a motivation for talk. When the four characters interact, they are contained by the camera frame away from the public setting. The public setting returns as Vicki and Tony leave, but it is soon lost to medium close-ups of Cass and Nicole. As Vicki and Tony exit, the doors of 'Tops' become the focus. They exit, closing their communication and participation in the social imagery. Donna and Michael enter in medium-close-ups set a part from the public setting. Their entrance is followed by talk. The main characters of the Love family have passed through 'Tops' in a network of personal conversation constructing an intersubjective social.

Donna and Michael make a move to their table, and the camera frames Cheryl and Sam at their table in a medium-shot. Their conversation is soon framed in medium close-ups. The table becomes isolated from the public setting in medium close-ups of Cheryl and Sam's talk. They are contained by the camera frame in the private sphere of the table.

As the scene continues, Cheryl leaves for the ladies' powder room. She walks towards the powder room in a medium shot and bumps into Cass. In the background, Michael and Donna are seen sitting at their table talking. They are soon

dismissed by the camera as Cheryl and Cass are shot in close-ups talking about Kathleen (Cass' deceased wife, sister of Cheryl).

The public is momentarily recognized as Cheryl makes her way to the powder room. As she and Cass talk, Donna and Michael are seen in the background. The public is recognized and a community of characters is created where class difference is irrelevant. The working-class and the upper-class share the same social space. Disparate realities are denied and masked.

The camera then switches to Amanda on the telephone in the ladies powder room to Julie-Ann. This extends the intersubjective social world. Both Amanda and Julie-Ann are shot in medium close-ups. Cheryl enters wanting to know what Amanda is doing there. The scene closes in a medium close-up of Amanda's face.

The public setting of 'Tops' is denied by domestic talk and the use of the camera. When the public setting is momentarily recognized, it does not frustrate the denial. It serves to reinforce the social imagery of a community of characters who all know each other personally. The tables, the bar, the powder room, the entrances and exits become isolated places for talk. Characters make contact as they circulate between and among these visually contained spaces within the public setting of 'Tops'. An intersubjective

social is constructed. The characters come to 'Tops' to talk, not sample the cuisine.

### Conclusion

Another World constructs a social imagery where fragmentation is denied by the occurrence of a ready-made universal reality. Three major sources of fragmentation in the social are made unproblematic through the process of personalization. The problems of class difference, the inequality between the public and private spheres, and social problems are reduced to the level of the personal. Macro-sociological reality is denied through this focus on an essentially intersubjective reality.

Class becomes incidental as characters interact at the personal level. Class is signified in order to be overcome by intersubjective equality. Interpersonal relationships take precedence over economic relationships. Intermarriage, friendship, and romance allow characters to cross class boundaries and class lines. Upper class settings are visited by working class characters, and working class settings are visited by upper class characters -all on a seemingly egalitarian basis. The personal is the equalizer as the talk of soap opera is common to all characters, and it is the means by which they are able to cross class lines.

The separation of the public and private spheres is

made unproblematic as the public is dissolved into the personal through domestic talk and the particular use of the camera. The elimination of the public sphere also eliminates the difference between the public world of men and the private world of women. The public becomes domesticated as men, too, talk soap talk. The structural world of work is also denied as it becomes the arena for the personal. The private sphere is denied its work, for it also becomes an arena for talk. The differential worlds of men and women are denied as the public dissolves into the private.

Social problems become personalized as they are handled in the private sphere by talk. Their source is not embedded in the social structure, but rather in the inherent psychological state of the individual. Therefore, they can only be solved by the individual in a personal manner. As a result, social problems are depoliticized through the process of personalization.

The social imagery of soap opera is thus denied any fragmentation. The reality constructed is one-dimensional. It is a world of the personal. The social imagery of soap opera is constructed as a social whole where commonality is preferred over difference. Difference exists to be overcome. The characters who inhabit this world are equalized through the process of personalization. They exist only through the personal; that is, they exist in a ready-made social as

ready-made characters because they talk soap talk. The talk of soap opera establishes an intersubjective social where objective social reality does not exist, or is simply taken-for-granted. It is a social constructed at the personal psychological level. Interaction is an exchange of emotion. It is a social created through talk.

The network of relationships that are found on soap opera is established through talk. And it is only because of this talk that a unified social is created. And despite the fact that the process of personalization produces individuals who may fragment the social imagery, the construction of a community of characters provides the glue that holds individuals together.

This social imagery is one level of meaning in the complex totality of the soap opera text. It is an 'ideological effect' in itself, for it is a unification of pluralities and a particular point of view that is universalized. Moreover, it becomes the playing field for the ideological discourses of the text. As will be seen in the next chapter, soap opera characters circulate ideologies on this ideological field, as it makes possible the soap opera's fulfillment of the second function of the mass media.

## Chapter Five

### Another World: The Ranking of Ideologies

#### Introduction

The second function of the mass media in their reproduction of ideological hegemony is to articulate the multiplicity of ideological discourses found in a plural society (Hall, 1977). Ideologies are ranked in an order of preference. It is here that it is 'decided' whether alternative definitions of reality will be excluded from, or included in, the preferred interpretation.

In this chapter, a structural analysis is undertaken which reveals a struggle over meaning taking place on the playing field of the social imagery of Another World. It reveals how this soap opera fulfills the second function of the mass media through its particular articulation of differing ideologies. These ideologies have been established previously as patriarchal ideology and liberal feminist ideology. In fulfilling the second function of the mass media, the construction of meaning that takes place in the text of Another World prefers one ideology over another; that is, it allows one ideology to contain and incorporate the other in its construction of meaning.

### Another World: Nicole's Storyline

The analysis of the ranking of ideologies on Another World focuses on one particular storyline as an illustration: Nicole's storyline. This storyline was just beginning at the time of the study. The analysis follows its development for five episodes.

Nicole Love is the central character that this plot revolves around. She is a member of the wealthy Love family, and she has just returned to Bay City after an absence. Nicole was previously a fashion model, but she has recently become a fashion designer. She has returned to her home in pursuit of fashion magnate Barbara Van Arkdale who has stolen her fashion designs. Barbara is portrayed as the ultimate bitch. She is the sultry vamp devouring men and women in her quest for power.

During her pursuit of Barbara, Nicole runs into her old friend Cass Winthrop. Cass is a lawyer and professed ladies man. He is just getting over the death of his wife. Cass decides to help Nicole get her designs back from Barbara. Nicole wants to prove she has talent and despises Barbara for stealing her best designs. In the middle of this, Reginald Love, Nicole's father, is trying to give Nicole the financial help she needs to establish her talent as a fashion designer. However, his offer is only to get Nicole on his good side, so he can use her in his own plotting (another

major storyline). Nicole refuses because she does not trust her father, and she wants to be independent in her success.

As the storyline unfolds, Nicole and Cass break into Barbara's warehouse hoping to find the stolen designs. Inevitably, they get caught by Barbara. A barrage of insults fly between Nicole and Barbara placing Cass in the middle of the cat fight. Cass must carry a screaming Nicole out of the warehouse near the end of the fifth episode.

#### Analysis of Nicole's Storyline

The introductory scenes to Nicole's storyline establish her as an independent active woman. Through her own initiative, she plans to fight against the injustice done to her by Barbara. These scenes are set at the Love mansion where Nicole's family await her return. In the first scene, the family is anxiously waiting for Nicole to arrive. There is a knock at the door but it is Cass and not Nicole. Cass sets up Nicole's arrival assuring the Love's that Nicole is back. In the next scene, Nicole does arrive, and it is in this scene that Nicole is set up to tell her story. The closing line of this scene is spoken by Michael Hudson (Nicole's brother-in-law) to Nicole: "I think you're in trouble." So, the following scene allows Nicole to verbally establish her independence and control. She gets to tell her own story.

Donna (Nicole's sister): Are you really in trouble?

Nicole: Well there's trouble then there's **trouble**.

Michael: So which is this?

Nicole: **Trouble**. But Cass is getting me out of it.

Donna: Getting you out of it.

Nicole (to Cass): Why don't you explain?

Cass: Oh no, its your family.

Although Nicole acknowledges that Cass will be helping her, Nicole is allowed to tell her own story in her scene. She is the focus of the scene, for she is blocked in the center of the family grouping and her face is rarely out of the camera's frame. Furthermore, Nicole establishes closure of the scene which signifies control.

Nicole: Well, I'm not going to be designing anything for any age group for awhile. No. I have other things to do.

Michael: Like what?

Nicole: Fighting back.

Michael: How?

Nicole: Dirty.

Nicole is further established as being in control through her defusion of a possibly explosive situation between Donna and Reginald. She verbally and physically controls Donna from starting a fight with their father.

Nicole's control is established here through her difference from an emotional Donna.

Nicole is established as an independent woman who is in control of her situation through the use of a variety of signifiers producing the meanings that establish Nicole: verbal (content and closure), blocking, camera framing, and difference. The female character constructed is an alternative to patriarchal ideology's construction of the feminine subject. Nicole is not passive or submissive, rather she is independent and self-respecting. However, she is defined in relation to men: they allow her to tell her story, to be in control, and to establish closure. A concession to patriarchal ideology is the defining of the female through the male, but the defining is not within the composing ideologies of the matrix of patriarchal ideology: romance, femininity, motherhood, and domesticity. The defining takes place within an alternative ideology which is the ideology of liberal feminism. As a woman, Nicole is defined by characteristics alternative to those of patriarchal ideology (i.e., independence, action, control), yet it is the power of the male that allows her to be defined in this alternative way. The alternative ideology which circulates within the matrix of patriarchal ideology exists on its terms. It is preferred only as long as patriarchal ideology allows it to be preferred.

Donna is the difference needed to continue Nicole's alternative construction. Donna is emotionally constructed within patriarchal ideology, whereas, Nicole is in control constructed within the alternative ideology. Nicole's difference from Donna is clarified in a scene where they exit to "dish the dirt." They talk woman talk: romance, babies, and fashion. Moreover, it is done in the privacy of the bedroom. Meanwhile their counterparts, Michael and Cass, discuss Nicole and legal issues in the living room. The placement of these two scenes in sequence constructs, through difference of setting and talk, femininity and masculinity. The signifiers of femininity are posed against those of masculinity.

The bedroom signifies the feminine. Donna and Nicole sit on the soft ruffled bed speaking the ideological discourses of femininity, romance, and motherhood. Donna worries about Michael and Nicole suggests she have a baby to make things better. Despite her difference from Donna, Nicole too is constructed by the composing ideologies of the matrix of patriarchal ideology. And as the alternative ideology circulates among these ideologies, it is allowed to construct Nicole as well. She may discuss babies with Donna, but at the same time, she tells Donna that she wants to be a "top designer" and it is something she's "never been so sure of." Nicole is constructed as feminine yet independent. The

fluidity of patriarchal ideology allows such a construction, for at this moment, the preferencing or ranking of ideologies has not yet occurred. Nicole has become the intersection of these circulating ideologies.

Nicole's difference from Donna is clarified. Nicole is constructed through the matrix of patriarchal ideology and the alternative ideology which circulates within it. At this moment, one is not preferred over the other. Nicole expresses both. The alternative ideology constructs her as independent and in control: she gets to tell her own story. Patriarchal ideology constructs her as caring and feminine: she talks woman talk with Donna. On the other hand, Donna is constructed only through patriarchal ideology. Nicole is a contradiction that has to be resolved.

The scene of Michael and Cass constructs masculinity. They are standing in the living room drinks in hand discussing Nicole and legalities. The conversation that ensues is as follows.

Michael: So you're acting as Nicole's attorney.

Cass: Yes.

Michael: I want you to take care of her (...) You're her attorney, well maybe you can slow her down.

Cass: I'll try

(...)

Michael: Look, I leave it to you to take care of her.

The conversation and the setting signify the masculine. Michael and Cass talk man talk: the business of Nicole's legal problems. The conversation is about the protection of a female who is perceived incapable of taking care of herself. She is placed in her absence under the supervision of a male which is a threat to her alternative construction while a complement to her femininity. This signifies the coming erosion of Nicole's independence, for her independence is seen as problem that must be dealt with by males.

The next major scene takes place at 'Tops'. Cass and Nicole are seen entering the restaurant in conversation. Reginald enters and approaches Nicole. She aggressively informs him in no uncertain terms of her contempt for him. She orders him out on the balcony to tell him her mind.

Reginald: Did you think I would give up on you Nicole?

Nicole: I think I should set you straight before we take one more step.

Reginald: Set me straight?

Nicole: And this time I won't be so polite.

Reginald: You always did have such spirit.

Nicole: Outside!

Nicole exits with Reginald following. Cass is left alone in a medium shot giving a low wolf whistle and hiss. Nicole

appears independent and in control of herself; however, Cass' reaction to her aggressive action delegitimizes it by sexualizing it. Nicole's actions no longer signify the aggressive self-assured female, for Cass' verbal signifiers sexualize Nicole's action. Her aggressiveness comes to mean 'sexiness' within the ideology of femininity.

The ranking of ideologies has begun, for the circulation of the alternative ideology is contained here by the ideology of femininity. It establishes the final meaning, and it becomes preferred over the alternative ideology. Nicole as a sexual object is preferred over Nicole as an independent woman. Furthermore, Reginald's patronizing comment referring to Nicole's "spirit" denies her construction as an independent subject re-constructing her as an object. Nicole is effectively displaced from her alternative construction preferring a construction within patriarchal ideology.

The scene continues with Nicole and Reginald on the balcony. Nicole tells her father to stay away from her as she rejects his authority. In this brief scene, Nicole regains her independence and control signified by her opening and closing of the scene. The preferencing of the ideology of femininity over the alternative ideology is temporary, for the fluidity of patriarchal ideology allows the alternative ideology to re-circulate making the preferencing momentary.

However, the next scene which continues the balcony discussion is opened by Reginald and Nicole starts to lose independence and control. She must be rescued by Cass' intervention. Nicole's construction is ambiguous, for she is constructed within both patriarchal ideology and the alternative ideology. This ambiguity is due to the fluidity of patriarchal ideology where ideologies circulate constantly exchanging moments of preference. Preference is not absolute or static. Patriarchal ideology as 'the' preferred ideology is not always in a position of preference. It allows the momentary preferencing of other ideologies; therefore, there are inconsistencies within the ideological field as 'the' preferred ideology doesn't always occupy a position of preference, thus concealing ranking.

At the point of Cass' intervention, Reginald is cradling Nicole's face in his hands. Cass hollers, "Hey, get your hands off of her!" Nicole is no longer the subject of her own action, but she becomes the object of Reginald's action. Nicole, no longer an active subject, needs Cass to defend her as an object. It is Cass who must finally speak for Nicole and establish closure of what initially (i.e., from the first balcony scene) was Nicole's scene. Nicole only establishes control through Cass, for in the next continuing scene, it is Cass who allows Nicole to begin to end her interaction with Reginald. Reginald opens this scene.

Reginald: I was talking with my daughter Winthrop.

Cass: So talk but don't touch.

Reginald: This is a family matter.

Cass: Are you finished with this conversation Nicole?

Nicole: Yes.

It is at this point that Nicole attempts to leave the balcony but is physically stopped by Reginald. After a brief exchange, Reginald leaves and Nicole regains control as she establishes closure. But this is only achieved through Cass' intervention. He allows Nicole to re-establish herself as an active subject. The alternative ideology is allowed preference by patriarchal ideology. From this scene onward, it becomes increasingly difficult for Nicole to maintain herself as a subject of her own action, not the object of male action.

In the next scene, the premise for the following five scenes is set. Nicole, re-established as a subject of her own action, decides to go to Barbara's warehouse to steal back her designs. Cass tries to talk her out of it, telling her it is too dangerous. He tries to pacify Nicole's desire to act. Wally enters the scene, and he and Cass provide Nicole with alternatives to going to the warehouse.

Cass: Why don't you just take a nice long hot bath?

Wally: Yeah, or read a book.

Cass: Try a new recipe.

Their alternatives are feminine passivity presented in a patronizing masculine way. Nicole sees through this ploy and takes action anyway. She runs to the elevator exiting as Cass hollers after her. Cass and Wally express their displeasure with her action.

Wally: That's one strong-headed girl.

Cass: I know. Disgusting isn't it?

Wally: You better do something quick.

It is here that Nicole's independence is fully established as a problem that males must resolve. Her independence and concomitant desire to act are problematic, for these are masculine not feminine characteristics. Nicole's construction within the alternative ideology is under attack. Cass and Wally as the circulators of the ideologies of femininity and domesticity attempt to prefer these ideologies over the alternative ideology which Nicole now circulates. They prefer passivity over action while Nicole prefers action over passivity.

Nicole's decision to act is a problem that must be resolved by Cass and Wally. Her independence is "disgusting" as she refuses to be redefined within patriarchal ideology. In response to this problem, Cass must "do something quick."

His solution to the problem of Nicole's independence is to remove her as a subject of her own action (which he re-established in the balcony scene) and make her the object of his action.

In the next scene, it is revealed that her attempt to go to the warehouse was stopped by Cass. He had Wally flatten her car tires. Cass' solution to the problem of Nicole's independence is to redefine her as an object. His solution is not to relate to her as an active rational subject, rather he relates to her as an object to be stopped by his action. His action is literally applied to an object which is Nicole's car. By stopping her car, Cass stops Nicole.

Nicole becomes angry and wonders what will happen the next time she tries to act.

Cass: There isn't going to be a next time.

Nicole: Oh. What are you going to do break my legs?

(...)

Cass: Hey! Hey! Hey! Will you calm down. I'm doing you a favor. (Cass physically shakes her.)

Nicole: Well pardon me if I don't thank you.

The scene ends with Wally informing Cass that his car tires were flattened too, most likely by Barbara. Cass responds by saying he will "kill" Barbara. Nicole replies, "You're going to have to stand in line and I'm going to get to her first."

She attempts to exit 'Tops', but she is physically stopped by Reginald who comments on her temper, "My, my, my. Such temper."

Nicole's action is resisted by Cass as he attempts to redefine her within patriarchal ideology. The construction of Nicole through the alternative ideology is contained, preferencing the ideologies that make up the matrix of patriarchal ideology. Nicole becomes an object of Cass' action; furthermore, she becomes an object of Reginald when he stops her from exiting. Nicole's attempts to maintain herself as the subject of her action are defeated, preferencing patriarchal ideology.

Moreover, the reactions of Cass and Reginald to Nicole's anger re-constructs her within patriarchal ideology. Only through Cass' reprimanding action does Nicole's loss of temper come to mean 'irrational woman'. This meaning is further enforced by the patronizing remark made by Reginald as he physically stops Nicole's action. The alternative construction of Nicole is subverted by the verbal and physical signifiers of Reginald and Cass. Aggressiveness and assertiveness come to mean irrational emotion. Nicole is redefined through the ideology of femininity which is activated by the signifiers provided by Cass and Reginald.

Nicole as the subject of her action is only accepted when that action is defined within patriarchal ideology. In

the scene which precedes the above two scenes, Nicole is constructed within patriarchal ideology when she offers Cass sympathy in his loneliness for his deceased wife. Nicole is caring and nurturing as she decides to keep Cass company. Here patriarchal ideology is revealed to be 'the' preferred ideology, for there is no objection to a feminine construction of Nicole. Cass does not attempt to redefine Nicole within the alternative ideology; for Cass, as a circulator of patriarchal ideology, only attempts redefinition when Nicole circulates the alternative ideology. Nicole is accepted when she is constructed by patriarchal ideology; thus, the ideology is revealed to be 'the' preferred ideology.

Nicole and Cass supposedly retire to their respective suites for the evening. However, Nicole only lets Cass think she has gone to bed, for she returns to 'Tops' to borrow Wally's motorcycle to get her to the warehouse. As she exits, Cass is entering. He physically stops her saying, "You're not going anywhere." Nicole's action is once again frustrated. In the next episode, this scene continues.

Cass: Funny, I thought you said you were tired.

Nicole: I am. I'm tired of being pushed around by Barbara Van Arkdale, and my father, and you.

Nicole verbally signifies her rejection of her redefinition

as the object of others' actions. She wants to re-establish herself as the subject of her own action. As the scene continues, Cass -an agent of signification- activates the ideologies of femininity and domesticity which attempt to contain and redefine Nicole. Cass decides to go to the warehouse for Nicole but she misunderstands.

Cass: I said I'll do it.

Nicole: You'll go with me to the warehouse? You'll help me steal my clothes?

Cass: No. No. No.

Nicole: But you said...

(Cass moves Nicole back into Tops with his arm around her.)

Cass: Look, you're terrific at designing. You really are. But at breaking and entering you're a complete wash out.

Nicole: Oh no. No. You are not going to that warehouse by yourself.

Cass: Isn't that my line?

Nicole: Cass, I'm going with you.

Cass: Look, breaking into a warehouse is a man's job. So why don't you just sit by the fireside and knit or something.

(Cass begins to exit.)

Nicole: Winthrop! You take one more step and you are dead meat.

Cass opens this scene signifying initial control; moreover, the addition of his verbal signifiers activates

patriarchal ideology. Nicole is best at performing feminine jobs (i.e., designing). Cass, as the male, should carry out the action of committing crime. Nicole should remain passive and domestic, knitting by the fireside. But Nicole does not accept her redefinition within patriarchal ideology, she establishes closure (control) with her order for Cass to stop his action. Nicole's final control of the scene and her refusal to be redefined within the meaning system activated by Cass allows her to create the final meaning. She rejects her construction within patriarchal ideology by demanding construction within the alternative ideology. The alternative ideology is in a moment of preference.

Cass opens the following scene by attempting to talk Nicole out of going to the warehouse reminding her of the legalities involved. Nicole finally agrees not to go to the warehouse.

Nicole: I'll wait for you here.

Cass: What?

Nicole: I said I'll wait for you here.

Cass: Oh. Good girl. Good. (He pats Nicole on the back.)

As Cass exits, Nicole changes her mind too late to catch Cass. She runs into Zak (a lawyer friend). They discuss Cass and Nicole realizes Cass has duped her.

Nicole: Ah, sit by the fireside and knit! Indeed!

Zak: Hey, wait a minute would you mind explaining what you just said?

Nicole: I'll tell you something Zak. You should never send a man to do a woman's job.

Although Cass once again establishes initial control of the scene and contains Nicole, Nicole creates the final meaning as she closes the scene. She turns around the cliché "never send a woman to do a man's job" and thus subverts its meaning. It now signifies rejection of patriarchal ideology. The alternative ideology is still in a moment of preference.

The next group of scenes are set at the warehouse. It is in these scenes where patriarchal ideology is finally established as 'the' preferred ideology, despite the concealment of its preferred position in the previous scenes through the apparent preferred position of the alternative ideology. It is here that the ranking of ideologies becomes clearer.

The first warehouse scene has Cass alone in the darkness. He hears someone else in the warehouse discovering it is Nicole. In the next scene, they argue back and forth.

Nicole: These things aren't packing crates. They're fortresses. (Nicole attempts to open a crate.)

Cass: I told you I'd do this.

Nicole: Oh yeah, well I got to thinking about what you said.

Cass: Yeah. And?

Nicole: And I decided you're wrong.

Cass: Did you?

Nicole: Yeah! You're not going to do all the fun stuff while I sit at home and wring my hands.

Cass: Fun!? Get outta here! (Cass physically moves Nicole away from the packing crate she is trying to open placing her between him and it.) Fun! Risking my precious life because you're so dumb that you're hooked up with a homicidal couturier. Fun. (Cass proceeds to open the crate.)

Nicole verbally and physically signifies her rejection of the ideology of femininity. She opens the scene by rejecting passivity, actively in control as she tries to open a crate while Cass observes. However, by the middle of the scene, Cass re-establishes patriarchal ideology's preference. His verbal and physical signifiers reject Nicole's alternative construction. They reconstruct her in patriarchal ideology. Cass moves Nicole away from the crate opening it himself as Nicole looks on. She becomes passive, the object of his action. The closure of the scene is established by Nicole; however, it doesn't signify control. Nicole hears a noise and runs into Cass' arms saying, "Oh my God." Unlike the final two scenes at 'Tops', Nicole's closure here does not subvert or reject patriarchal ideology. It acts to establish it in a preferred position.

In the next scene Cass makes fun of Nicole's fear as they continue their search of the warehouse. She ends up

running into his arms again as a crying black cat enters the scene. Nicole worries that the cat may be Barbara's.

The problem of Nicole's independence begins to be resolved with the appearance of her dependence on Cass. Nicole is independent, active and in control during the initial stages of the plan to break into the warehouse. However, when it comes to putting the plan into practice at the warehouse, Nicole becomes vulnerable and dependent. Nicole's ambiguous construction as either independent or dependent is resolved. The problem of her independence recedes, for when it comes to the actual practice of Nicole being a subject of her own action, she fails. Furthermore, she 'naturally' falls into patriarchal ideology where her dependence is preferred. Cass does not reject Nicole when she is dependent. This is the 'normal' and preferred construction for a female within patriarchal ideology. The alternative ideology only appears to be preferred, for it is never accepted, always being contested by patriarchal ideology. Its circulation is limited within the matrix of patriarchal ideology. Patriarchal ideology, on the other hand, is 'the' preferred ideology, for it permits the moments of preference of the alternative ideology and conceals ideological ranking.

In the next scene, Cass is suspicious of a trap. He and Nicole hear someone coming and hide. A woman enters, signified initially by an extreme close-up shot of black

stiletto shoes. The next scene opens on a medium close-up of the black shoes with the black cat rubbing against the legs. One foot suggestively puts out a cigarette as the camera moves up the woman's body to waist level. The woman's hands, complete with long red nails, open a gold cigarette case and remove a cigarette. The camera moves up to the face. The woman lights the cigarette suggestively blowing the smoke. Electronic drum machines provide background music that is menacing. All of these melodramatic signifiers (the camera style, black shoes, black cat, the red nails, the cigarette, the swirling smoke, the music) come together to establish this woman in an instant as 'the evil bitch'. The camera directs the gaze of the viewer so it is the viewer that constructs this woman. The viewer is not looking through the gaze of another character, but is looking alone. The signifiers restrict the possible meanings, for they activate automatically the ideology of femininity in line with the ideology of sexuality. The recognition of the 'bitch' is instantaneous as the signifiers activate a stock of images contained in patriarchal ideology. Meaning appears to be natural not constructed through such ideology. It sets up the viewer's expectations for this character. Moreover, Barbara is the difference needed for the final rejection of Nicole's alternative construction. Barbara is the independent, unemotional bitch who defines Nicole through her difference

as the dependent, emotional woman in need of a man to control her and her situation.

In the next episode, the ending of the above scene is repeated, opening a new scene. Nicole and Cass come out of hiding and face Barbara. Nicole opens the scene, retaining control until Barbara establishes closure. Nicole is blocked between Cass and Barbara, so the action must center around her. Nicole is in control of her situation. She has momentarily re-established herself as the subject of her own action. However, her construction through the alternative ideology is made suspect, for she temporarily loses control when she reacts to an insult from Barbara. Cass must restrain her from physically attacking Barbara. She regains her composure and re-establishes control as she tells Cass and Barbara to "cut the banter" and get back to the topic at hand, her stolen designs. In response to a threat of legal action from Nicole and Cass, Barbara closes the scene with a threat of arresting them for breaking and entering. She gains final control.

Nicole's difficulty in maintaining her construction within the alternative ideology is now increased. Her circulation as the bearer of such an ideology comes under increasing pressure. Earlier, Cass and Reginald made Nicole's maintenance of her alternative construction difficult. In these final scenes, Nicole is confronted by Barbara who

circulates as Nicole's possible binary opposite. Previous to the introduction of Barbara, Nicole's ambiguous construction had her split internally: independence versus dependence, active versus passive, subject versus object. As Barbara is introduced, Nicole's internal contradictions become resolved. Nicole becomes one side of the binary and Barbara the other. Patriarchal ideology is 'the' preferred ideology, for the alternative ideology no longer circulates.

In the next four scenes, Nicole's control deteriorates as she becomes increasingly emotional, needing to be restrained by Cass. As one scene opens, Cass is holding Nicole around the waist and off the floor stopping her from attacking Barbara. Barbara stands by calmly, smirking at Nicole.

Nicole: I'll rip her face off!

Cass: Nicole! Nicole! Stop it. Stop it. (Cass sets Nicole back on the floor behind him. Now Cass is blocked center.)

Throughout this scene, Nicole is behind Cass trying to get at Barbara. Cass establishes closure as Barbara makes Cass a suggestive offer: "Cass why don't you come and work for me instead? I'm sure I can find a place for you, darling." Cass refuses the offer.

The next scene sees Cass as a referee between Nicole and Barbara.

Cass: This could all be very easily resolved.

Nicole: Yes, I get my designs back and then I kill her! (Nicole lunges for Barbara and Cass must grab her.)

Cass: Will you cut that out! Now its obvious to me that Nicole is very, very talented. Why don't you hire her back?

(...)

Cass: Listen to me. What if you introduce Nicole as your new star designer? Then you both look good.

Barbara: I look good already.

Nicole: And you've got the plastic surgeon bills to prove it.

Cass: No. No. Come on. There's plenty of room at the top for both of you.

Barbara: I don't need her. I made it to the top on my own.

Nicole: Horizontally.

Barbara: At least I know how to hold on to a man.

Nicole: Yeah. Hold on to his...

Cass: Ladies.

Barbara: Why don't you just go back to the junior league sweetie, huh?

Nicole: Why don't you kiss my a...

Cass: Ladies!

Nicole loses her alternative construction. She becomes constructed within patriarchal ideology as one side of the binary opposition within the ideology of femininity. She is emotional and dependent. She is no longer the subject

of her actions, becoming instead the object of Cass as he must restrain her. Her aggression towards Barbara is ineffective, and she is defeated. She becomes the victim unable to control her situation. Nicole is recuperated, reinstated into a patriarchal mold.

Barbara is an accomplice in this recuperation. She is the other side of the model of femininity which provides the needed difference to convincingly place Nicole back into patriarchal ideology. Nicole's internal contradictions are resolved, for they become external contradictions between her and Barbara. Moreover, Nicole and Barbara as binary opposites become mediated by Cass. He is between the "ladies" controlling their interaction. Cass signifies the masculine, mediating the feminine split. The masculine construction is unambiguous. It is strength, control, independence, and rationality. Cass opens and closes the last two warehouse scenes. He must carry a screaming Nicole out the door. Cass is the rational man offering a solution to the "ladies'" problem. It is refused by overly emotional females. The masculine is preferred over the feminine. Barbara's femininity is defeated by Cass as he refuses her advances. And as the referee of their fight, the strength of Cass' masculinity is again preferred over the weakness and emotionality of the feminine. Patriarchal ideology is ranked as 'the' preferred ideology over the alternative ideology

that circulates within its spaces.

### Conclusion

This articulation of ideologies (i.e., the composing ideologies of patriarchal ideology and the alternative liberal feminist ideology) takes place on Another World's social imagery. This social imagery is a one-dimensional universal reality devoid of fragmentation. This smooth surface of the social imagery is a site of ideological struggle. And as such, it does not merge with the dialogue of ideologies occurring on its surface, for it is another level of meaning in the soap opera text.

The social imagery is the ideological field on which the multiplicity of ideologies become ranked. This ranking occurs as alternative ideologies are recuperated by 'the' preferred ideology. The alternative ideology has 'moments' of preference, but this preferencing is only possible so long as patriarchal ideology allows it. The fluidity of this ideological structure is apparent as ideologies move in and out of preferred positions. This is an ideological structure that is constantly shifting as the preference to mean is contested. Moreover, the repetitive narrative of the soap opera magnifies this shifting as ideologies are constantly recirculated. Significantly, the shifting of ideologies in and out of preferred positions conceals ranking. And this

concealment is what makes patriarchal ideological hegemony possible, for it appears as if all views of reality are being expressed equally when in actuality some views are preferred over others.

## Chapter Six

### Another World: The Production of Consensus

#### Introduction

The third function of the mass media is the production of consensus surrounding the preferred ranking of the multiplicity of discourses within the dominant ideologies (Hall, 1977). The multiplicity of ideological discourses articulated to the dominant conception of reality inevitably provide points of recognition for a diversity of groups. These groups recognize their realities (something of themselves) within the ideological discourses articulated to the dominant conception of reality; subsequently, they consent to this preferred ranking as their definition of reality appears to be represented equally. In actuality, their realities are subordinated to the dominant ideological discourses, and this 'ideological effect' leads these groups to consent to their own subordination, reproducing ideological hegemony.

In this chapter, the soap opera Another World will be shown to fulfill this third function of the mass media. The production of consensus is dependent on the the realism of the soap opera text. It is argued that there are two levels of realism. The first level of realism is constructed through

the realist conventions of soap opera that parallel the reality of the viewer. This level of realism is seen to make way for the second level of realism where ideological discourses become points of recognition for the female viewer. Finally, the coerciveness of the camera's point of view is seen to be complicit with the work of ideology, as it makes choices for the unaware viewer. This leads to the production of consensus surrounding the ranking of ideologies.

#### Soap Opera and Realism

Realism is essential to the soap opera in its reproduction of patriarchal hegemony, for it is only through the female viewer recognizing something of herself in the soap opera that the production of consensus can be achieved. The female viewer is presented with the particular social imagery of soap opera which is an intersubjective social world devoid of fragmentation. This social imagery does not mirror societal reality since macrosociological reality is absent. However, soap opera's realism is not a realism of scope, but it is a "realism of detail" (Intintoli, 1984: 61). It is this 'realism of detail' that provides the intersubjective social of soap opera with points of recognition for the female viewer, so she experiences it as a parallel reality allowing for the symbolic reproduction of

patriarchal ideological hegemony. The details which construct soap opera's particular realism are recognizable by the female viewer, for they are the details of the cultural sphere of women.

The particular realism of soap opera is constructed on two levels. The first level of realism is constructed through the use of realist conventions which fill the social imagery of soap opera with details that parallel the experiential reality of the female viewer. The second level of realism is constructed through the content of the soap opera text where the ideological discourses that construct the culture of women's daily lives become the stories of the soap opera. It is through these levels of realism that points of recognition are established for the female viewer culminating in the production of consensus, and thus, the reproduction of patriarchal hegemony.

#### The First Level of Realism and Another World

The social imagery constructed on Another World through the process of personalization is an intersubjective social where a 'realism of detail' creates a parallel reality for the female viewer. The first level of realism is created in the intersubjective social of Another World through the use of realist conventions: contemporaneity, lack of closure, and the visual, musical, writing, and acting conventions.

Soap opera in general strives to reflect contemporary reality in the hope that a realism will be created which holds the viewer; therefore, the storylines often include contemporary issues. By including current social issues within the storylines, the soap opera producers wish to persuade the viewer that their programme is a parallel reality. "Persuasiveness, the authority of a construction, is linked to the sense that this is the **way the world is now**" (Intintoli, 1984: 97; emphasis in original).

Another World also strives to reflect contemporary reality through the inclusion of contemporary issues in its storylines. Three ongoing storylines include the following contemporary issues: the alienation of Vietnam veterans within American society, the issues surrounding teenage pregnancy, and AIDS.

John Hudson is a Vietnam veteran who finds it hard to adjust to the routine of everyday life since his experience in Vietnam. This is shown in his restlessness and inability to stay with any one project in his life. He is portrayed as a man who does not fit in with the current mores of society. This current issue is also verbally addressed as he infrequently alludes to the devastating experience of Vietnam.

Amanda Cory, the daughter of the wealthy MacKenzie and Rachel Cory, is pregnant and unwed. She must deal with

the prospects of being an unwed teenage mother. Amanda considers abortion, bringing to the fore another contemporary issue. She must also deal with the father and whether he has any say in her decisions concerning the pregnancy.

Dawn Rollo is a young woman who has contracted AIDS from a blood transfusion given to her by her deceased prostitute mother. This storyline allows one of the most pressing current issues to be presented to a large audience. The storyline provides information about the truths and myths of AIDS while showing the process of the acceptance of impending death.

The inclusion of these contemporary issues within the storylines of Another World begins the creation of a parallel world where the viewer finds a 'realism of detail' which conveys a social imagery parallel with their own reality.

One of the most notable characteristics of the soap opera genre which offers further persuasion of a parallel world is the "absence of ultimate narrative closure" (Allen, 1985: 69). The multiple plot lines do achieve closure, but the over-all narrative of the soap opera is constantly opening up new plot lines as past ones close, making ultimate closure absent. This lack of closure gives the viewer the sense that the reality of the soap opera actually does parallel their own reality.

Soap opera['s]....interest resides in an implicit claim to portray a **parallel** life. It offers itself to its audience as the representation of lives that are separate from but **continuous** with their own....[Its] duration year after year is coextensive with that of the calendar year. Soap opera has its own rhythms, its weddings, births and even deaths....Thus the claim to represent a vast network of concurrently lived...lives rests largely on the genre's life-imitating diachronic capaciousness. Through the very **power of continuity** it suggests a kind of **heightened realism** (Porter, 1977: 783; emphasis added).

The continuity of the soap opera enabled by its lack of narrative closure "offers a homology between soap-life and viewer life" (Brunsdon, 1986: 86). This continuity can be seen in Another World whose narrative has lacked final closure for twenty-four years (Allen, 1985: 127). It mimics the calendar year as the seasons change and important holidays are marked with the community of characters celebrating. Long-standing characters' lives become continuous with the viewer's life, as they, too, grow old and change. The character Rachel Cory has a long history (as do many others) on Another World. She started out as a young woman living with her mother, Ada Hobson. The viewer has had the opportunity to watch the rhythms of her life as she weds, has children, and grows into a mature woman over numerous years. As the viewer has grown old and changed, the parallel reality of Rachel Cory has mimicked those same changes. Thus, the creation of a 'heightened realism.'

The creation of a 'heightened realism' is further

accomplished on soap opera through its visual conventions. Soap opera uses an "intimate camera style" (Timberg, 1982: 135). Camera shots are limited mainly to the use of extreme close-ups, close-ups, and medium close-ups (Intintoli, 1984: 167). Consequently, the intersubjective social imagery of soap opera becomes a world of faces. This intimate visual style is used on Another World where faces are often framed in close-ups and medium close-ups. The use of extreme close-ups is limited to intense emotional scenes. Nevertheless, Another World is characterized by this visual style.

This intimate visual style parallels the experiential reality of the female viewer. The world of soap opera is a world of faces as is the world of the female viewer. She inhabits a cultural sphere where she learns the skills of sensitivity, intuition, and perceptiveness (Brunsdon, 1983: 81; Modleski, 1983: 70). In other words, she learns to read the nonverbal desires of her intimates. The female in her particular cultural sphere learns to 'read' the emotions of these intimates to fulfill her social role as nurturer and satisfier. Reading the emotions of others involves reading faces, and it is precisely the intimate visual style of soap opera that invites such reading and provides a point of recognition for the female viewer. She recognizes her visual reality in the visual style of the soap opera adding to the

plausibility of this parallel reality. Moreover, this intimate visual style which the female viewer recognizes creates immediacy and familiarity with the soap opera characters. The visual style pulls the viewer closer and nearer to the characters.

The writing and acting conventions of the soap opera contribute further to this 'heightened realism.' They, too, create immediacy and familiarity with the characters for the viewer. Harding LeMay, a writer on Another World for eight years, purports that the immediacy of soap opera is attributable to the fact that it is "[w]ritten in colloquial dialogue and acted in most cases by players skilled in projecting naturalist realism" (Intintoli, 1984: 51). On Another World the characters talk in everyday language which does not require a special cultural capital to understand. The actors rely heavily on facial expressions to convey emotion with little use of embellished gestures. This is due mainly to the fact that they are framed in close-up shots and must use facial expressions as their greatest acting tool.

These realist conventions of the soap opera (i.e., intimate visual style, writing, and acting) combined with their location on the domestic medium of television increases the immediacy and familiarity the viewer experiences towards the characters. These characters become familiar faces circulating in familiar settings in the viewer's home five

days a week; consequently, the viewer comes to know them intimately. "Viewers come to feel they know the characters well -characters are continually there, and their most intimate feelings, desires, and behaviors are accessible" (Intintoli, 1984: 55). The characters are close and near.

This emotional involvement with the characters by the viewer creates an "emotional realism" (Ang, 1985: 45). The female viewer recognizes a psychological reality in her involvement with close and near soap opera characters. Moreover, the use of flashbacks and music add to this emotional or psychological realism. In soap opera "[w]e are frequently engaged...with the visual representation of imagined events, or with memory. Often we see the creation of aberrant psychological states or dreams" (Newcomb, 1974: 169). The visual convention of flashbacks on Another World signify characters remembering past events, and these flashbacks create an internal psychological reality. The musical conventions of soap opera are the additional signifiers of emotions. And whether music is used with regular visuals or flashbacks, it underlines the mood of the scene, enhancing the 'emotional realism.' As in real memory, soap opera flashbacks are triggered by words or objects. While aboard a houseboat that John Hudson is temporarily using as a home, Vicki Love has a flashback of her accidental viewing of John and her mother Donna in a passionate embrace.

Vicki finds Donna's scarf in John's bed which triggers the flashback. The flashback begins with the camera's slow movement into an extreme close-up of Vicki's face. The memory of John and Donna is superimposed on her emoting face. The viewer is invited to share Vicki's psychological reality. Music provides a supportive role as an additional signifier to Vicki's face. A sustained synthesizer at a low intensity builds to a higher intensity as Vicki's reaction to the flashback intensifies. The music mimics the facial expressions of Vicki as her emotions intensify with the memory. The music's intensity diminishes as Vicki comes out of the flashback with the camera slowly pulling back into a close-up. The flashback fades to reveal only Vicki's face. Through these visual and musical conventions, Vicki's psychological experience becomes accessible and recognizable to the viewer.

This creation of an 'emotional realism', where the viewer can experience the internal psychological reality of close and near characters, is often called identification with the characters (Intintoli, 1984: 55; Ang, 1985: 29). However, as Modelski (1983: 68-69; emphasis in original) argues, the female viewer does not experience identification with the characters because closeness and nearness cause this viewer "not [to] **become** the characters...but [to relate] to them as intimates, as extensions of her world." The distance

necessary to objectify the characters in order for identification with the characters to take place is absent. It can be said that female viewers tend to empathize with the soap opera characters. Empathy for characters adds to the 'heightened realism' as fictive characters like Cass and Nicole become real an hour each day for the Another World viewer.

The first level of realism provides "a site for viewers to become involved in problems, issues and narratives that do touch on [their] lives" (Brunsdon, 1986: 87). Furthermore, the involvement only occurs so long as points of recognition are provided which allow the female viewer to recognize something of herself in this parallel reality. Moreover, there is a multiplicity of points of recognition for the female viewer to choose among. This becomes essential to the reproduction of patriarchal ideological hegemony as will be seen in the discussion of the second level of realism.

#### The Second Level of Realism and Another World

A multiplicity of ideological discourses inhabit the symbolic world of soap opera. They inhabit the social imagery of the soap opera in the stories that take shape through multiple plot lines and complex interrelationships between characters. As established previously, these ideological

discourses that inhabit the intersubjective social of soap opera also compose the cultural sphere of women's lives. This is where the second level of realism begins to be constructed, for these ideological discourses also offer points of recognition for the female viewer. However, the recognition by the female viewer of something of herself in these ideological discourses is only made possible through the realist conventions that construct the first level of realism.

The significance of the first level of realism as provider of a site for involvement in the ready-made world of soap opera is now apparent, for it is at the first level of realism that a position is created for the female viewer to occupy in relation to the soap opera text. She is positioned from "the point of view of intimacy" (Porter, 1977: 786). The female viewer is positioned to interact with the soap text as an empathetic viewer involved in the lives of these characters.

The viewer's empathy with the characters is important, for they are the circulators of the ideological discourses that compose the parallel reality of the soap opera. From the point of view of intimacy, the female viewer recognizes something of herself in the ideological discourses circulated by close and near characters. The fictive characters appear as real people in this realist illusion.

And more importantly, the circulating ideological discourses become aspects of these characters' personalities hidden in the transparency of realism. It is with the accomplishment of this realist illusion that the production of consensus may take place, and thus the reproduction of patriarchal hegemony. For, it is the pleasure of recognizing something of herself in this realist illusion that makes certain for the female viewer "the obviousness of ideology, its disappearance behind the inevitable, for who in the midst of pleasure would seek to disrupt it by analyzing its source or consequences" (Nichols, 1981: 41)?

In the case of Nicole's storyline on Another World, the realist conventions which construct the first level of realism have provided a site for the female viewer, a point of view of intimacy, from which to develop empathy for the characters. The contemporaneity of the storyline where a woman must struggle against a more powerful figure to regain credit for her stolen work offers a point of recognition for the female viewer. The work of women has traditionally gone unrecognized, and this parallels Nicole's storyline. The story is spoken in simple dialogue and acted within the limited camera shots of close-ups. Nicole's emoting face is framed in close-up after close-up making her close and near for the female viewer. The viewer can come to empathize with Nicole's problems, for despite the glamorized world of

Nicole, the 'realism of detail' creates points of recognition for the female viewer. Nicole's problem is recognizable as a problem that faces many women. It relates to the problems within the cultural sphere of women; moreover, Nicole's storyline embodies a multiplicity of ideological discourses which, like the storylines of most soap opera, compose women's culture.

The close and near characters who figure in Nicole's storyline are the circulators of these ideological discourses, and thus, they offer a choice for the female viewer among multiple points of recognition. Moreover, from the point of view of intimacy, the ideological discourses are hidden within the characters as closeness and nearness make them transparent. The female viewer is aware of an emotional realism but not its source. Furthermore, she is aware of her empathy for the characters but not its consequence. The consequence of this empathy, or more precisely, the pleasure of recognizing something of herself in the soap opera text becomes the female viewer's consent to her own symbolic subordination within patriarchal ideology. This secures the reproduction of patriarchal ideological hegemony.

#### The Production of Consensus and Nicole's Storyline: An Analysis

The production of the consent of the female viewer to

her symbolic subordination within patriarchal ideology is constructed in the text of Another World. The plurality of points of recognition constructed in the first and second levels of realism provide the viewer with an apparent choice of what she will recognize. She has an apparent choice as to what characters she will empathize with, what points of view she will occupy, and what she will recognize of herself in the soap opera text. These choices are apparently objective made through the eyes of the female viewer. However, it is through the 'surrogate look' of the camera that these choices are made. As established previously, the camera appears to be the viewer's own way of seeing the world. And in the case of the female viewer, the way of seeing the world is the visual style of soap opera -intimate. The female viewer is positioned as an intimate observer, a choice made by the invisible camera. The camera structures the viewer's way of seeing and the choices that the viewer will make. The camera controls the look of the viewer deciding what that viewer will see. The particular structure of representation provided by the 'surrogate look' of the camera is complicit with the work of ideology.

In the case of Nicole's storyline, the multiplicity of characters offer the viewer an apparent choice as to who she will empathize with. Should she empathize with Nicole, Barbara, Cass, or perhaps Reginald? The multiplicity of

viewpoints gives her an apparent choice of seeing the story from either Cass's viewpoint, Nicole's viewpoint, or from the viewpoint of any other character involved in the story. And, what will she recognize of herself? In the following analysis of three scenes from Nicole's storyline, it will be shown that the viewer's apparent free choice is actually determined by the controlling look of the camera forcing choices onto the viewer.

The first scene in the analysis is the scene in which Nicole initially returns to the Love Mansion after her absence. The Love family and Cass await her return. In this scene, a multiplicity of viewpoints are available to the viewer as are a multiplicity of characters to empathize with. Nicole enters the scene in a medium shot from the point of view of all of the characters at the Mansion, and of course, the viewer's. The camera quickly reduces the points of view available to the viewer as Nicole is framed in medium close-ups predominantly with one character at a time. This framing is limited to Donna, Michael, and Peter. Their points of view are directed at Nicole as the camera shoots from their view. The camera limits choice. Moreover, Nicole is the only one in the scene who is seen in close-up. The viewer is unknowingly being directed by the 'surrogate look' of the camera to focus on Nicole. The close-ups of her face place the viewer in an intimate position with Nicole. The viewer is

being set up to empathize with Nicole as the camera makes her closer and nearer to the viewer than the other characters. Moreover, the direction of all points of view to Nicole places her at the center of attention. The direction of all points of view to Nicole gives her the opportunity to establish her point of view in the intimacy of close-ups. The camera begins the establishment of the viewer's empathy with Nicole leading to the viewer's adoption of Nicole's point of view. What appears to be freely chosen is forced by the controlling camera. Moreover, what the viewer comes to recognize of herself is now determined by what the camera allows her to see.

The balcony scene at 'Tops' between Nicole and Reginald shows the continuing coercion of the camera. Nicole is attempting to tell her father to stay away from her while he attempts ingratiation. This scene is a series of shot reverse/shots where the point of view is exchanged between Reginald and Nicole. This equal exchange of the point of view gives the viewer the illusion of choice as to who she will empathize with and whose point of view she will take. However, the camera makes the choice, not allowing the viewer to empathize with Reginald. When the camera positions the viewer from Nicole's point of view, Reginald is always seen in distancing medium close-ups. On the contrary, when the camera positions the viewer from Reginald's point of view,

Nicole is always seen in intimate close-ups. As in the scene discussed previously, Nicole is brought by the camera's look nearer and closer to the viewer. The viewer is positioned to view Nicole from a point of view of intimacy, her emoting face producing empathy in the viewer. Reginald, in his medium close-ups, is distanced from the viewer. Moreover, the empathy established by the camera leads to the viewer adopting Nicole's point of view. What the viewer recognizes of herself will be found in Nicole's emoting face as she confronts her father. The viewer does not choose to recognize herself in Nicole, the camera has set her up to do so. The viewer recognizes the ideological discourses that Nicole circulates, for they construct her sphere of life.

Throughout the progression of Nicole's storyline, the coercive camera builds the viewer's empathy for Nicole. By the time Barbara makes her first appearance in the warehouse scenes, the viewer empathizes with Nicole and is experiencing the storyline from Nicole's point of view. As previously shown, Barbara's initial appearance, loaded with signifiers of 'the evil bitch', establishes her in an instant as Nicole's enemy. In the last of the warehouse scenes, an emotional Nicole is being dragged away by Cass. Here, the camera forces the viewer to watch Barbara in intimate close-ups while Nicole is seen in medium close-ups. Viewing Barbara's cool smiling face in close-ups does not produce

empathy for her, rather it intensifies the viewer's empathy for Nicole. Barbara in close-up is more of what the viewer dislikes. The camera chooses to intensify the viewer's empathy for Nicole by forcing the choice of the viewer. She must watch Barbara in intimate close-ups.

It can now be argued that a preferred view is constructed within the soap opera text. The camera prefers a particular way of seeing over others. In the case of Nicole's storyline, the camera prefers Nicole's view, yet it appears to offer other possible views. The camera does not limit itself only to shots of Nicole. Characters other than Nicole are also framed by the camera. However, developing empathy for these characters is unlikely, for it is Nicole who is framed predominantly in intimate close-up shots.

The viewer has the illusion of choice from among many possible views; however, the camera really makes the choice for her. In directing all possible viewpoints at Nicole, the camera creates unity from the plurality of viewpoints. Everyone agrees to look at Nicole and recognize her viewpoint. The viewer takes up this preferred viewing position as if it were her own. She is positioned in a relationship of intimacy with Nicole as the camera frames Nicole in close-ups. The viewer comes to empathize with Nicole as the camera prefers her over other characters. The viewer's empathy leads her to recognize something of herself in

Nicole. The points of recognition that Nicole offers are the ideological discourses that she circulates. As established previously, these are patriarchal ideology and the alternative feminist ideology. These ideologies compose the cultural sphere of women. Thus, the viewer recognizes her reality represented in the soap opera text.

The production of consensus surrounding the ranking of ideologies occurs when the viewer consents to the reality represented in the soap opera text. The parallel reality that the viewer recognizes is framed in a preferred viewpoint. Within this textually constructed viewpoint, a preferred ranking of ideologies has occurred which is masked by the fluidity of the hegemonic process. It appears to the viewer as if all views are being expressed equally when in actuality patriarchal ideology is preferred. Consequently, the viewer consents to Nicole's recuperation by patriarchal ideology, not only because of the masking of preferencing, but also it appears as if she has chosen to view Nicole in this way. She consents to what appears to be her own way of viewing. As she consents to Nicole's recuperation by patriarchal ideology, she is consenting to her own symbolic subordination within the soap opera text. The reproduction of patriarchal ideological hegemony is secured, for the subordination of the alternative ideology within the matrix of patriarchal ideology does not become an area of contention but rather an

area of consensus.

However, the production of consensus cannot always be guaranteed. Given the nature of the hegemonic process, dominant decodings are not always assured (Hall, 1977: 344). There is a constant struggle over which ideologies will have preference to mean. The fluidity of ideologies makes consensus surrounding the preferred ranking unstable, for other possible ways of ranking ideologies are necessarily put into view in the hegemonic process. "[P]referred meanings, which usually coincide with the perceptions of the dominant sections of society, must compete with and be seen in the context of the other possible ways of seeing" (Fiske and Hartley, 1978: 18). Thus, the production of consensus is never complete, for in its production it must reveal that which it attempts to conceal.

### Conclusion

It has been argued that the realist conventions of soap opera construct the first level of realism within the text. A 'realism of detail' parallels the experiential world of the female viewer, as it offers many points of recognition. A second level of realism is made possible by the first when the viewer is positioned from a point of view of intimacy with the soap opera characters. Only then can she begin to empathize with them recognizing herself in the

ideological discourses they circulate and which construct the second level of realism.

The consequence of this recognition of herself in the parallel reality of the soap opera text is the reproduction of patriarchal ideological hegemony. The two levels of realism offer many points of recognition for the viewer to choose from. However, the camera makes the choices for the viewer as it constructs a preferred viewpoint in the soap opera text. The preferred view appears to be the viewer's own. And what occurs in this view is thus consented to by the viewer. This produces consensus for the hegemonic position of patriarchal ideology. Yet, consensus can never be guaranteed as it is a process of constant negotiation.

## Chapter Seven

### Conclusion

Through the use of Hall's theory of the mass media and his conceptualization of ideology, this research has shown that the soap opera Another World reproduces the hegemony of patriarchal ideology. The analysis of how the soap opera fulfills the three functions of the mass media reveals how the soap opera text constructs meaning to be 'read' by the viewer.

Another World's text first constructs a social imagery through the process of personalization. Here an intersubjective social world is created where social fragmentation is denied, favoring a universal reality. All characters are equalized at the level of the personal, and in turn, the problems of class, the public/private dichotomy, and social problems are personalized.

Secondly, the soap opera's social imagery becomes a site of contestation where ideologies struggle for preference to make meaning. The ranking of ideologies occurs here, and it becomes evident that ideology is a fluid contradictory structure. The ideologies that attempt to construct Nicole contradict one another. The openness of patriarchal ideology is evident as it allows the alternative liberal feminist

ideology to temporarily construct Nicole. This openness is necessary for the concealment of patriarchy's hegemony as other views appear to be expressed equally.

Thirdly, consensus is produced surrounding the ranking of ideologies. A reality that parallels the viewer's is created within the soap opera's social imagery offering many points of recognition for the viewer to choose from. Yet choices are made, not by the viewer, but by the coercive camera which constructs a preferred point of view. Therefore, the viewer consents to the preferencing of patriarchal ideology, for she appears to have made the choices of its preference herself.

Thus, this research confirms Hall's theory of the mass media. As expected, the cultural product of soap opera responds to its conditions of existence reproducing those conditions. Furthermore, the propositions which flowed from Hall's conceptualization of ideology have been confirmed. Ideologies (i.e., patriarchal ideology and liberal feminist ideology) were seen to inhabit a medium of the mass media. Ideology was materialized in the site of the soap opera text. Ideology was found as a structure within the text of Another World. Ideologies 'impose' themselves as structures, and as seen in the case of soap opera, it is the complex structure of the text that facilitates the work of ideology. The narrative structure, the structure of character

interrelationships, the structure of scenes (both within and between), and the structure of camera shots all facilitate the work of ideological structures. And most significant to the proposed hypothesis of this research, ideology was found as an ever changing site of struggle as patriarchal ideological hegemony was contested by the ideology of liberal feminism.

This research not only confirms Hall's theory of the mass media, but it is the first attempt to systematically apply Hall's theory to a soap opera text. Moreover, this research has gone beyond the generalizations of Hall's theory to specifically look at the conventions of the soap opera text, and their role in the construction of soap opera's particular meanings. Although some work on soap opera has begun to examine how the text constructs meaning for the viewer (e.g., Hobson, 1982; Brunson, 1983; Modleski, 1983; Allen, 1985), there is no research which specifically focuses on the production of meaning **and** the reproduction of patriarchal ideological hegemony within the soap opera text.

However, there are limitations to this research. As stated at the outset, this research does not attempt to provide a theory of the reader. Assuming an active reader, it follows that not only dominant decodings will be made. However, this research shows a highly structured text (e.g., coercive camera) that may limit an active reader's decodings.

Meaning is textually structured to some extent (e.g., camera shots, sign combinations). Yet, this research cannot say with certainty what the audience will decode from the text. The text itself may reproduce patriarchal ideological hegemony, yet the work of ideology can only take place when the viewer is positioned within its structures. For, it is through the interaction of the 'reader' and the text that the meaning constructed within the text can actually mean. However, there is no substantive research on the reader. "The 'reader' constantly invoked in [the] examination of soap opera has been, for the most part, a theoretical construct -a position from which meaning **might** be constructed" (Allen, 1985: 182; emphasis in original). Research has only begun to investigate the role of the reader (e.g., Morley, 1986). This is a necessary avenue for further research if the complexity of the soap opera text in its relationship to the viewer is to be understood.

It can be argued however that there is no universal reader. Not all readers will decode the meanings of the text in the same way. This is especially seen in the research of Hobson (1982), Ang (1985), and Morley (1986). Therefore, the reproduction of patriarchy's hegemony becomes problematic. This can account for the excesses of soap opera's conventions (i.e., excesses of plot lines, dialogue, repetition, close-up shots, acting, music, and realism). If hegemony was being

successful, these melodramatic excesses of soap opera would not be necessary to convey the hegemonic meaning in the text. Moreover, this excess can be seen as "**ideological**, opening up a textual space which may be read against the seemingly hegemonic surface" (Feuer, 1984: 8). As seen in Nicole's storyline, the excesses of meanings or ideologies create contradictions which may create openness for negotiated or oppositional decodings. In the final analysis, the viewer is of the utmost importance. For the way meaning is decoded from the text "is not a question the texts themselves can answer" (Feuer, 1984: 16).

It has been argued in this research that soap opera is not a trivial matter once viewed in its larger context. It is an enduring artifact of women's culture which reproduces symbolically within its text the hegemonic process which subordinates women in the 'real' world.

APPENDIX: Scene Map of One Episode of Another World

Scene Map of One Episode of Another World (September 24,  
1987, episode four of five)

<u>Plot</u>	<u>Time Length</u>
A	50s
B	20s
C	10s
Y	15s
Z	1m 30s
D	1m 17s
A	1m 17s
C	30s
Y	15s
Z	2m
C	1m 55s
A	45s
D	2m 16s
Y	05s
Z	1m 30s
C	2m
D	1m 30s
A	3m 45s
C	1m 55s
Z	2m
D	1m 24s
A	2m 27s
B	1m 49s
C	1m 35s
Z	1m 30s
Y	10s
C	1m
B	1m 20s
A	1m 55s
D	1m
Y	05s
Z	2m
C	3m 55s
E	30s
A	40s
E	15s
A	40s
D	44s
B	1m 10s
C	40s
B	25s
C	25s
Z	1m 30s
D	37s

E	25s
A	42s
C	50s
Z	1m
F	05s
---	-----
35 scenes	57m 28s

Key

A = Amanda's plot line  
 B = Donna's plot line  
 C = Vicki's plot line  
 D = Nicole's plot line  
 E = Zak's plot line  
 F = Sign off  
 Y = Logo/Signature music  
 Z = Commercials

## Footnotes

1. The term re-present is used to distinguish the representations that culture embodies in its ideologies from the representations inherent in the cultural products of the mass media, specifically soap opera. That is, soap opera presents again cultural meanings or ideologies. In its re-presentation of women's culture, it is selective in what it re-presents.

2. Representation is a term "which implies that images [or symbols] do not simply reflect social conditions but are themselves selected, constructed, and purveyed within specific...ideological settings" (Kramarae and Treichler, 1985: 389). Representations do not merely reflect real relations, for they are ideological categories or phenomenal forms. For example, the real relation between capitalist and labourer is that of exploitation based on surplus value, and it is hidden in the representation of the wage exchange: a 'fair day's wage for a fair day's work' (Mephram, 1974: 103, 109). Systems of representations compose ideology.

3. Articulation is the connection or linkage of differing ideologies.

4. This is not false consciousness. Like Althusser, Gramsci conceptualized ideology as material, having effects, and organizing social action. For Gramsci (1971: 377), ideologies "'organize' human masses, and create the terrain on which [people] move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle." Therefore, the subordinate classes are not victims of false consciousness in Gramsci's hegemonic ideology.

5. Discourses are systems of meaning. More specifically, they are systems of signification embodying representations.

6. The term reproduction, used in the context of the mass media reproducing ideological hegemony, implies that the hegemonic process is reproduced in the products of the mass media. And therefore, the hegemonic ideology which is the outcome of the hegemonic process is also reproduced. Moreover, reproduction does not imply a mere mirror reflection of cultural meanings in the texts of the mass media. For, the media is selective in what it re-presents, and thus, it is

often accused of distorting reality (Fiske and Hartley, 1978: 23, 24). What the media does is to magnify certain cultural meanings, discard others, generally transforming cultural meanings.

7. For example, a viewer of television news may agree with the dominant encoded meaning of a news story on illicit drugs which portrays the problem as a national crisis. However, the viewer may not agree with the additional dominant encoding that the police are valiant in their efforts to stop the illicit drug trade. Perhaps at the situational level, the viewer has experienced police corruption thus making an oppositional decoding. This is a negotiated decoding.

8. The family form of television is not only the plethora of actual family units around which dramas and comedies are written (e.g., *The Cosby Show* or *Little House on the Prairie*). It is also the extension of the family form to television programmes where there is no family unit proper (e.g., *Hill Street Blues* or *M.A.S.H.*). These particular programmes establish close and personal relationships between regular characters out of the family setting but still as a familial group.

9. The term signifiers can only be understood in the context of signification, a practice which produces meaning. Signification involves the important concept, sign. A sign is composed of the signifier and signified. The signifier is the "physical existence of the sign" while the signified is the "mental concept" (Fiske, 1982: 47). For example, a red rose can be viewed as a sign. The rose in its physical presence is the signifier while the signified is the mental concept it evokes. What is signified depends on the interaction of the sign with cultural meanings, for signification is "culture-specific" (Fiske, 1982: 48). The red rose in western culture usually signifies love, so what is signified by the red rose, or the mental concept it evokes, is love.

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